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The Production of Spaces for the Past:
A Cultural Geography of the Heritage Industry in England.

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A thesis presented for the degree of Ph.D. in accordance with the regulations of the University of
Bristol, Faculty of Social Sciences. January 1995.

Synopsis:

The thesis responds to a growing anxiety over the role of the past in contemporary Britain. It recounts the two levels of this in, firstly, a growing and changing public concern and, secondly, a polemical intellectual debate over the significance of the former. It argues it is important to set both in a historical and sociological context. The result of this is to reveal certain silences and gaps in the debates - principally over how 'ordinary people' actually come to understand the past. This is taken up in how senses of the past are produced. The production spoken of in the title is thus the dialogic structuring and development of meaning between heritage 'apparatus' and heritage 'consumers'. However, setting up the argument in these terms is suggested to be a flawed strategy. Instead these understandings are seen to be created through contexts composed of the 'provider', 'consumer' and the relationship between them. The title was chosen to try and capture this perspective without invoking any of the disputed terms I have placed in inverted commas. It is also from this perspective that I see the geography of heritage - not in terms of regional images, or representations of landscape but through the creation of interactional spaces - be they institutionalised, discursive or visual. One of the long-standing purposes of the project was to show the heterogeneity of senses of the past, and how they were structured in comparison to some of the accounts given by intellectuals in recent years. To maintain both the commitment to understanding these spaces of the past in the present and what went on in them, the research combined historical and museological perspectives with fieldwork in Britain. The fieldwork was designed to explicate how the geography of heritage was produced through a range of contexts and was thus undertaken through a variety of methods appropriate to each context.

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Memorandum:

This thesis is the original work of the candidate except where acknowledgement has been given and has not been submitted for a higher degree in this or any other university.



Michael Crang.

December 1994.

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Travelling Round Heritage

"There is world of difference between the presentation of confusion and a confused presentation." Walter Benjamin.

Why Travel to Heritage?

It seems beholden on me to suggest why it is important to study 'Heritage' in contemporary Britain, why I have devoted more than three years to studying it, and why I think it is also worth the readers' time. Firstly, I became interested in 'heritage' as a category when it kept cropping up in works on contemporary society and (post-) modernity. It seemed to be one of the paradigmatic examples of a range of processes - right-wing hegemony, a concern with images and superficiality, commodification, a loss of the referent, 'the crisis of representation', Disneyfication and hyper-reality (eg Eco 1987; Harvey 1989). These seemed important issues to me, yet Heritage was rarely examined, only cited. At the same time, and secondly, it seemed that constructions of identity were one of the central issues in cultural geography. Constructions of identity as belonging inevitably seemed to raise questions of how the past was understood, not merely as examples of changes but as constitutive and reproducing new discourses of identity and value:

'Museums are certifiers of taste and definers of culture. As such they are intimately involved in the task of defining identities and setting up schemes that classify and relate cultural identities. The way that museums are inserted in civil society and their power to produce cultural values make them an integral part of the processes by which cultures are placed into hierarchies that define them as superior or inferior to one another.'

Karp (1992:31).

However, while accepting the important role of these institutions, it seemed to me that confining my study of understandings of the past to officially sanctioned institutions would inevitably reinforce the status of those versions of the past as *the* legitimate ones, whereas it was clear that much of the debate over the 'Heritage Industry' was about the way that new forms and changing institutions portrayed the past. It seemed that studies of the geography of contemporary modernity used a remarkably unproblematised idea of what a range of changing institutions did, while studies focusing on understandings of the past used a remarkably narrow set of institutions.¹ In both cases the focus was on

¹ The claim is a little too sweeping, when authors such as Walsh (1992) and Wright (1985, 1991) have made concerted attempts to study how practices are embedded in wider contemporary shifts. Certainly in more historical

the apparatus producing these versions rather than the actual practices. So I wanted to address what I felt, and still feel, were important concerns but using a sense of the divergent practices and understandings not only 'produced' by various apparatus but enacted and performed by various groups of people. Thus, I agreed with Lumley in taking:

'Not the museum in the narrow sense of a particular building or institution, but as a potent social metaphor and as a means whereby societies represent their relationship to their own history and to that of other cultures. Museums, in this sense, map out geographies of taste and values, which is an especially difficult and controversial task when it is necessary radically to redraw the maps in response to major social change'. (1988:1).

The inevitable self-interestedness of proving that this thesis is an 'original contribution to knowledge' aside, I still think this is an important terrain for analysis. In thinking through what this 'potent metaphor' might look like I hope to avoid at least some self-aggrandisement - where the PhD candidate traditionally proves their own importance by suggesting the importance of their topic. Both Karp and Lumley, and indeed most writers on museums, have not inconsiderable professional investment in suggesting how important museums *per se* might be. Instead, I have laid claim to the 'gap in the literature' trope, where the candidate announces their work as some synthetic creation. Well, up to a point anyway. That is where I set out from and I think it is important to spell out these starting points since they meant that from the start the work would be structured around forging connections and conjunctions in disparate analyses and in different 'empirical' situations (cf. Hebdige 1992).² It is important, then, to look at how this conjunctive approach has led me to recast what should and could be included as objects of analysis.

Where is this Heritage?

works there is a great deal of consideration of how institutions are embedded in wider discourses and the articulations and changes of their positions. However, in what might be termed the 'heritage debate', such sensitivity has been notably absent.

² It will thus be clear that I could not adopt the other standard legitimations and aggrandisements in doctoral theses - the 'one more brick in the wall' and the 'OTSOG' approach. These are respectively, where the candidate suggests the work serves to edge forward some accumulative process of knowledge creation, common in the hard sciences - I cannot suggest that since my somewhat more grandiose claim to refashion the object of study undercuts the accumulative idea - and the OTSOG (Ashmore 1989) claim to somehow have synthesised earlier work and thus completed a process unknowingly set in chain by other thinkers greater than the humble candidate. This latter is a false modesty embedded in the statement 'that if I have seen farther it is because I stood "On The Shoulders Of Giants" ' (Isaac Newton), that is typically deployed to retrospectively cast greater thinkers as antecedents and ancestors whose work is completed by the current author.

To think through the importance and changing possibilities in understanding the past, I felt it was imperative to look beyond canonical institutions. I wanted to look at popular memory, that is the senses of the past produced and reproduced through society. This is not the same task as looking for images or ideas. Rather it is about discourses and contestations, institutions and power, since I was early on convinced by arguments that:

'memory has a texture both social and historic: It exists in the world rather than in people's heads, finding its basis in conversations, cultural forms, personal relations, the structure and appearances of places and, most fundamentally for this argument, in relation to ideologies which work to establish a consensus view of both the past and the forms of personal experience which are significant and memorable'

(Bommes & Wright 1982:255).

As such social memory is a diffuse set of sensible, not necessarily ideational or imaged, discourses rather than a coherent object. It thus, I want to argue, spills beyond the 'intended object' of academic commentaries, I outline in chapter II. That is, there exist a wider range of practices than shown in the vision of Heritage created in the debates over how it is an apparatus forming people's identities and relationships with the past.

As such I confront immediately the reflexivity of this research process - studying representations of the way the past is represented and representing this in turn myself. It is a topic which I shall spend considerable time on throughout this work so I leave only a marker now. Having analysed the object created through accounts of Heritage I devote the next two chapters trying to put this object, and representations of it, in context. Firstly, sociological contexts are provided (chapter III) by asking to whom various messages might be addressed, by whom, and in what situations, by suggesting the multiple readings any single institution may be susceptible to and by arguing that changes in various institutions interact differently with intended and actual audiences. In some ways this chapter is intended as a corrective to some semiotic accounts that seem to allow discourses to float as free as signifiers are supposed to, touching only too lightly on the circumstances that enable both the discourse and the analysis (cf. Bommes & Wright 1982; Thrift 1991). Secondly, I try and provide some historical context (chapter IV) in order to assess how things have stayed the same, how things have been revived or become more important, and in order to suggest that society has

had a number of ways of representing the past and many of the current changes might be seen as rearranging them rather than as some epochal leap into the unknown. Hopefully, these two chapters also outline how any idea of one homogeneous object cannot work.

In the light of this I spend chapter V rethinking what is being talked about, using the idea of a spatialised past to discuss whether the multiple forms outlined cannot be read as part of some unity. As such my concern begins to shift from specific social institutions to the imaginary institutions of society (Castoriadis 1987, 1991). I try and discuss how these diverse forms can be seen to relate to each other. Suggestions that they are unified may be true at one level - where the sum of them forms a technology, a process of mediation through which the past becomes legible and is made present to people now. However, I try to move this discussion on by recasting the terms of the debate (in chapter VI) to suggest that such imaginary institutions cannot be located as an apparatus producing senses of the past. Drawing on media theory, ideas of active consumers and situated consumption are used to suggest the flaws in trying to read changes from just the formal modes of production of representations of the past. Indeed, instead of the word representations I prefer 'understandings' since the term denotes more clearly a dialogical situation where 'celibate machines' of whatever sort can not be said to produce meanings. Instead I locate the rest of the study in the situations in which understandings of the past are produced. I frame this move through the social situation of travel, trying to suggest how meanings are negotiated, and experiences and sites are linked and seriated.

The social situations I then analyse comprise the next four chapters. We could perhaps say that they follow a logic where I start by looking at ways the past is present in the everyday and where understandings of it are produced through hearing and speaking. This is a study of everyday histories through the work of oral history groups (chapter VII) - it is about living in the midst of history, in spaces of memory as a milieu and sites of interaction, at the same time as being about nostalgia for the loss of the past. Work in this field led me to realise it was not as simple as that and chapter VIII concerns the staging of the very same places and their visualisation as historic sights in old photographs (now published and marketed). Leading on from this is chapter IX that attempts to look at the ways historic sites separated from the everyday are seen and experienced, maintaining a concern with the process of visualisation and spectacle but now removed from the normal spaces of the city. Finally, in chapter X, I attempt to

look at the spaces and practices that carve out sights even more radically as 'historic', but do so in order to try and provide them as sites where people can experience history as though they were living contemporaneously with it - the putative 'time travel' of living history.

Finally, I try to reconcile these disparate practices and situations by suggesting that if Heritage is to have analytic and political validity it may be better to see it as an organising principle than a category or object. However, I try and stress that despite the multifarious practices I outline it is important to retain some sense of this unifying, organising effectivity. I try to stress that popular practices are not some *deus ex machina* that inevitably produces progressive understanding of the past. At the end I return to my concerns at the start. I try to suggest how to reconcile a sense of the necessary messiness, multiplicity and contingency of understandings of the past with processes of hegemony, by exploring whether Connerton was right to argue that:

'The fact that we no longer believe in the great 'subjects' of history - the proletariat, the Party, the West - means, not the disappearance of these great master-narratives, but rather their continuing unconscious effectiveness as ways of thinking about and acting in our contemporary situation: their persistence, in other words as unconscious collective memories.' (1989:1).

I try to suggest it is insufficient to see the organisation of the past as existing in some amorphous collective unconscious. However, truly hegemonic power does involve a struggle for the control of popular memory through the situations in which it is created and reproduced.

How do we get to heritage?

If I have acknowledged the way previous accounts create objects of analysis I have to be absolutely clear that so will I. Objects that 'in the last instance' only appear as textually mediated here but are also presupposed and created through research praxis as a whole.³ Therefore, I need to consider the reflexive nature of the thesis at the level both

³ The Althusserian parody is intentional. Many studies in critical ethnography, which I would loosely call my academic home, always talk of practice beyond the text but like with Althusser's last lonely instant never get there. In fact those working with 'representations' seem firmly locked in the library let alone the text. While I am willing to concede much of Derrida's import that there is nothing beyond the text, many readings of this aphorism left a textual metaphor to totalise all activities and a divisive sociological position where empiricist work proceeds unproblematically while theory remains in the library (cf. Mellor 1991; Okely 1993).

of research structure and in its final textual form.

The ideas behind how this research should deal with its inherent reflexivity have remained stable for quite some time. I shall detail the individual decisions as and when needed. For now let me state that by acknowledging the role of researcher in producing 'data', by acknowledging the role of both methods and theory in rendering some things - but not others - visible and shaping the object of study I feel it becomes wildly inappropriate to adopt the science-as-discovery trope. Within the thesis I have attempted to use a doubling strategy whereby I try to frame the research situation - producing my understandings - to consciously echo the social situation producing understandings of Heritage. I thus want it to be clear that while I retain a scepticism to simply 'reading' Heritage I do not lay claim to show what 'really goes on'. I do however, believe it is important to get (and hopefully give) a sense of the lived experience of people - or at least how people read their understandings of the past.

The thesis is thus attempting to engage with issues of voice and self-construction by participants in the project. Such a goal is problematic and I remain concerned over the way I have handled this area. In one way this introduction is intended to stress the personal nature of my trips through Heritage, the thesis as a personal odyssey and rite of passage in order to stress the particularity of how I have represented others. I have tried to use formats to represent them through the process of research - I have shown draft chapters and papers to those involved where possible and I have tried to elicit their comments on my ideas - I have been far from the non-committal interviewer. In the text itself I have used a variety of textual strategies to try and show the dialogical construction of research - extended quotation, self-commentary of participants on videos they made, and mock debates between myself and academic interlocutors which have framed issues of importance for me. I have however, found no one strategy, no solution to these issues. Perhaps that is not a bad thing since instead I have had to rely on situated local solutions to particular cases.⁴ In some ways this may say something about a state of knowledge current in academy which I have been assiduously imbibing during the research process. It is a state of some eclecticism where, in part, due to the broad sweep of the project, I have not found any single theoretical schema adequate to all the conjunctures I wished to analyse. Also, the fragmentary structure reflects both a

⁴ One net result, perhaps of conformism, cowardice or lack of imagination on my part, is that essentially this thesis retains a traditional structure - from literature review and contexts to theoretical chapters to case studies. Let me hasten to add it does not take this course in the naive hope this obviates the issues or produces 'findings' in a conventional manner.

desire and fear on my part since in setting out on a broad sweep I am writing a particular version of desire for some grand vision, a desire that refuses, legitimately I think, to subscribe to a one more brick or empirical vignette approach yet, in its place, risks creating an overarching account. For instance, I have been continually interested by the works of many authors inspired by Foucault, in searching for the conjunctions and articulations of historically embedded discourses. But I am fully aware that the seduction of many of these ideas to me lies precisely in their seeming power - or, as de Certeau (1984, 1986) so eloquently puts it, in the very panopticism of these theories (cf. Schor 1992).

The text as produced thus shuttles between dissatisfactions. It is not intended to be a tale of completeness (though to meet the regulations I suppose I shall claim it is thoroughly incomplete). I would have liked to have presented the final account in hypertext - allowing the reader to connect and follow linkages between situations without them being drawn into some whole framework. Thus the structure would show rather than tell of the connections and parallels I have tried to construct, as a process of navigating conjunctures following trails and making connections (Joyce 1991; Moulthrop 1991; Ulmer 1991).⁵ I have tried to keep a sense of this in a conventional format where essentially I lay out a narrative which might be said to be a traveller's tale. I want it to be read though with a sense of how it undoes any idea of the text as read being an unfolding of events *found* in the world. Rather the early chapters are written in the light of what will follow. They serve to select and frame issues, the connections and conjunctures. They emplot incidents and events into a whole (cf. Ricoeur 1980, 1984, 1985, 1988, 1992). The long string of references to Ricoeur I have tucked in here make it clear that an encounter with narrative theory underlay a great deal of my practice and is now embedded in how I see this thesis. The tale is thus a narrative but one that is perhaps more akin to Lawrence Sterne's sentimental travelling than the directed plot of classic narrative (Sieburth 1987). It is pregnant with digressions and distractions. It jumps and skips in a particular path, cutting back on itself, rushing ahead and so on.⁶ The fact that this happens anyway is

⁵ The idea of intellectual and imaginative connections will remain central not only to my practice but also the practices I try and illuminate. The constrictions and conventions of the narrative form bring to mind Benjamin's assertion that 'today the book is already, as the present mode of scholarly production demonstrates, an outdated mediation between two different filing systems. For everything that matters is to be found in the card box of the researcher who wrote and the scholar studying it assimilates it into his [sic] own card index.' (cited in Ulmer 1991:6).

⁶ In using the feminised tone here I want to make clear my unhappiness with science as masculinised ideas of linear, rational progress and the trope of fieldworker as hero. If I must be a hero in my own story then the sentimental and whimsical slightly lost figure is perhaps more accurate than the ever eager, straining forwards researcher-among-the-

one reason for keeping a narrative and fairly conventional structure - which is my fear that if I allowed myself to play with the text too freely it would cease to be biographically informed and become auto-biographically centred and thus erase those whom I feel should appear in the text.⁷

What this text operates at is a level of isomorphism with the process it outlines. It suggests a diversity of particular experiences that are rendered into a field of practices through various organising schema, and as a text it also has to *organise diverse practices* into a field through some organising principle. The unfortunate upshot is that although these ideas have remained stable for quite some time, they still lead to etiolated phrasing and complex structures, in as much as at any given moment the same problem appears to apply to both the topic I am trying to write about and the way I am trying to think about it, and then write it - and quite often the way my participants tried to think about it! Rather than fear an endless regress I hope that the doubling of the resulting structure allows the reader to see the issues as staged within the research process rather than being external to it - in the sense of Derrida's *mis en abyme* (Derrida 1980; Ulmer 1991); to see not objects of knowledge 'out there' but a process of knowledge creation in a variety of circumstances. Thus applying to both the study of people's (mis-) understandings and (perhaps) my (mis-) understandings of them is a concept of staging the ideological which I owe to Slavoj Zizek:

'an ideological edifice fails by definition, of course, to "reflect correctly" the social reality in which it is embedded; yet this very "surplus" of distortion is in itself socially determined, so that *an ideology "reflects" its social context through the very way the "reflection" is distorted.*' (1991a:101n1; cf.. 1991b).

The result, I hope, is not to close options and meanings but rather to stress the inevitable failure to do so. To perennially force the narrative plot onwards as each instant reveals its own insufficiency. Thus this account starts as I did by assessing the insufficiencies I felt lurked in existing academic accounts. But it never leaves the academy fully. It never seeks an unproblematic reality 'out there' with which to fill the gaps. Rather it uses both to manufacture the gaps, to stage conjunctures. I have thus

natives so familiar in geography.

⁷And, frankly, I am not sure whether it would flatter or break my ego, or, if so, whether I could be frank. If doing a thesis has been bad for my head, then it is because the thesis became at times too much of my life. If my life were the subject of my thesis I do not think I could have handled it. I would like to thank Nigel Thrift and Ian Cook for reminding me of this in entirely different ways and always understanding when I got it wrong.

embedded 'empirical' material in sections conventionally confined to theory and put theory in sections conventionally about 'reality' since what is reported from 'out there' inevitably is a product of what occurs back here in the academy. The result is intended to show the connectedness and reflexivity of the two but is perhaps overly skewed to the academy. But then perhaps so am I.

The geography of heritage.

I have not in all this been overly concerned to build up disciplinary claims, even of the modest sort that recognise other work but ask that space be added in. However, I do think this work has retained a focus with geography on at least two levels. Firstly, and most straightforwardly, it has focused on the particular situations and instantiations of popular memory, and in doing so the thesis suggests the context and place-bound nature of these discourses. More than just saying that where they occur impacts -or that there are some levels of personal, local, regional and national memory - I want to make the case that the forms of understanding the past are reliant on the contexts of performance. Now within the time allotted, and given other themes, I have not pursued these contexts into some categorisation of how these vary regionally or whatever. Instead it remains the case that, in an almost structurationist sense, this thesis insists and depends upon the particularities and specificities of various sites in sustaining and producing certain discourses.

The second level is that of a more symbolic geography, perhaps etched in terms of a reversal of Paul Carter's spatial history (1987) in which he sketched how new spaces could be brought into circulation in an imperial symbolic economy. Carter provides a beautiful tracing of the way places became knowable, meaningful and were claimed by western discourses, of the role of the observer in creating a world *in potentia*, full of places ready to be placed and located, and of the creation of the world as a 'map-emptied space' for a western agency to fill. Obviously they do not 'apply' to late twentieth century Britain. Yet his suggestive comments on how the contingencies and processes of 'discovery' were mythologised and naturalised seem remarkably similar to some of the explicit political overtones of debates in Britain - in terms of defining a national island history. The symbolic geography I want to reveal lies in the contemporary re-enactments of the 'discovery' process, discovering not foreign lands but the home-land itself. For this reason I confine this account to post-imperial Britain and in actuality to 'Little England', the most shrunken of imperial powers. The

trackings I want to make will show how places in Britain are now created, and brought into circulation as part of that homeland as a succession of places and situations that can be read as symbolising an insular heritage. These voyages then represent a post-colonial turning inward, and perhaps a recolonisation of the home spaces, certainly a re-investment in them, as former symbolic geographies melt away. So the re-discovery and re-invention of a sense of homeland is constantly churning, redeploing a vast number of conventional identities. It is not an epochal shift, a starting afresh; rather there is a spectre truly haunting English identity. It is the truant elements of this identity and their ghostly footfalls this thesis sets out to follow.

Writing Heritage.

Introduction

This chapter sets out to review what could be called second order texts *about* heritage, that is commentaries on heritage as a phenomenon rather than texts that are part of the phenomenon. I make this distinction since there is a large field of literature, and other media, that could be considered as part *of* heritage - active constituents of heritage in the public mind which organise the field of "heritage" just as much as museums/historic sites and are, thus, ontologically part of that field. Examples of such media are tourist guides, local history works, TV programmes and so forth, which I shall use here to counterpoint what commentators discuss by inserting excerpts from promotional literature into the text. My hope is that this will reinforce the accounts of commentators on one level while at the same time revealing their close dependence on the *rhetoric* of the field of heritage.

The choice of commentaries used in this chapter is largely conditioned by their impact, and by their direct self-identification as studying heritage. I have divided them into those that treat heritage as a symptom of a deeper malaise. Then analyses of how discourses about heritage 'invent' the past. This brings us to accounts that locate heritage as part of a 'dominant memory' which is instantiated in historic sites, and then commentaries that concern themselves with how this ideological position impacts on public understandings of economic changes and an alleged post-industrial ideology. However, such accounts of a hegemonic ideology are then set against more positive accounts that see heritage as part of a movement to re-claim a popular past and the way such reinscriptions of local differences become the raw material of spatial competition in the current capitalist system. Finally, I begin to draw out the common methodological stances used in the above accounts and suggest how my response to this literature has structured the kinds of work undertaken for the thesis.

All of the above - the recognition of a heritage literature as distinct from other topics, the grouping of these into approaches, and the assessment of their impact is an attempt to show how the intertextual effects of all these commentaries seem to go a considerable way in actually constituting and defining not only how to approach heritage but actually what 'heritage' is - as an object of study. It will become clear that I propose to destabilise some of these conventions throughout this thesis and so I wish to start by rendering them explicit.

The Index of Decline ¹.

Any analysis of 'heritage' phenomena could do worse than starting with Robert Hewison's polemical "*The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline*" (London, Methuen. 1987) largely due to the huge influence it has had on academic debate, not just among heritage commentators but also by a process of citation into many more general accounts, it casts its long shadow on much further discussion. Trawling through the databases of the Institute for Scientific Information there are some 70 articles recorded as referencing this work and this does not include the citations and use made of it in books.² Its influence is such that it is a key factor in what de Certeau (1985b) calls 'the institution of the real', whereby repeated citation makes the object of citation appear, even if it did not previously exist.

The moment at which this account emerges is succinctly framed by a certain type of analysis of the ideology of heritage that emerged in the late '80s which is best summarised as the "landscapes of nostalgia" school (Lumley 1988:4). Such an account contrasts the tone of the '50s with the '80s, suggesting a fear *for the past being destroyed* becomes a fear *of the past destroying the future* (Ashworth & Tunbridge 1990:1-2). The national psyche is gripped by "cultural necrophilia" (ibid.:29). Amid uncertainty heritage offers a secure version of a past. In this view heritage is :-

"A symptom of a nation immersed in nostalgia and living in its past; concerned with manufacturing heritage rather than manufacturing goods."
Herbert (1989:1)

Hewison takes on this "entropic obsession" (op.cit. 30) that he sees gripping the nation in the eighties. He situates this obsession as being closely involved in the political hegemony of the Right in Britain, a hegemony achieved through a distortion of the past.

"History is gradually being bent into something called Heritage, whose commodity values run from tea towels to the country house. Its focus on an idealized past is entropic, its social values are those of an earlier age of privilege and exploitation that it serves to preserve and bring forward into the present. Heritage is gradually effacing history, by substituting an image of the past for its reality."

Hewison (1991a:175 & 1989:21).

¹ The phrase was coined by Merriman (1992, 1989). I especially like the use of the term "index" as it evokes Peirce's categorisation of signs, where the indexical sign acts by standing metonymically in place of what it represents, as oppose to the action of symbolic or iconic signs. Whether Merriman intended this or not, it is a splendid summary of the theoretical position ascribed to heritage phenomenon in this perspective where it not only stands as symbol of decline but the fixation of the past it is part of is seen as part of the cause of that decline.

² Obviously this can only be indicative since, like all citation counts, it is impossible to tell whether the use made of this referencing was approving, critical, extensive, passing, credentialising or evidential.

This makes heritage both the vehicle for and embodiment of a mythical past representing "the drive to conceal the present under layers of the past" (Hewison 1987:30). So it is that "the growth of the heritage industry took place in the 1970s and 1980s against a background of perceived national distress and actual economic decline, and that we have turned to the past, both as an economic and psychological resource" (Hewison 1991b:23).

Nostalgia is posed as a general process raising the national self-esteem in the face of the harsh realities of a post-imperial world, a selective recall that dispenses with the anxieties of the present and prefers, instead, a rose coloured portrait of the past.

In the face of change that is alarming and profound, the national disease is one of clinging to the certainty of the past, rendered suitably comforting, of course. The romanticised past is used as a "protective illusion" (Benton 1991:40, Robins 1991b:22) that the people can cling to:

The Blitz- An authentic reconstruction of the most terrible nights this country has ever endured - hear the sounds - smell the acrid burning bombed street - experience a British town under siege.

"Protective illusions .. can stand in place of the overwhelming anxieties to which we would be subject if the full helplessness of our condition were borne in upon us... We can abandon these imperial illusions only to the extent that we can face the world without them, having been convinced that it is a sufficiently benign place for our weakness not to be catastrophic, and having gained some faith in our growing powers of independent functioning."

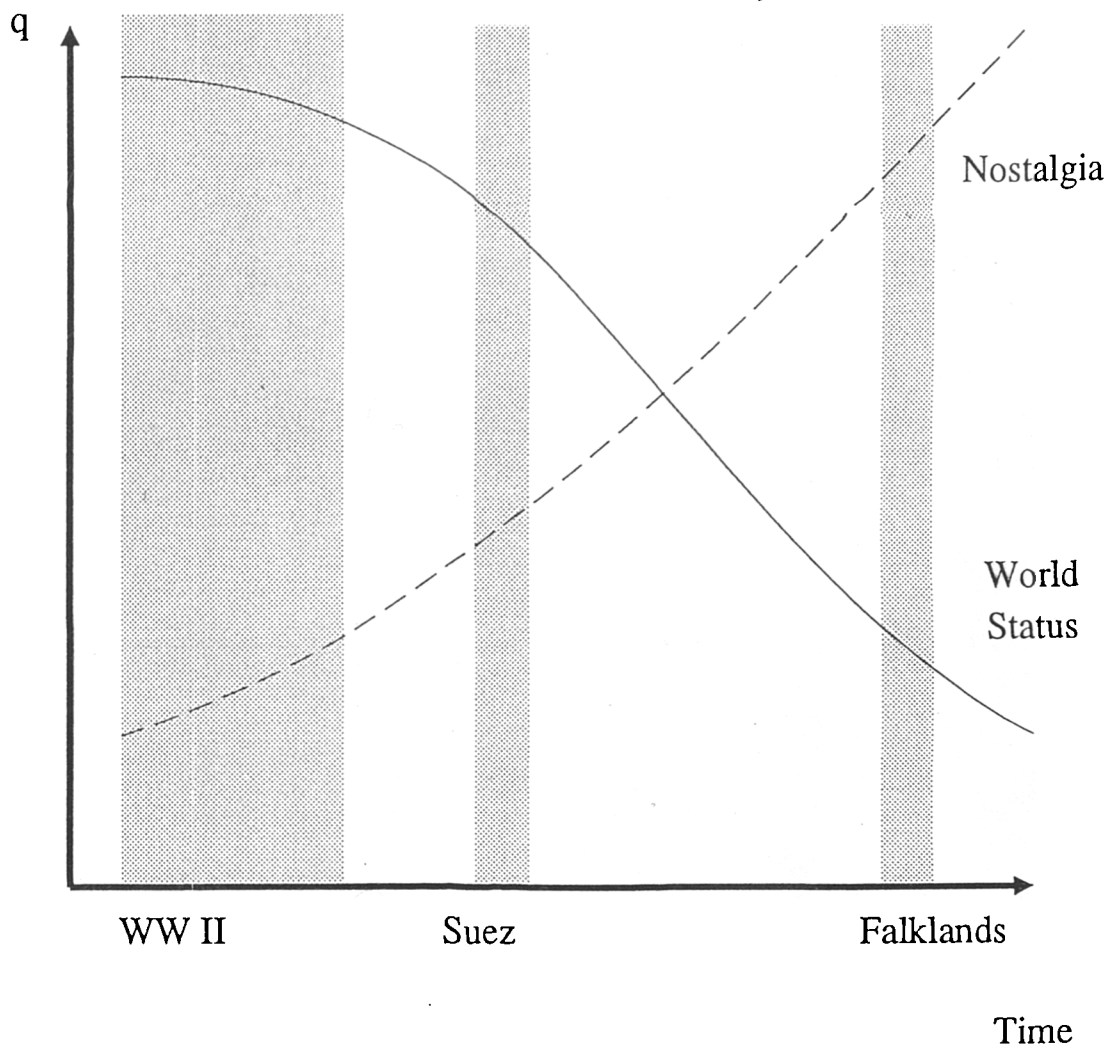
Robins (1991b:22).³

Hewison bemoans Heritage as just such a 'narcissistic impotence' where it is easier to alter a delusory past than the real world. In this conceptualisation we have a declining ability to alter the real world matched by an increasing fixation upon the past (figure 1). The y-axis is left deliberately vague since one reason for the popularity of Hewison's account is its ability to function as a multi-purpose proof and explanation. I have used world power, illustrating the rereading of history that gave us imperial crisis at Suez, yet atavistic 'triumph' in the Falklands. Heritage serves as proof of the process of decline (we are nostalgic therefore there is decline) and the decline serves as the cause of heritage (there is decline therefore there is heritage), but equally there could be an economic reading

³ The pessimistic outcome is that if everyone else is relying on 'imperial illusions' we have a 'culture of narcissism where it would indeed be catastrophic to reveal any weakness (Craib 1989; Lasch 1979). Note, though, the individual psyche is broadened to the collective, with no account of the mediating mechanisms and their impact on the psyche in making this happen.

Figure 1:

Index of Decline. Hewison's Thesis.



Title from Merriman (1989).

mobilising themes of the British disease, sunset industries and regions needing regeneration. This sort of flexibility may explain the popularity of this account.

The way Heritage is alleged to operate is by distorting the past, so that while the interest in 'heritage' apparently announces our intentions to preserve the past, in actual fact it represents alteration and rewriting of it on an unprecedented scale:-

"The paradox, however, is that one of our defences against change is change itself: through the filter of nostalgia we change the past, and through the conservative impulse we seek to change the present. The question is not whether we should preserve the past, but what kind of past we have chosen to preserve, and what that has done to our present."

Hewison (1987:47).

This is the critical edge that Hewison's account introduced by focusing on the interests and factions of present society served by certain versions of the past. The point is someone is doing the selecting, this past is institutionally organised (Hewison 1989:22). Through Hewison's work we are being led into the selectivity of displays in museums, and the way this conditions our understanding of the present (1987:85).

Excluded Pasts - Political Discourses

Protective Illusions.

"We have begun to construct a past that, far from being a defence against the future, is a set of imprisoning walls upon which we project a superficial image of a false past, simultaneously turning our backs on the reality of history, and incapable of moving forward because of the absorbing fantasy before us."

Hewison (1987:139).

The past forms a compensatory spectacle that occupies attention and diverts us from current problems. And being unable to see our real situation we are immobilised and incapable of acting to remedy it. In this sense we are truly close to the fear that 'he [sic] who controls the present controls the past, and he who controls the past controls the future' as Orwell so starkly phrased it. The stark politics of control over the past appears to be hidden under the rubric of preservation and tradition. But this rubric is premised on the values of the dominant class. For example, for the Ironbridge Gorge museum's all white, all male managerial cadre the views of economic process causality and reality are all:-

"informed by the dominant codes of significance. These, unless stated otherwise, invariably favour the privileged classes and the anti-progressive accounts of history, with their blindness to class struggle, gender inequalities and racist legacy of Empire. Equally such perceptions of history fetishise the artefact as "Heritage", a hidden level of interpretation that forms its own kind of privileged knowledge, and creates popular symbols of the nation in almost mystical form."

West (1988:52).

So, at the same time, not only is the hegemonic version made to appear natural but it is also made almost impossible to criticise. The difficulty is that any opposition is made to sound un-English or is effectively silenced as barbaric for failing to appreciate the value of this heritage:

"At present there seems to be no public position from which criticism can be sustained: indeed it sometimes seems as if questioning National Heritage were akin to turning a flamethrower on a Rembrandt canvas."

Bommes & Wright (1982:272).

The specific forms thus sanctified as a national heritage, as a sign of history are created through a process whereby what was formerly the everyday and quotidian is staged and marked out as distinct and extra-ordinary spaces. Spaces which are separated, excerpted, from the everyday life of the present and thus rendered strange, or exotic (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1991, Samuel 1992). They are also typically rendered photographic and reciprocally marked out as historic by the photographic activity in a new geography of historic sights.

So, rather than the interpretive layering of the palimpsest, rather than a 'time thickening', this is a spatialisation of temporality; a geography of selected, marked and sacralised sights. This is a process that appears at its starkest when floodlighting is used at night to direct the gaze of the (archetypal) spectator (Horne 1984:11) as in the current Scottish campaign to literally 'Highlight our Heritage' or, in Bristol, the lighting of the monumental landscape of the Wills Tower, the Cabot Tower, the Cathedral, St. Mary Redcliffe Church, and the Avon Gorge Suspension Bridge. Heritage creates, names and marks, a 'monumental geography of nationalism' (Bommes & Wright 1982:265) that spatialises history. One may begin a first cut at analysing this geography if we follow Horne's (1984:57) suggestion that most of the sacralised and marked out sites of Europe are dedicated to the memory of the ruling class - if we cast our eyes over the list I provided for Bristol then there is no space for the workers who built Brunel's bridge, no space for the deckhands who sailed Cabot's ships, no space for the slave trade so implicated in the city's mercantile past. Truly this geography of heritage appears to be more a collection of absences than a coherent account.

This is a theme I shall take up again but for now I want to look at not just what history is preserved but how it is re-staged and re-told. And I think the idea of telling is very useful suggesting different genres, audiences, formats and versions being used.

"National Heritage does not just consist of *meanings* which are ideologically and publicly instituted. The experience and advocacy of heritage is not merely a matter of accurate conformity to public semantics. The historical texture of national heritage as a way of thinking is also very closely connected to proto-narrative structures which can be articulated in different ways, which can be overdetermined and pressed into service by various meanings and which are capable of organizing and making sense of many different experiences."

Bommes & Wright (1982:289).

In this way I want to focus on heritage not as a specific legacy but as a way of organising the past. There is a 'proto-narrative' within it that allows it to be appropriated for various purposes and to situate various experiences.

Invented Pasts and Exclusionary Geographies.

Let us follow from the idea about organisation that Bommes & Wright gave above and connect it with the idea of absences. For example, we may think of a national heritage as embodying objects, rituals and traditions passed down by prior generations

the possession of which defines the inheritors. I have already alluded to the simple point that the rich tended to have more to pass down and were better able to commemorate themselves in grand memorials. But we can take the analysis further by looking at more mundane practices. Take for instance the cup of tea, which as Stuart Hall (1991) points out, is the quintessential English ritual and symbol - precisely a widely dispersed inheritance bonding people together in a common identity. But, as Hall notes, there are no tea or sugar plantations in Lancashire. This 'English' ritual is founded on slave and colonial labour. Within the heart of this exclusive heritage is the symbolic presence of thousands of those now defined as 'non-English', unentitled to residence (after the 1981 immigration act). The suppression of this presence can then be connected to the form of the ritual and thus the failure to construct a British identity that recognises its transnational connections.

'These images present a few dramatic snapshots of the episodes which make up the turbulent history of our island nation.

The defence of the Realm is a remarkable collection of castles, museums, great ships and stately homes which played a part in shaping this heritage.'

What is being constructed is so many 'exclusionary geographies' (Robins 1991c) where the national heritage encodes '*our* island story' and thus seeks to define us by excluding others.⁴ Such fantasies can legitimate, if not motivate, the Right's political programme,

⁴ And of course such a story tends to be not only about the island race but also full of masculine assessments of nation and empire and a chronicle of High Culture (West 1988:39).

where national heritage is used as a demonstration of essentially British 'sterling qualities'. However, the Right must attempt to deal with the problem that:

"These 'sterling qualities' had for centuries involved the deployment of superior military force against colonial subjects or colonial rivals. They seemed to many, both inside and outside Britain, inappropriate for a post-imperial age."

Corner & Harvey 1991:10).

However under the sign of Heritage a new post-imperial identity can be emplotted that allows precisely the maintenance of this posture. As an example, on the world stage an imperial heritage written in terms of sterling qualities and national character provides the script for current actions. The Falklands war becomes the reaction of a rational democracy to the "ungentlemanly act" of a dictator. Britain is emplotted as typifying fair play, still holding a civilising mission. Again the Persian Gulf war saw Britain 'ahead of the field' in contributing troops to bring an irrational "mad dog" back under the rule of law and justice. And seeing how mad and bad the world is, our rulers are confirmed as the embodiment of enlightened reason (Robins 1991b:42, 1991c; Bristow 1991; Edgerton 1991; Benton 1991)⁵.

The 'British character' becomes an exclusive identity, that of the "Imaginary Briton" (Wright 1985). Such a figure provides a script around the British way of life that is based, it is claimed, on an unchanging 'character' that is 'a bulwark against dictatorship, threats to liberty or revolution' (German 1993:17).

Ale, real; banger, the great British; Breakfast, the ditto; Cricket; Debs; Eton, playing fields of; Family, the royal; Garrick Club, the; Henley; Landladies, seaside; Lip, upper, stiff; Pickwick, Mr.; sandwiches, cucumber; teas, cream; Wodehouse, PG. ... all these are sentimental triggers which lead to a wistful longing for a lost land, or, worse, some awful jocose celebration of those things that make 'us' different'. Faulks Guardian 1992.

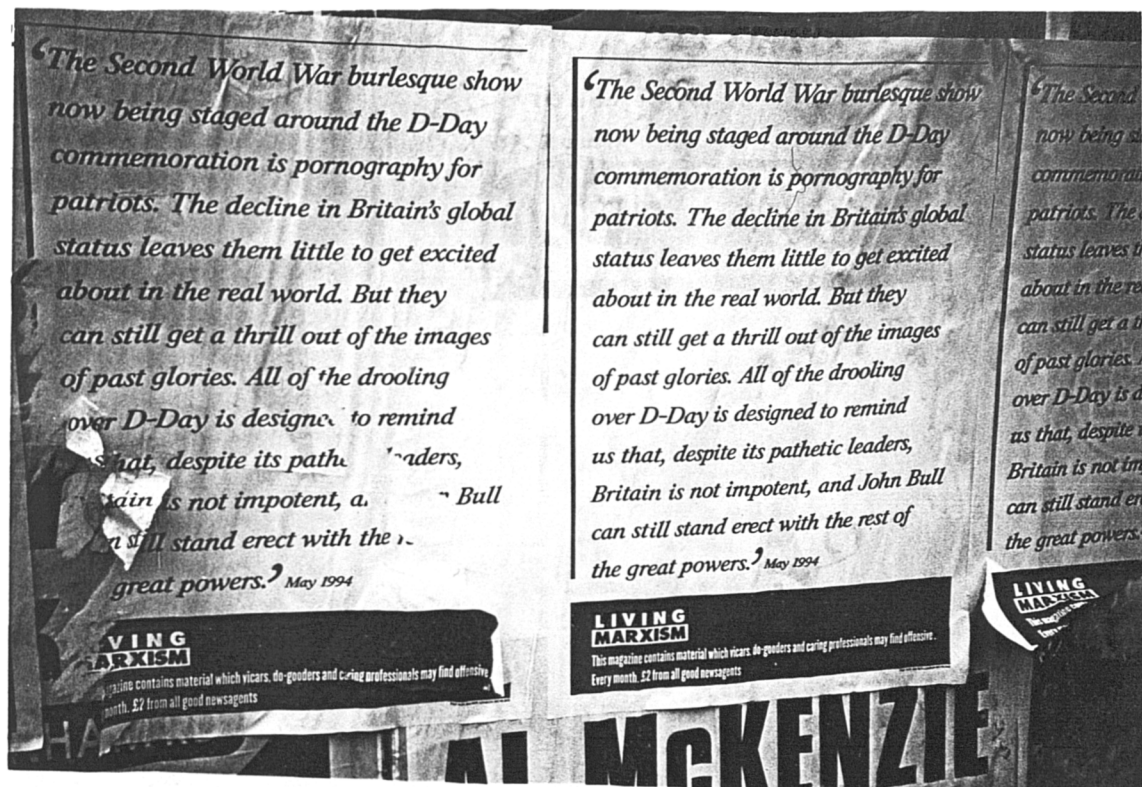
This past is set up as unchanging essence, an anchor to appeal to in the vertigo of the modern world. It is the 'backward glance taken on the edge of a vividly imagined abyss, and it accompanies a sense that history is foreclosed' (Wright 1985). What else can explain John Major's invocation of Orwell to say he wants an England and Englishness that still involves 'the old maids biking to Holy Communion through the mists of the autumn morning'?⁶ This is a history presented as closed off, as gone and lost. It is truly 'a country

5. A different heritage could be expressed in the bombing of the Kurds in the 20s to protect (the imperial creation of) Iraq, and the surgical (rational) bombing of Iraq's post-biblical infrastructure to defend (the imperial creation of) Kuwait.

6 One might note that although Orwell was indeed being elegiac to a lost pre-war England (ie one that Major never knew) he was also appealing to wider streams of that lost time: "The clatter of clogs in the Lancashire Mill towns, the to and fro of the lorries on the Great North Road, the queues outside the Labour Exchanges, the rattle of pintables in the

Figure 2.

Imperial Delusions Under Attack.



Poster Advertising *Living Marxism*, taken in Bristol June 1994. Criticisms of the overt use of D-Day as Heritage have been prominent on its recent anniversaries (cf. Luke 1985)

Soho pubs, the old maids biking to Holy Communion through the mists of the autumn morning." (George Orwell (1941) cited in German 1993:19).

full of precious and imperilled traces - a closely held iconography of what it is to be English - all of them appealing in one covertly projective way or another to the historical and sacrosanct identity of the nation' (Wright 1985:2). Much of the focus of heritage commentary has revolved around the pastoral identity of the nation and what Hewison calls "the cult of the Country House" (1987:53). They are treated as *the* British contribution to civilisation (Walsh 1992:80). The criticism is more a ruling class ideology may be promoted alongside or through a ruling class style, which erases relations of wealth and power, in order to create the essentialised imagined community of the Right that exists in the celluloid of 'All Creatures Great and Small'⁷ or 'Miss Marple'.

Lost England.

Exemplars of such imagined communities located in a mythical, lost and poignantly irretrievable past abound. For instance, there is the England that the magazine '*This England*' seems to want to conjure up where it "has a defiantly posthumous feeling from the start. Its country was full of branch lines, threshing machines, thatched cottages and traditional English customs .. When This England's "green and pleasant land" seemed quite greyed over by modern decline, there was always the post to rely on. The letters page burgeoned as expatriate readers remembered an England of threepenny bits, hedgerows and simple family pleasures. This England was really lost England all along." (Wright 1993:11). It is a magazine whose photographs are organised around what they refuse to show - no motorways, no cities, no industry to interfere with its thatched and royalist idyll. A magazine whose columnists have unsavoury connections to neo-fascist gangs and call on 'us' to reclaim 'our' home that was once 'exclusively our domain' before it is 'flooded' and 'over-run' in a multi-racial, multi-cultural society. It seems the leafy lane of John Major may well lead him into strange company. Not that he would be alone when we turn to the use of a pastoral England by the right-wing ideologue Roger Scruton. He wrote a programme for the BBC ("England, My England" 1991) where he stands gazing out on the rural landscape from a country house and recounts how it sums up the quintessential English spirit - he traces the twists and turns of the hedgerows and blithely comments that they reflect years of negotiation and compromise. Whether this is true is debatable when we look to a history of stately homes expropriating land and moving the 'ordinary folk' away to create vistas of the sort enjoyed by Scruton (Cosgrove & Daniels 1986; Bann 1988; Daniels 1993). This history is brushed away to be hidden by an aestheticised celebration. Indeed the perpetuation of power relations is still hidden where such aesthetic viewing remains private property (Hewison 1987) and Scruton finally comments that the views are so good that that was why he bought the property.

7. Leaving aside for the moment how that is invoked by the so-called Herriot country in the Yorkshire dales.

any signs of working-classness, thus facilitating the passage of the mobile middle classes: they also construct a past for those classes to return to - an amalgam of a conflict-free past of origins and an urban idyll, a past which weighs on the brains of the living like a petit-bourgeois daydream in which that class finds itself always-already there."

Bennett (1988a:11).

I used this quote at some length since the discursive operation identified bears a striking resemblance to just that exclusionary process outlined in terms of a pastoral English identity. This suggests that a retrospective refabrication of an originary period can be used to justify the exclusion and construction of Others who can be defined as not one of 'us' (cf. Carter 1987). We may perhaps go further and suggest that the originary features stressed are precisely a projection of all that is defined as parts of an essential identity in the present (Zizek 1991a) but repressing all signs of construction (Handler 1988; Handler & Linnekin 1984). The fixing of the past to form an essentialised identity seems to result from the "installation of a spectacular display" leading to a "delirious impression" of the mass invocation of the past leading to "a strange and obliterating glaciation" portraying what is in fact a historicised national present (Bommes & Wright 1982:264). What this tack suggests we need to discern is the active political agency in manufacturing the past or 'inventing traditions' (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1987).

A parallel could be the situation in Zimbabwe. Since the revolution, the racist denigration of African pasts in colonial histories has been replaced by an equally mythologised and monumental interpretation of a pre-white 'golden age', suggesting, instead, that the whites destroyed some pre-colonial black essence. What was once a strategic tool in the liberation struggle now justifies ethnic violence in independent Zimbabwe based on who is the spiritual 'inheritor' of a pre-colonial essence. Both histories align power with an exclusive identity secured on a relation to the past (Kaarsholm 1989). The construction of the past is a real and exclusionary political process as can also be seen in Cambodia where Pol Pot used the ruins of Angkor Wat to suggest a glorious national history that could be resumed and relived. As part of this the remains of field systems around the ruins were taken as proof of a highly organised, complex society that

"Many [South African] historians and teachers believe the only solution is to scrap existing textbooks and draw up a new syllabus. What they are anxious to avoid, however, is swapping one set of politically motivated myths for another set more acceptable to the country's new rulers." Ellis, Sunday Times 1992.

'The concept of a Zulu uprising was used by Afrikaners to portray blacks as inherently violent people who needed to be rescued by white civilisation.' Ellis Sunday Times 1992

could be sustained indigenously - all of which were highly prized goals for the Khmer Rouge regime (Barnett 1990). Original myths can be recycled through academic accounts, as with 'the idea of African custom and tradition [which] arose mainly as a means to hallow official histories or, better, official's history. Our early consensual models of African kingship or chieftancy were handed down to us by colonial officials who wanted to establish both political alliances with the then lords of the land and the legitimacy of their own rule' (Lonsdale 1989:132). This was in effect a denial of history that elaborated and essentialised elements of indigenous power structures depending on the ways that they intersected with the needs of the colonisers (Lonsdale 1989; Chakrabarty 1992).

Rituals Made for Old Englande.

The preceding account of invented traditions could leave us with the impression that it is all 'their' problem, in strange and irrational lands, unlike in the United Kingdom where such myths would be quickly debunked. I want to bring this back home to show this ideology forming a mythical interpretation of Western history. The example that falls most easily to hand is that of the Royal family. The rituals of Royalty are also a very effective invented tradition both within the UK and in other times and places (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1989). To many people calling the rituals of the British monarchy an invented tradition would in itself appear ludicrous if not scandalous. Picking up on the earlier ideas of the past providing stability in a changing world many would see the monarchy as the archetypal 'anchor' for the country, the cement that holds the nation together and so forth. In fact it may be possible that the content of the rituals is of very little importance - in the senses that the rituals are almost totally symbolic in the political arena and very few people actually understand what they are symbolising. In fact in empirical work Billig came to the conclusion that the royal family and its rituals acted as a sign of pastness and continuity:

"It is possible for a collectivity to have as its object of commemoration the past itself, rather than a specific past event. What is recalled is not an event whether genuinely historical or mythical but the feeling that the collectivity possesses a history".

Billig (1990:62).

The sense of the tradition is of a fixed and static past, rather than seeing history as process and change (cf. Lowenthal 1989c). Let me take an example of this fixing of the past - Guy Fawkes and bonfire night.

Up and down the country there are bonfires burning Guy Fawkes in effigy. Now my point is not to suggest that these actually represent some deep structure or memory of ancient solstice rite. Rather I want to suggest that they act as an excuse for a public and

shared ritual - shared not just with others around a single fire but shared because we know 'everyone' else up and down the country is doing the same as we are. Just as watching a royal wedding or coronation served as an occasion when the nation came together and shared in a dispersed event (Dayan & Katz 1985). Likewise we can draw out that the meanings of this ritual have changed over time; being emphasised under the early Stuarts - with state led prayers, used by anti-Stuart Puritans in the Civil war to rally the anti-Catholic cause, used by lower orders as a license to appropriate timber or money for the bonfire, the effigy has often been any contemporary bogeyman, and then curtailed by the Victorians due to the disorder and license it occasioned (Cressy 1992). The ritual itself has an unstable history which has been submerged.

The submerging of these instabilities is precisely the point at which heritage emerges from history according to most commentators - in history's mythification. We are left with a fetishised spectacle of the result of changes rather than a sense of ongoing change. The past we see is not only reified but presented as complete. The meaning of these rituals is above all a contemporary fabrication.

We can take the great ritual of a princely wedding and see that dates back only to the then Duke of York and Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon between the wars. While most other 'ancient traditions' go back only as far as Victoria (Cannadine 1990:3). Most heirlooms were made more grandiose to befit the new scale of pageantry, and as a child I can remember, after all the effort of learning monarchs back to Alfred the Great, the disappointment in the Tower of London to find that, if not Victorian, virtually all the heirlooms were post-civil war. If Victoria worked to create a grander public monarchy, the image the Windsors developed in the middle of the century was the ultimate family of middle England probity. We can look to the 1960s when monarchical popularity fell till even Prince Phillip pondered life as a museum piece. The monarchy was relaunched purposively by people who manufactured anew the magic of monarchy (Pearson 1986). The BBC was invited in to see royalty as human beings for the first time in the Seventies with *Royal Family* and subsequently the recent adulatory *Elizabeth R* and fawning ITN interviews with minor royals. New rituals were designed for television (such as the investiture of Prince Charles at Caernarfon) and the Royalty as soap opera was launched. The soap opera relies not on the interest in the British monarchy *per se* but the interest in it as entertainment, it is not the revelation that behind the pomp Diana is human, it is not finding the Empress has no clothes (though this seems to be a literal prurient fascination) but rather that she only has clothes (Cannadine 1990:9).

The latest round of arguments over the betrayal of the sound family of George and

Elizabeth by the low quality of current 'young royals' reeks of this mythification - the soap opera was manufactured, as was the age of bourgeois morality and philandering princes are not aberrations. But the anguish over the 'annus horribilis' also reflects a fear that articulates with the ideas I have been advancing about the index of decline:

"In the case of Britain itself, it is distressingly clear that the royal family has thrived in recent years as the all-purpose antidote to international decline, economic decay and social unrest. As the circumstances of British life become more dreary, the pomp of the monarchy becomes all the more magical. But in addition, it is held to bolster Britain's battered self-esteem overseas, where it can also be presented as a unique national possession, one of the few remaining assets for which the country is genuinely the envy and cynosure of the world."

Cannadine (1990:9).⁸

It seems banal but apposite to point out that this special possession defines nationality in terms of being rather than doing. It further, suggests importance of an audience, not necessarily 'us' but (we believe) admiring others who consecrate 'our Heritage' (Billig 1993). Equally this thing, our heritage, is a glossing over the sudden transformation of the European dynasty of Saxe Coburg Gothe

into the quintessentially English Windsors.

Equally it seems strange that pop-psychology explanations of heritage and the fascination of the past for others (principally North Americans) focus on 'our' 'abundant' history in an 'old country', to use Wright's phrase, as oppose to the New World, when most of the royal rituals and artefacts of this ancient island race appear to be about the same age as the statue of liberty.

'what does it mean to be English?... it means being descended from invaders or neighbours who diluted whatever national blood there was. Even the Queen... owes less to King Alfred than to his Bavarian torte-burning equivalent... the English are.. model Europeans, racially integrated with the 12 beyond the wildest stipulations of the Maastricht treaty.' Faulks Guardian 1992.

The analysis thus begins to turn to specific rituals that the public witness and which need to be witnessed and thus make the spectators necessary components and participants of the rituals (cf. Dayan & Katz 1985). Heritage, as seen by most commentators, is not solely about some discourses that appropriate, use, bastardise or mythify history - to take a few of the implications of the work discussed above - but about the way they create objects for public attention. In the next section I want to draw out the way commentators see these discourses as instantiated within the life of society through these specific sites.

8. For the moment I shall allow to stand Cannadine's rather imperious assumption of a vantage point that allows him to speak for everyone else in the country in saying the royalty are an antidote to an unarguable process of decline and are accepted as an opiate by the misled masses. All these propositions will come under considerable pressure later in my account.

Time Machines and Dominant Memories.

Intended Objects of Academia.

In this section I attend to accounts of the installation of heritage as specific sites in the 'publicly imagined past' (Blatti 1987:7). This is not a specifically imaginary past but one which is constructed through a complex variety of sites which are at one and the same time both material and symbolic. They are what has been termed sites for 'mythic communication' where people speak with the collective and the abstract discourses (Silverstone 1988, Bann 1988). The specific sites focused upon by most commentators are heritage centres and/or theme parks. In this section I will confine myself to dealing with these forms of places, though the definition is scarcely water tight and moves to include themed retail environments, self-proclaimed heritage centres, restored historic houses and some of the more avant garde museums. I should state from the outset that this is one of the most argued over areas with vast amounts of ink spilled over what is 'heritagised' (pejorative) what is 'our heritage' (approbatory), these are substantive categories in the debate over the public interpretation of the past not merely analytical constructs (cf. Bourdieu 1984). Given this it is perhaps not surprising that heritage is so widely discussed (and I would add invoked) but so rarely defined (Herbert 1989:1) and I see no prospect that either announcing its undefinability or constructing a typology of it (both somewhat paradoxically undertaken in the same chapter by Herbert) will prove useful. Rather I shall later argue that it is the idea of a category of 'heritage' that is problematic.

For this chapter though we can begin to spin out some of the threads that commentators see as definitive of heritage, how they construct it as an analytic object. It should be clear that I am arguing that heritage is not and cannot be treated as a self-evident empirical object that exists independently of the observer - be they an academic or anyone else. And that I do not believe that the way ahead is to treat heritage as an unproblematic entity to be counted and dissected (as per Prentice 1993a&b; Herbert et al 1989) in what might be called, after Marcuse (1963) mythifying exactitude. Its existence as an object is, in part, dependent on the gaze and recognition of commentators - however critical. What I shall do here is look at the sites identified by commentators as sites where history is presented to the public in formats that were not widely prevalent until the seventies to reconstruct a *post hoc* definition that seems to fit the literature, a working definition that I shall show creates a theoretical object by extensive citation.⁹ I shall then defer consideration of the built environment and the epiphenomena of heritage that occur outside such sites (Klinger 1989) to chapter 5, although I shall continue to try and show the porosity of this division

9. I have to acknowledge that the work of Patrick Wright (especially 1991) diverges from this object somewhat.

and the baggage of any visitor with the continued intrusion of such epiphenomena as snippets of TV programming and promotional material.

Time Travellers.

Such an extensive succession of qualifications and caveats is necessary since commentators produce such a uniform and limited definition of their object of study. Following from Hewison the focus is on sites that work to recreate a restored scene, through dioramas or reconstructed everyday environments using a multiplicity of often commonplace artefacts as opposed to a more traditional museum display of isolated and valuable objects.

'This more holistic approach to material culture, with the emphasis on the everyday objects and buildings usually in bucolic environments, aims to maintain a sense of place and identity through the display of material culture that remains just within living memory. However, in the majority of cases such displays have objects removed from their original localities and situated in artificial places to create a past that never existed'

(Walsh 1993).

Walsh highlights two facets. These are the focus on a past that is just out of reach yet also readily appreciated as their own by a large number of people, as being the experience of parents or grandparents, and the way recreations of earlier periods represent the experience of the common folk - installing everyman or everywoman as hero (Sorensen 1989:72).

'Enjoy family fun from the days of Grandma and Grandpa! See the 1920s come alive right before your eyes'

Secondly, such displays promise to recreate the past, to make the past live, or to enable the visitor to step back into it but many

commentators add the rider that such pasts are constructs that may be very 'realistic' while romanticising and fabricating the very reality they purport to re-present. I shall take each of these strands in turn, starting with the connection to the everyday and the just receding past.

Firstly, the attempt at understanding on the basis of everyday life provokes an identification with people in the past. In many ways this is no bad thing actually allowing some understandings to be developed about lives in the past. Yet too often this blurs over into a shared humanity which allows a too direct reading of our present psychology into those of past people. Thus Breen, in working as what he termed an 'historical anthropologist' in East Hampton, found that distant past and recent events begin to merge into a mythic past-time with many history activists and preservationists (Breen 1989:67). This is perhaps crucial operating both at the edge of living memory or still in at least reported memory. But it may be a more general effect of time-capsule presentations:

"They are all places out of time - anyway, out of *this* time. They are visits to times past. They allow us to play, for a time, in another time. In order to do this, some of them, rather worryingly to some of us, begin to play with *time*. death and decay are, it seems, denied. Strangely and paradoxically in the context of institutions nominally preoccupied with the passage of time, these phenomena are not allowed to occur. This denial of the realities of time, this artificial omission of any interval between then and now leads to the ready assumption, indeed the implication, that then and now are very similar, and that *we* and *they* are, except for a few superficial differences, similar also."

Sorensen (1989:65).

Delaney (1992:141) parallels such forms of temporal manipulation to Foucault's idea of heterotopia (1986:16), where the permeation of forms of space is also a process of heterochronism which, while celebrating a diversity of times also works at the abolition of different times.

The example Foucault uses is, revealingly, that of tourism to enter another culture entirely 'to get away from' our own time and experience another time in totality which simultaneously mixes different times and abolishes them into a liminal now (Cohen 1989a; Shields 1989). Now let us be clear that regardless of these implications this is a major step beyond the absence of the popular or ordinary found in so many 'traditional' museums in a field where up until recently the 'pristine technology' of industry and the logic of the technostucture was all that could be shown (Alfrey & Putnam 1992; Buchanan 1989), relegating ways of working and conditions of use to the sidelines. Meanwhile to show the home at all is a major innovation although still so much is shown in terms of domestic products rather than tools for a feminised and unpaid labour-force (Porter 1988).

So we can access a version of the people's past but one premised on a supposed and constant shared humanity, especially pronounced when dealing with the recent past, which allows new the observer to be positioned in new ways:

'Beamish ... works on the ground of popular memory, and restyles it. In evoking past ways of life of which the visitor is likely to have had either direct, or through parents and grandparents, indirect knowledge and experience the overwhelming effect is one of easy-going at homeness and familiarity. At the same time though what one is at home with has, so to speak, been shifted elsewhere through the specific political and ideological

With painstaking attention to detail, the colliery buildings are alive once more with the familiar sights, sounds and smells of a now past era. Journey back in time with u and experience the unique character and culture of the Rhondda, as seen through th eyes of three generations of one 'typical' mining family.

Open the Door to the Dark Ages .. A Living Village

associations which are lent to these remembered pasts."

Bennett (1988b:73-4).

A similar fear of a sliding past being apparently realistic yet at one and the same time misleading can be found in Hewison when he writes of how the promises to bring people back to life ring hollow:

'Bring these people back to life for £1.20'

"But you can't bring people back to life, and you can't go back in time. The past is unknowable. All you can do is imagine what it was like. But the realism of so many heritage displays in fact serves to block the potential individual act of imagination. In the case of displays of the recent past, it erases individual memories and substitutes a simulacrum - a perfect copy of an original that never existed."

Hewison (1991b:25).

Hewison goes on to add that these sites resemble less the past but rather each other in a competitive market - that they institute what is a 'realistic' version of the past. So the past that is both empathetic yet just out of reach colludes with the creation of a realistic effect.

Realism and the Dominant Memory.

The realistic effect operates on the basis of the museum as time machine or time capsule (Lumley 1988; Anderson 1984; Sorensen 1989; Yamaguchi 1990). This idea will keep recurring throughout this work in the discussion of the varying ways museums represent time in terms of their spatial arrangement. Here the aspect commented on most often is the way that museums try to create a separate realm of the past, so that visitors do not experience the sense of time passing but rather that of time stood still and reanimated in terms of "a re-entry into a vanished circumstance when, for a brief moment, the in-the-round 'real' physical, audible and (especially popular) smellable realities of a distant 'then' become a present and convincing 'now' " (Sorensen 1989:61). All the elements put together are precisely as Walsh notes out of place by reconstructing whole environments out of materials from other localities or periods so that Beamish reconstructs an imaginary site that is somewhere but actually nowhere in the north east (Walsh 1993; West 1988) while presenting a typical northern community of the turn of the

See!! Smell!!! Speak!! So Real you'll believe you are there!

Stepping back through the gates of ... is like stepping back nearly 100 years in Australian History.

century.¹⁰ What this concretisation adds to is a creation of an 'elsewhere' in the sense that Shields speaks of the West Edmonton Mall creating pseudo-places that are simulacra of other representations of places (Shields 1989; Delaney 1992; Hopkins 1990). Furthermore one can follow this to suggest that an imagined community of the past (West 1988) is creating a spatialisation of the past where social meanings are scripted onto and infuse various locations (Shields 1992).

Moreover, what is produced is not just a matter of a typical site but a typification, a wild ideal type of the historical geography of the region. In fact we can add that the emphasis on an unchanging regional spirit, as narrated by a 'received pronunciation' commentator subordinates local imaginative cartographies to the vocabulary and vision of the hegemonic classes (West 1988; Bennett 1988b). What is left is a 'people without politics', a regional people, framed in terms of a picturesque vision from the powerful so they are represented in the massively idealised forms that 'stalk the imagination of the middle-classes' (Bennett 1988:64). This is materially enabled by a variant on both the pastoral themes developed earlier and the aesthetic themes mentioned by Horne above so that:

"[E]ven if there is an attempt to show the past as somehow a different place, the rhetoric of 'The Way We Were' offers a nostalgic return to that place, a compensation for loss, and a denial of the very real anxieties, difficulties and dangers that the inhabitants of that historic place actually felt. In the last 20 years we have somehow managed to pacify the Industrial Revolution and the very real struggles it involved so that it now sits comfortably within the wider pastoral myth of England's green and pleasant land."

Hewison (1991b:25).

The presentation of industrial life is 'ironically reconstitutes a sense of the industrial through an idealisation of organic ruralism.' (Bennett 1988b:69), or what West terms a 'countryside of the mind' (West 1988). Such analyses highlight the political implications of what Walsh (1993) later called 'bucolic interpretations' or what Schlereth (1978) termed the 'peaceable kingdoms' of recreated environments. How can an accurate sense of the shock and turmoil of industrialisation be presented by a quiet Severn valley that is more reminiscent of a park than a factory? What is too often infusing these sites is a sense of the industrial revolution without much 'revolution', few winners and above all no losers (Alfrey & Putnam 1992). And this ideological reconstruction of history is found encoded in these sites as a dominant memory. Both West and Bennett (and the early Wright) read heritage as battle grounds in Gramsci's war of position (Gramsci 1971):

"The 'reality' .. produced actively disorganised, and thus rendered illegitimate, any alternative account of what the experience of work adds up

¹⁰ A similar reconstruction and relocation plays a part in re-creating the Manor studied in chapter XI

to. Up to a point I felt silenced by it, and in the absence of anything else, felt drawn to identify with the tools, the noise and the smell. But isn't this what the dominant memory always does? A museum like this with its professional-managerial assumptions provides a very partial framework for personal experience, and one that constantly threatens to compromise those visitors who want to sustain their own distinctive and opposed perspectives to the exploitation of waged work."

West (1988:58).

It is difficult to argue with this logic of the concrete that presents reality as it was in an unarguable form (Lefebvre 1992). Opposition sounds

The visitor to is in a world as near to the reality of almost two centuries ago as it is possible to be.

not only like sacrilege against a treasured past but downright silly. As Norkunas frames it '[i]deological control in the present is maintained by control over the past, a control exercised through the "obviousness" of its assumptions' (1993:30). Thus Fowler (1989:62) is left feeling marginalised as a 'crusty old professor' for being the one to protest that although heritage events and recreations may appear realistic they represent an eclectic empiricism and temporal discontinuity and thus form a spurious but authentic looking past. Indeed, partly he fears the temporal flexibility of places that use artefacts of many periods in a reconstruction of one, that 'antique' things to give them the patina of age, that use sepia photos to recreate the impression a 'real' past that stands not linked to the present in some narrative but as a radically separate alternative (Samuel 1992; Norkunas 1993:27) or instead peel away the layers and evidence of time's passage to recreate a pristine past-time.

At this point it may be apparent that one of the problems in dealing with these issues in the abstract (and for heritage institutions defending themselves) is the way both sides of binary oppositions are thrown at them - they either show a shared humanity or a radically different time with no sense of causal flow. Both will be critiqued by variously positioned commentators as inappropriate in various circumstances. So let me here suspend this debate until chapter X when I will deploy empirical materials to begin to address the issues raised here in terms of living history. For now I wish to keep looking at the wider political situation in which heritage is positioned. So at this point I shall turn to the wider discourse which heritage supports and aids through these installations.

Manufacturing the Past and Post-Industrialism.

New Pasts in Re-newed Spaces.

At this point I want to discuss how the preservation of the industrial past works as a signifier of wider social processes, and indeed helps legitimate and sustain them. As such I return to draw out the themes that ran through the early sections of this chapter about heritage being a symptom of decline and try another take on this theme. Broadly, by looking at the intersection of heritage and enterprise, as Corner & Harvey (1991) put it, two discourses very much bound together in the right wing's rhetoric of regeneration, semantically connecting the past with economic progress and the rise of new economic formations (op.cit.:45). Such a rhetoric directly contradicts the idea of a lost past - instead suggesting its recapture. As such it is a revisioning of the role of the past as one providing inspiration and guidance - as where the 'entrepreneurial heritage' of British commerce is lauded, in terms of the success of figures such as Clive Sinclair.¹¹ Nor is it an innocent appropriation of the past, where it is used to justify green and pleasant environments for the managerial classes, the budding entrepreneurs to whom industry must move if it is to be successful, and the message to get on your bike for the other sections of society who can be discarded as industry moves.

It is on this point that we come closer again to theories about decline. What heritage is about is a reinterpretation of the past, what enterprise suggests is a re-novation, and this in turn slips into re-newal.

Thinking further about who is valued in society now, we can see the power of gentrified areas of cities, that create residential spaces through the conversion of former working areas to residences for the middle classes as with the residential development of the Bryant and May match

Gloucester Docks is undergoing a gentle transformation, turning historical warehouses into exciting new uses. Melding old with new and blending conservation with innovation to create a changed atmosphere and environment. At the heart of the Docks is Merchants Quay, an exciting new shopping pavilion with shops and restaurants to suit all tastes.

factory (Wright 1991; Smithers 1992; Schwarz 1991). In this sense much of the history of the area can be removed, the complex layering of the landscape can be obliterated in the name of restoring it and commemorating the historic. Often it is not even the historic that is celebrated merely the fact of having a history - which is celebrated by removing many of the scars and signs of the passage of time. The accumulated accretions and overwritings of the past are re-newed, that is new meanings and interpretations are inscribed on the area. Bennett (1988b) characterised this as producing a 'shiny new past' that obliterates many of the historic associations of the area serving less as a commemoration than an 'institutionalised forgetfulness' or erasure of the past (cf. Woodward 1993).

¹¹ However, this appeal to an entrepreneurial tradition is itself a nostalgic fixation since the electronics industry is a global business with a global assembly line and is dominated by multi-nationals; suddenly the fixation with the small individual entrepreneur appears not only a doubtful reading of the roots of Victorian national success (omitting as it does the huge role of the warfare state throughout the period ; Edgerton 1991) but as a strangely atavistic and possibly misguided approach on the threshold of the twenty-first century (McNeil 1991).

It is an erasure which works to transform an area of manufacturing into one of services; an industrial landscape into a 'post-industrial' landscape; a landscape of work into one of leisure (cf. Norkunas 1993:50-1). Such a vision may actively legitimate these processes by suggesting that industry is to be consigned to the dustbin of history, and only fit for museums (Wallace 1987). The industrial use of such areas is literally suggested to be historic, the industries to be part of history. That we have museums for industry suggests in itself that the society is post-industrial and now capable of reflecting on the practices of earlier eras. On the one hand such museums often still remain rooted in technological accounts of what might be caricatured as big men and big machines written from a managerial perspective (Alfrey & Putnam 1992; Buchanan 1987; Porter 1989; West 1988). The message sold is progress; 'progress is our most important product' according to one industrial sponsor of the Epcot centre where Wallace argues we all move inexorably into the corporate future (Wallace 1989). Nor is Wallace's choice of Epcot and Disneyland as remote from issues about museums as it may at first seem. The connection of museums and Epcot occurs directly in the present where George Macdonald, the director of the Canadian Museum of Civilisation, has embraced 'Disney world' as a model for museums in the global village (Macdonald & Alford 1992; Macdonald 1991). Delaney suggests that the CMC now replicates this very sense of progress in Epcot, but in terms of a westward expansion interpreted from a single ideological vantage point in the Canadian nation's progress (Delaney 1992:144).

Political Economies of the Past.

Indeed, it will become clear that not only are such celebratory tones normal but that divergence from it may well displease both patrons and influential sectors of the clientele (Ames 1992; Azoulay 1994; Lane 1993:615; see chapter III). Even where more critical sources are brought in, for instance the use of oral history sources to allow the social relations around the preserved artefacts to be explained the net result may well still be to confirm the historic/obsolete status of that industry precisely by encoding it as historic, as commemorated, as the subject of reminiscence and separated from contemporary life (cf. Crang 1994b).

'The presentation of the industrial heritage has become a celebration of an escaped and completed past. The industrial experience as served up at Beamish and Ironbridge serves not only to beautify an often terrifying past, but also to promote its relegation into a more distant past.'

Walsh (1992:100)

In part such a temporal distancing is achieved by ignoring processes of spatial distancing. The processes of capital flight, the so-called New International Division of

Labour, or indeed the 'global assembly line' or 'global shift' are profoundly spatial processes. But what the industrial museum does is to transpose this into a temporal dynamic that suggests these industries died rather than left, using the inexorability of hindsight to render such a demise natural as though these industries had been surpassed or superseded (Wallace 1987, cf. 1981, 1989).

Big Pit closed as a working colliery in 1980, exactly 100 years after it first produced coal. .. The pit is now a museum where visitors can go underground and discover how miners have worked and lived over the last 200 years ... [An underground tour] You will be kitted out with a safety helmet, cap lamp and self-rescuer jacket just like a working miner.. Ex-miners will be your guides and their explanations and anecdotes will bring your trip to life.

Such a temporal fix in the ideology of the eighties obviously meshes with the rhetoric of post-industrialism, but it also has its own undercurrent of decline. What we have is a situation where instead of creating wealth by manufacturing things, we manufacture the past.

'The services of the heritage industry are expected to replace the manufacturing facilities we have lost; they must compensate for that loss of industrial power by turning factories into museums and becoming as it were ghosts in the machine, the phantom of the operative. It is one of the bitterest ironies of the eighties that people have found recreation in paying to watch other people pretend to work.'

Hewison (1991b:23)

The result is all too often a reliance on low paid service sector labour (Worpole 1991). In fact, for all the market rhetoric, most of the major industrial heritage projects have relied on large-scale public sector subventions in the form of work programmes which provided low paid labour that decreased unemployment figures temporarily by helping build museums to the industries whose departure did not help improve long term job prospects - let alone financial aid from councils and preservation grants so that up to 43% of income could be from the state (Hewison 1991; Johnson & Thomas 1992). The contradictory position of staging past poverty using cheap labour brought about by present poverty is neatly encapsulated when West talks of a "museum town" rather than a factory one (1988:53). Ironbridge Gorge Museum is, he suggests, a "history making colony" where the needs of niche marketed tourists triumphs over general social provision, with the "training programmes" as key props in run down areas that are to be revitalised, meaning that modern low pay exploitation is used to conceal current dereliction (Hewison 1989:20). The version of the past produced hides exploitation in the past as well as the present (West 1988:60).

The form of analysis of this portrayal of the past is important. It remains the hallmark of writers such as Bennett (1988a & b) and Wright (1985, 1991) in attempting to understand the concrete workings of a new Right hegemony. Here is a strategic refusal in not being satisfied with ideology. Rather there has always been a wish to maintain the connection to material practices and to remain closely engaged with the social and political situation of the 'historical apparatus' rather than follow a more continental brand of discourse analysts who are seen as often being:

"inattentive to the conditions of production of discourse, and this has encouraged a kind of poetics of the archive which treats discourses as if they were written on the wind."

Bommes & Wright (1982:256).

However, before accepting this style of analysis, it is worth thinking of Morris' (1992) attack on Harvey's (1989) analysis of postmodernity. Her commentary has profound echoes when she asserts this genre relies on two mirrors, the bad one of the simulacra sellers and the good one of theory that reveals the truth behind the smoke-screen. She then goes on to point out that it treats postmodernity as composed of images not practices. This is also true in the 'heritage debate' (which Harvey uses as an example) and it fits with Hewison, who certainly tries to demystify the "image", Wright, with his rewriting of politics into an area he sees as purposively depoliticised, and the position of the analysts such as Wallace and Bennett. So at this point I want to recover some of the practices involved in creating heritages¹², in arguing over which version of the past should be portrayed.

Amenity Politics and Repossessing the Past.

Against such a portrait of decline, of heritage as symptom and of Heritage as hegemonic installation runs the theme of what might be loosely called amenity politics. We have already begun to come across this sort of politics with the mention of a fear for the past becoming a fear of the past (Ashworth & Tunbridge 1990:1). By putting it like that I risked, or should that be, lured, the reader into assuming that fear for the past was a stage in historical consciousness that has now been surpassed. In fact in it was never a universal phenomenon but always spatially and socially situated and it remains a part of the field that produces Heritage. That said it certainly does appear to rise to prominence in the sixties and seventies and has not remained invariant. What the commentators on Heritage suggest is that it has become more and more (ie too) successful and has disturbed the

12. It will become clear that by using the word creating I do not wish to privilege the physical creation and production of sites over the creation of interpretations from them. As will be seen, to do so would beg the question of how real the former can be if it is never realised.

balance of progress and preservation. Certainly there has been a change from early defeats such as the Victorian society's attempt to preserve Euston Arch or Crickle Down, or the sense of the imminent danger of the country house (Wright 1985) to the creation of a ministry of national heritage in the UK or the zoning of over 500 historic town districts in the US by the mid 1980s (Ashworth & Tunbridge 1990:11).

The flow of amenity politics is somewhat more complicated than this scenario suggests, however. For a start, treating heritage preservation and the groups that work for it as a single entity in time and (social and physical) space, as is done when Heritage is read as a symptom, does enormous violence to the diversity of positions and interests they represent. It acknowledges the increasing quantity of concern for the past but not its increasing diversity. As such it seems to almost replicate the situation of legislation that throughout Europe was written to protect what was assumed to be a fixed and finite 'heritage' (Ashworth & Tunbridge 1990:18). This fixed heritage was also a loaded heritage structured around huge absences, as we have seen above. But it was these very absences that called out to groups who sought to amend and correct them and institute their own versions of the past. These are the 'passionate minorities' (Ashworth & Tunbridge 1990:45) who want to insert their preferred readings, or preferred monuments into the canonical heritage. In treating Heritage as a symptom all these constituencies struggling to change the categories within heritage presentations are conflated with the expansion of the meta-category 'Heritage' (cf. Davies 1988).

Each struggle over versions of the past has its own situation and history. Heritage commentators have focused on the use of preservation to secure government subsidies for stately homes from 1945 onwards (Hewison 1987; Wright 1985), or on the pastoral campaigns that encode a specific landscape as historic and demand preservation in terms of the National Trust (Wright 1985, 1991; but see Matless 1990). Quite correctly the subtexts of such campaigns at defining heritage are pointed out. For instance, Wright (1985, 1991) has suggested that the campaign for stately homes also represented a coded attack on the values of the welfare state as opposing the 'greyness' of bureaucratic, technocratic nationalisation to the values and ethos of individual care and concern. In terms of the country house this meant the attempt to uphold a model of a paternalist past by such as Lees-Milne and the use of "heritage" as a trump card to indict the Left as vandals and iconoclasts (Wright 1991, 1989).

'The rising cult of the country house may indeed have kept the odd duke off the dole, but this is scarcely a serious objection. The more significant point .. is that the restoration of the country house as a post-war national symbol has been predicated on the failure of the 'institutional' endeavour not just of

the public museum but of the entire welfare state.

Wright (1991:67).¹³

Wright (1991) begins to draw the parallel to 'new times' with heritage seen as part of the Thatcher political project. The attack on the welfare state ties in again to embourgeoisement, an ostensible key to Tory populism, and an increasing privatisation, especially of consumption, reflecting through into the cultural sphere. But it was not just a case of condemning heritage as fantasy its roots again can be unearthed in popular protest and desire. Welfarism was portrayed as a failed model:-

"The tower block as tombstone not just of council housing, but of the entire welfare state."

Wright (1991:92)¹⁴.

The poor are as disillusioned as the affluent shoppers demanding the spectacle of postmodern malls, or the inward looking pseudo-heritage housing developments (1991:185). What amenity politics is part of then is a struggle to reterritorialise and gain some control over the world. It is also open to reappropriation by the right as it posits some lost community, some lost essence as we saw earlier and more simply as it is involved in simple political struggle where tower blocks may be lousy machines for living but are great for discrediting your opponents (Wright 1991:93).

Such opposition to the forces of abstract rationality and capital need not always be reactionary though (Horkheimer 1993, Marcuse 1963). An assertion of the virtues of the particular can indeed be an anti-hegemonic act. So while the initial preservation of country houses as aesthetic masterpieces and treasure-houses was indeed associated with conservative (in all senses) policies, those behind such ideas could only look with horror as the interest and demand for social history begins to force open the back regions. The mystique and aura of the country house would, according to their arch propagandist Lees-Milne, be destroyed (Wright 1991:118). We can move wider to look at the whole context of urban preservation, where analysts have aptly pointed out the processes of creative destruction that remake the city and the basis of modernity in an overturning of the old (be that tradition or fixed capital) (Harvey 1985). The reason I raise this splendidly ambivalent term is that what is creative to some will almost undoubtedly appear as wanton destruction to others.

¹³ The affair of Crickel Down can be introduced in this context, as a background to the public discourse that is framed around the "heritage and danger" polarity (Wright 1991:67). Heritage is seen as a rallying symbol for the Right, as a medium for its conflict explicitly with the state - the fight against the 'men from the ministry' where the state's bureaucratic bungling is opposed to a localist, and individualist ethic, in the preservation of the Down.

¹⁴ Wright is sensitive to the distortions this involves, the ironies of Keith Joseph and his inheritance of the Bovis fortune, as well as McAlpine, the Tory party treasurer, who both had connections to and had profited from what they now decried.

*'Does your town have municipal amnesia?'*¹⁵

Whole movements have been formed to instate the local as significant and to insist on the preservation of local groups' heritages as well as those for tourists and the elite.

Indeed the study of one such movement, local and especially oral history groups, forms the substantive focus of chapter VIII.

This is meant to convey an approach that is geared again to changes in society, but one that operates less at the level of collective

psychology and more at the level of sociology. If one tries to account for the postmodern challenge, this is very much in the model of a sociology of postmodernity rather than a postmodern sociology (Bauman 1992:30). The argument is simple, and broadly democratic, that with rising income new groups aspire to the perceived accoutrements of privilege. At first these rising fractions would be accommodated within broadly the same structures, the "Great and Good" dominating a received pronunciation history - where the ordering is firmly that of the establishment. By the late 70s this order is seen as breaking down, as more and more people demand access. The

whole terms of the debate begin to shift.

The outline schema for this process is explicitly described in an interview with Wright, as a movement from the people with a rising interest in amenity politics,

and traditional forms (perhaps in response to modern anxieties), to the deflection and "nationalisation of those meanings, by various institutions and ideologues, and finally the re-presentation of all this in the "curatorial field", that is the mode of display" (Wright 1989:48).

Such a schema certainly inspired me in planning the angles to be explored in this thesis - the process of presentation and a sensitivity to the passionate minorities of amenity politics. Yet although it takes up and reworks the themes of reaction to the welfare state and a politics that responded oppositionally to the late 80s private wealth and public squalor of the 2/3 1/3 society, it needs further complication. For popular resistance, in the forms of passionate minorities, is not just directed at the state but also at the historical apparatus itself. For instance, metal detectors express their defiance of "heritage" totalitarianism. Again they do so as a defiance of the bureaucratic state - and in their refusal

'Gastown became Old Vancouver and began a slow slide into economic decline. In danger of being torn down, Gastown finally rallied community support for a sparkling renewal and on February 2, 1971, the provincial government designated Gastown a Heritage area and the old buildings were saved from the wrecker.'

'Take a trip down memory lane, bring in your wartime photographs and stories for display.. visit our informal interview room and record your past on video for future generations to learn.'

¹⁵ A question posed in a local history advocacy book by Robertson (1973).

to accept the place assigned to them as "loyal yokels" or to acknowledge archaeologists' monopoly on the buried past (Wright 1991:144). Indeed they even resist the allegedly benign gatekeepers of social history by rejecting attempts to focus on contextual ways of life and focusing specifically on an object-driven interpretation of history with what is almost a cult of authenticity and displays that resemble nothing so much as cabinets of curiosities (contra the suggestions in chapter iv). Such tensions between the popular, non-professional elements of heritage interpretation and the legitimate keepers will recur throughout the thesis and inspired and underpins much of chapter XI that discusses the situation of historical re-enactors. However, I now want to consider the way that heritage is commodified and sold in itself.

Packaged Pasts and Place Marketing.

Places for Sale.

Let us be aware that even as we may decry the reliance of depressed areas on heritage attractions to boost tourist revenues, at the same time they may well be the only alternative for regional and local politicians (Fretter 1993). Not only may there be a genuine desire to commemorate industries that played a major role in the life of communities but it may also be one of the few viable economic strategies. This does perhaps need to be situated in a wider context for instance in terms of ideas of 'place competition' (Harvey 1989) in the competitive world of tourism:-

"In a world where differences are being erased, the commodification of a place is about creating distinct place identities in the eyes of global tourists. Even the most disadvantaged places, heritage, or the simulacrum, of heritage can be mobilised to gain competitive advantage in the race between places... underlining the importance of place-making in placeless times, the heightened importance of distinction in a world where differences are being effaced."

Robins (1991c:38).

The direct employment effect of a large heritage site is still not really significant in a regional economy. For instance, Beamish has been estimated to have increased gross regional employment by 195 jobs but after adjusting for the number of those that were moved within the region the net figure falls to 61 jobs (Johnson & Thomas 1992:59). So despite large flows of visitors, to what is the most popular attraction in the North East, the overall employment effect is minuscule. So why is heritage and place marketing deemed so important? Firstly, we do need to look beyond bounded sites and realise that place marketing is also bound into to local regeneration strategies designed to create a favourable

impression of the region. The target for this re-imaging can vary.

Sometimes it is an attempt to make a deprived area appear a promising place for affluent workers to live, where they will find amenities they value (Bianchini 1993; McNeil 1991) in attempts to promote 'regeneration' or gentrification, and by attracting the workers to attract the employers that want these highly skilled employees, and which bring income into the area. I do not propose to go into the problems of this trickle-down approach here

- even though it begs questions of who regeneration is for, who benefits and how various forms of social power operate. Other purposes behind heritage regeneration may well be a hope that a positive image will attract inward investors who are not tied by the location of the workforce, that it may prove attractive as an environment for key investors who have to decide between many areas bidding for the jobs they may bring. It is again beyond the scope of this thesis to do justice to these topics and the economics of what may well be a zero-sum game.

However, it is pertinent here to look at the way the encoding of history as a marketable heritage is achieved. The earlier accounts by commentators of how heritage is a pastiche and a simulacra are important here. They are important not just as analytic constructs but as part of the very process of creating Heritage, where reflexive educated people use ideas of

the past as simulacra and hyper-reality which "argue to the benefit of every property developer who can read" (Wright 1991:167). These ideas of changing society act as a license to the processes of heritagization. In such a system radical critiques, premised on revealing an oppositional real history, are merely reabsorbed and re-presented as part of the diversity of the system; Zukin's analysis of gentrified loft living finding its way into promotional literature for gentrifiers (Wright 1991:185). For in heritage the oppositional movements to the dominant order can now be safely packaged and portrayed by that order. Gane follows Baudrillard, in noting how yesterday's vital conflicts can be atavistically revived as the

'Brewer's Quay is the centrepiece of a unique scheme to regenerate the historic part of old Weymouth. The development includes a new quayside paving scheme, parking provision, road improvements, the residential development of Malhouses and a new 'village' style housing development. The grand and imposing buildings have been converted into a mixed development including the TIMEWALK - an exciting visitor attraction and more than 20 000 sq. feet of speciality shopping... Leisure: a retail essential.

The museum vividly illustrates the changes in woodworking methods and machinery as well as the evolution of mining lamps .. but that's not all. This great family day out includes Gunsmoke cowboy town. Take a daring train ride thorough the northern territory

spectacle of conflict. The society of the spectacle does not want no opinions but a multiplicity of them to feed the spectacle (Gane 1991:78). No one monumental version of the past will do but such plurality that opposition loses its effective edge by becoming only one choice among many.

Places in Fiction/ Fictive Places.

We have to connect this presentation of history as a multiplicity of competing goods with both the commodification of history and that of places. In an analysis about heritage theme parks this tends to move one rapidly to the derogatory term "Disneyfication", and if we take an analysis that does this explicitly we find the positioning of consumers as passive collectors of logos that are articulated by the itinerary in the theme park (Willis 1991:57). So instead I will turn at this point to the conversion of landscapes into literary or historical (or sometimes an amalgam of the two) themed areas. This can be seen connecting to the idea of selling places in a world which is increasingly dominated by abstract and mobile forces while at the same time commodifying the urge to mark out local particularities that I illustrated in the section of amenity politics above.

'The homogenizing effects of world markets imply a certain placelessness. In Monterey, souvenir sea otter salt and pepper shakers that were made in Japan, clothing stores selling dresses from India, and restaurants contribute to the idea that the tourist has reached a destination that is not rooted in a particular locale. Although the tourism industry uses historical descriptions in its brochures as a tool to market Monterey as unique, upon arrival it is the commodity from 'Somewhere Else' that the tourist encounters.'

Norkunas (1993:16)

Such a comment on commodification and the pastiche of place identifiers suggests that not only the past is packaged but that the way it is understood is also altered. Let us firstly see that this in part as an attack on what is seen as trivialisation of the past (Fowler 1989, 1992). Moreover, it involves changing appropriations that led Hewison earlier to talk of history being bent. So when we have a literary portrayal of an area, even a critical one it can be taken up and used to sell that place:

"When I wrote *Tortilla Flat*, for instance, the Monterey Chamber of Commerce issued a statement that it was a damned lie and no such place or people ever existed. Later, they began running buses to the place they thought it might be."

Steinbeck cited in Norkunas (1993:58).

Such a fabrication and reshaping of the past is precisely the point that many commentators wish to highlight and if possible stop. However, it is not as simple as denouncing this

process since the process has no fixed original truth. The past is always a fabrication. Within the marketing of places this can occur where Catherine Cookson portrays a vision of the history of the north east in her novels, novels which both attract tourists to the area and then form a lens through which they interpret that area's history (Pocock 1993; Osborne 1988; Game 1992; Squire 1994, 1993, 1990, 1988).

"Many famous fictionalised landscapes transcend the reality they were once based upon, and in the process art and reality tend to merge in quite literal ways. Literature depicts the physical properties of reality; in turn reality is gradually transformed to correspond to its image in art. The physical site becomes an attraction because it offers an invitation to participate in the fictionalized image."

Norkunas (1993:59).

We may then have a fusing of a fictional portrait of the history of an area (eg Cookson), or with the passage of time the description in fiction may become historic (eg Hardy, Steinbeck, Wordsworth). In either way, the point I wish to emphasise is that spaces are then constructed around these imaginary geographies, a topic I shall expand on in chapter V, but also that the way these areas are portrayed has enormous resonances with fictional works - both literary in these examples and televisual as well if we look at, say, the selling of 'Herriott country'. The mode of understanding the past is calling out for the same sort of competences, skills and demanding the same sorts of positionalities. History presentations are leaning on fiction (see chapter IV). Such thoughts prompted me to appeal to the media studies in order to try and understand this kind of interpretation.

Nostalgia for a non-nostalgic time: the beginnings of a critique.

Heritage as Text.

To round off this review of critical commentary on Heritage as a phenomenon I want to take up this reference to media studies and use it both to suggest the directions I felt impelled to take in response to the existing literature and the limitations it reveals in this literature. Firstly, it must be apparent how strong a parallel there is in many commentaries with the paradigm of textual analysis. The world is metaphoricised into a text that can be read by the analyst. But both in the material world and in looking at discourses, most commentators have taken very much a model that allows the text to position its reader - what Wright (1989) somewhat unfairly calls the film studies model. Moreover they then attribute an unfailing significance to the meanings that can be found 'written' through heritage.

"The only problem with this wretched scenario is that it has been devised by people who are compulsive readers of texts. They pay close attention to their semiotic surroundings and believe that others do too."

Mellor (1991:114).

Now I must hasten to say that I do believe there are discourses encoded in Heritage but Mellor's caution is a timely one about the dangers of assuming they are that simple to read off. And this is where media studies provides both an inspiration to much work on heritage and at the same a critique of it. What heritage commentators have done is to start from treating heritage sites as texts which the analyst reads which, like the landscape as text approach in general, sets up the commentators as a privileged interpreter (cf. Gregory 1994). What Meaghan Morris (1988d) terms the "cruising grammarians" of cultural studies, who create an assumed reading of what an environment means and, if they are not careful and I do not think they have been with heritage, such analyses can end up treating textual metaphors, assumptions about verbal communication and these specific ways of experiencing the situation as universal (cf. Thrift 1991).

Such a textualisation of Heritage is made even more deleterious by the heavy reliance on textual sources. These sources are the ones I have tried to provide examples of irrupting into my commentary on the commentators culled from labels and promotional literature and popular commentaries. I wanted to show a first cut that illustrates how these materials support the line of many commentators *and* how these texts invoke what commentators hope will be critical or pejorative terms to market heritage sites. But then I want to take a second cut where the agreement of these two strands highlights a strategic conflation. That is that although most commentators say they are privileging bounded heritage sites as an object of study (eg. Prentice 1993, Herbert et al 1990, Walsh 1993) in fact they can sway towards treating these sites as not merely coeval with textual discourses but as the same as texts that circulate about the sites. I agree that 'epiphenomena' (Klinger 1991) outside sites are vitally important in contributing to how the visitor understands and makes sense of them. But it needs specification of both how and whose expectations are moulded. Throughout this chapter there have been mentions of all of these issues but no systematic exploration of them, begging such questions as; how do sites relate to other sites in a Heritage 'discourse', how do bounded sites relate to other conveyors of the past in contemporary society, how does the past get represented in different circumstances and how then do different users make sense of all this?

"A consideration of the recent literature on museums and the "heritage debate" shows that most analysis has taken the form of critical reviews of the messages inherent in contemporary museum presentations, with little concern being demonstrated for the experience of those who actually visit

them. We do not therefore know how people use museums and whether they assimilate the messages, intended or unintended, that museums give out."

Merriman (1989:149).

Sites of Symbolic Production.

It is in response to these sorts of questions that this thesis is organised. In particular in response to the loadings that these 'text-based' approaches have created in the critical literature. Loadings that lead to a relatively static interpretation that fails to allow for the activity of the observer. Thus Heritage turns into an exemplar of postmodern representations of the past and analyses then slip into a:

"focus on the experience of postmodernism to the neglect of the practices of postmodernism. It would seem important to distinguish between the commentator's experience of postmodernism and specific experiences of groups and class fractions who use postmodern cultural goods in particular cultural practices."

Featherstone (1991:57).

Such attentiveness to the practices that animate heritage has been distinctly lacking so far in the critical debate which treat heritage as being about the production of places rather than places of production. If we think back to Hewison's ideas about heritage and decline we keep seeing an objectivised language of "images" and "walls" on to which the misleading version of the past is projected and which then imprison us (1987). Such a lack of attention to the diversity of uses perhaps echoes in Hewison's title 'the heritage industry' redolent as it is of the 'culture industry' decried by Adorno (1973) and open to a similar criticism for interpreting culture as a top down process - what Wright calls the 'dupe theory' where the 'culture of the nation is only so much wool' to be pulled over people's eyes (1985).

In criticising heritage as misleading versions of history through the use of textual metaphors we risk fetishising the enunciated, without looking at the actual processes and circumstances of enunciation. What too often happens is that instead the very structures of the account being criticised are replicated inside the critical commentary. For instance in seeking to be rid of a misleading history Hewison implies the need for a true history in its place - the replacement of one monolithic version of the past with another. Moreover, to argue such cases Hewison (1987:99) ends up declaring Liverpool to be the first nineteenth century industrial city to be made redundant by the twentieth century - a neat polemical point but one that makes agents out of cities and reified periods. Likewise there is a tendency to treat heritage as a substantive entity and single object and many other categories become both monumental and reified as pseudo-psychological accounts take

ideas of the individual psyche and apply them to an alleged 'national' consciousness in a sort of voodoo psychoanalysis. Hewison's implication that once upon a time Britain made History but now it makes Heritage (Hewison 1991a:174-5, or 1989:21 identical) may be rhetorically effective but it leaves significant worries in terms of the categories he is marching around. It is also a replication of the very nostalgia he decries, a tale of loss and decline.¹⁶

The only actual agents described in both his and Wright's (1985) account are the "Great and Good", who implement their version of culture on a post war Britain. Now it is true that one of Hewison's aims is to explode any myth of populist interpreters in the new marketplace (1991a:174, 1989:17,19) but the subtext of his initial work seemed to be concerned in the end not with multiple uses but solely with modernist 'high culture' (Davies 1988). Wright has a much stronger social history perspective which makes the absence of popular movements even more problematic. But so many analysts end up with Heritage as a theoretical object that has become a single hugely reified actor, both cause and symptom. One of the beauties of Hewison's work is this deliberate homogenisation of diverse elements into a single object in order to try and grasp a grand scale of process. But we must ask whether this position can be sustained, whether there is not some way of positing both a Unity and a multiplicity. To use the pseudo-Heideggerian term, what is repressed is the "thatness" of heritage sites. In prosaic terms it is a commonplace that museums categorise but what must be suppressed is the internal categorisation of the museum field (Jordanova 1989:23).

Moreover, collections such as Uzzell's (1989) *Heritage: the visitor experience* are remarkable for failing to include any significant attempts to see what visitors themselves make of the field. It is only in Wright's later work (1991) that he really attends to how people make sense of sites and Heritage - although even here he ends up speaking for them as he attempts to construct the diversity of their experiences. My suspicion of this is redoubled by my agreement with him in many of his opinions. It is the reading of a white, male, leftist academic. My thesis then tries to deal with the multiplicity of the phenomena grouped as Heritage while retaining the critical edge of grouping them.

¹⁶ The nearest to a causal explanation, not using reified categories, becomes a story about the adoption of effete bourgeois culture and a nostalgic pastoral desire among the elite that inhibits the entrepreneurial drive of the country (1987:142). Thus the final disease of which heritage is carrier and symptom is lifted from Wiener's (1982) suggestion about a lack of dynamism among the elite leading to economic decline.

The Social Field of Heritage Activities.

Introduction:

In the last chapter I attempted to lay out the salient critiques and analyses made about a 'heritage phenomena' in Britain. In this chapter I shall attempt to put this debate into a sociological context along three axes. The first such axis consists of the social composition of heritage forms and consumers in order to establish what sort of situation is being spoken about by commentators. The second axis consists of the relation of these people to the forms of experience and knowledge presented in museums and heritage experiences - a situation where popular, middlebrow and legitimate knowledges and enjoyments circulate in a dance of the mutually misrecognized. The third axis consists of considerations of how this situation is refracted, re-constituted and replayed in the critical literature.¹

These axes are not discrete since, for instance, I shall suggest substantial homologies between both the form of institution and its place in a field of taste and the clientele and how they see their position within a field of taste. In so doing it will be clear that this chapter owes a large debt both directly to the work of Pierre Bourdieu (particularly 1991a, 1984, Bourdieu & Darbel 1990) and also, indirectly, through the survey of attitudes to heritage in the UK, by Nick Merriman (1991, 1989a, 1989b), which is also heavily influenced by the same readings. Visitor studies can otherwise become a relatively arid field with a mixture of psychological-behaviourism dominating studies of what visitors actually do (often entirely divorced from wider social issues such as who is visiting eg Falk et al 1985; McManus 1994, 1988, 1987, 1986) and straight empiricist, 'bums-on-seats' studies of visiting trends (eg Prentice 1992; Herbert et al 1989). Both these forms, I suggest, mythify Heritage since, as Adorno (1993, 1973) argues, such approaches only serve to reinscribe as 'facts' what they set out to measure.

To begin with, though, I shall focus on how the forms of representing the past are imbued with social status and how their status impacts on visitors' interpretations of the past. This section will be framed through ideas of oppositional readings and

¹ I have tried to separate and place this academic refraction towards the end of the chapter for convenience although, as I shall argue, in actuality it is permanently intertwined with the operation of the field.

dominant ideologies, as one prominent way ideas about the past have been ordered. I shall argue that this dualism over-simplifies, but does provide a starting point for analysis of the contemporary situation.

Legitimate Knowledges

Legitimate Culture.

The historic roots of museums of Britain (covered in more detail in the next chapter) align them closely with the interests of the dominant elite. They were established to proclaim the virtues of the values of that elite to society. In this subsection I will try to explore both how this origin positions museums in relation to those possessing different values and how it impacts on who visits the institutions. Let us be clear, the nineteenth century investment in building municipal and national museums was undertaken as a mission to bring civilising values to the masses (Bohrer 1994; Hooper-Greenhill 1991; Merriman 1991). As such museums did not portray ~~out~~ a set of values rather they sought to promulgate *the* set of values, the single interpretation of the past.²

Museums set themselves up as appealing to all, preaching a universal credo. Yet, I argue, operated to divide society and support a legitimate culture in part by transforming a struggle over history into a technical failure of some groups to understand (Bourdieu & Darbel 1990). This division operates through 'a universalisation of the definition of competence not accompanied by a universalisation of the conditions of acquisition' of such competence (Bourdieu 1984:368). We have to be clear then that we are not dealing with a 'dominant ideology thesis' of 'false consciousness' propagated in museums since the majority do not have the competences to respond in kind with such 'messages'. The museum may be a divisive institution because of whom it excludes from its audience, not whom it indoctrinates. As Wallace (1981) observed of American 'national' history campaigns, they appeared to have the strongest ideological effect not on the immigrant they were aimed at but on the people carrying them out.

The museums presented an incontestable interpretation in terms of the dominant

² To promulgate these values they employed a whole series of techniques, explored in the next chapter, to render their world view unchallengeable - presenting closed versions of the past, disembedded and professionalised versions rendered incontestable (Walsh 1992).

vocabulary. Contestatory interpretations would be devalued and ruled inadmissible. The lack of a language of contest produced an excluded language that did not engage with the interpretations offered but rather side-stepped them; in short, mutually incommensurable discourses. Perhaps this can begin to explain what puzzled Fowler (1992:115) where calling something a museum, outside the academy and dominant groups, can very often be a term of denigration.

We can begin to see the divisiveness of the institutions in crude social terms if we look to almost any study of the composition of visitors to museums. These studies almost all³ show a regular pattern: a skewed distribution of visitors toward younger, better educated and higher social classes.⁴ For instance, Hood (1983) identifies that 14% of the population make half the visits in her study area. In the UK Merriman (1991) found that 17% of the population go to museums three or more times per year with an additional 37% going once or twice per year, sharing characteristics of better than average education and income. Meanwhile the other 46% of the population⁵ shared characteristics of being less well educated, poorer and visited one once in the last 4 years (14%), over five years ago (14%) or never (18%) (Merriman 1991:49). In a wide-ranging survey of published attendance figures Prentice (1989) concludes that in the UK some 60-80% of visitors could be classed as white-collar or professional - in terms of being in the Registrar General's categories ABC1.⁶ We can perhaps sense the cynical power of Kelly's (1987:16) conclusion from all this; 'It is as though that strata of society which once owned the precious objects now residing in museums continued to visit them.'

We have to find a rationale for this phenomenon. Prentice (1993) suggests a double effect based on income elasticity - tourism expands more rapidly than income the higher that income is rises, and thus the regressive distribution of growth over the last 15 years has fostered the growth of tourism in a particular group. Bourdieu & Darbel (1990) suggest that part of the effect in 1960s Europe was the high connectivity of

3 The exception I know of is the National Railway Museum in York (Prentice 1989).

4 For example, Bourdieu & Darbel (1990) on European art museums in the 60s; Hood (1983) on a United States mid-western state museum; Merriman (1991) on a postal survey of the UK; Herbert (1989) particularly on Cadw ('Welsh Heritage') properties.

5 This is an under-estimate, as Merriman found it difficult to correct a systematic bias in his postal survey where visitors to museums were more likely to reply to the questionnaire than non-visitors.

6 We can draw parallels with the Canadian experience where a government survey found visiting museums to be a mass activity, but only by extending the boundary of what is called a museum. Otherwise the report showed that 20% of Canada's population went to an art museum, while natural history or cultural museums fared little better at 21.9% (Macdonald 1992).

museum visiting with tourist practices acting as a double weighting - those who had the most money could be tourists and thus have the opportunity to engage in what they anyway enjoyed doing. However, in contemporary Britain it is clear that there are divergences from the profile of tourists visiting Wales and those visiting historic monuments, with the visitors again tending to be professional or 'intermediate' classes and showing a propensity to visit not just one site but several (Thomas 1989). Hood (1983) provides one way forward by posing an alternative question, why people are staying away. She finds an answer in two very different value systems. Visitors valued an experience that was 'worthwhile' and taught them something new, whereas non-visitors valued socialisation and shared enjoyment much higher. As such they found museums to be places that stopped social behaviours they enjoyed. As Davey (1992:19) put it in a special issue of *Architectural Review*, the classic museum was an impressive structure that served to distance the place from the everyday, to make it a 'sacred' space which at the same time served to humiliate the visitors as much as celebrate its contents.

I am not happy suggesting some immanent structure of needs or architectural effect though. Instead, I want to add in the social dimension of to whom and why these patterns occur. These different value systems are not randomly distributed. We have a pattern of heritage which is part of high culture, where for many visitors museums, theatre and opera are all part of a piece as 'things they do' and are all described relatively positively (Merriman 1991). Whereas non-visitors used 'tomb-like' as description of museums (Merriman 1989b:160) with the deathly image partly a hangover of Victorian ideas of municipal Temples of Culture instilling truth and right moral thinking (Duncan 1991, 1982; Duncan & Wallach 1979).

I want to position the refusal of the Legitimate culture as not just being about the iconography of the building but also the rites and rituals within. As Duncan (1991) puts it, they are truly like Temples as sacred spaces that transform people and things within (cf. Turner 1982). Dimaggio (1991) suggests this operation of museums, particularly in regard to art but also the display sanctified objects, serves to divide society:

'The museum's aim was to permit the direct, unmediated perception of the work of art by the visitor, whom he [Gilman] called the 'disciple'. Only the slimmest interpretive materials were tolerated lest they contaminate the relationship between the perceiver and the object. Such

a view privileged the perceptions of the educated public and the upper classes who could acquire through socialisation or training what the museum was forbidden to impart.'

Dimaggio (1991:270).

As Vergo (1989:49) notes, the idea that art speaks for itself ignored how remarkably taciturn it was for a large section of the population. Rather more acidly, Bourdieu & Darbel (1990:2) again draw us back to the idea of a temple - suggesting the parallel between bourgeois art and religion when contact should be unmediated and open only to the Elect. In either case the competences and entry rules cannot be learnt 'piecemeal'. Rather the whole has to be grasped to be sure of understanding any given part in the 'sacred universe of legitimate culture' (ibid.:53).

However, Legitimate culture is accepted as valuable even by people who do not know what is in it. Thus, a larger proportion of the British population will say archaeology is valuable than those claiming to know what it does, and even among these opinions of what it involves vary considerably (Merriman 1991). Such situations suggest that the complicity of parts of these excluded publics helps reinforce and sustain the system (Bourdieu 1991a). The 'scarcity' of legitimate symbolic capital creates a permanent queue for admission, and as groups aspire to climb the social hierarchy so the increasing demand for admission reaffirms the importance of the institutions and increases the prestige of dominant groups. Thus under the guise of communicating and spreading a universal truth, Bauman (1990) suggests institutions such as museums have served to divide society. Their standing invitation to partake of the one culture displayed their tolerance while turning applicants into 'objects of examination and assessment by the dominant group, who held complete control over the meaning of their conduct. Whatever they did, and whatever meaning they intended to invest in their actions, they *a priori* reaffirmed the controlling capacity of the dominant group. Their clamouring for admission automatically reinforced the latter's claim to dominance' (Bauman 1990:159;cf. Zolberg 1994).

Thus the focus of this chapter is not on what universal values were advanced but on whose interests were served in advancing them (Bourdieu 1991a). We can see then that structuring this idea of the action of institutionalised history is not a crude idea of presenting a false past, some distorting mirror that misleads the nation. Rather the focus is on the enormous investment of dominant fractions in creating their own legitimate culture through the naturalisation of arbitrary, or at least partial, rules as

universals. More than just a 'ruling ideology' museums form one way of reproducing a dominant group:

'It is not sufficient to characterise ideology as a nebulous and ungrounded corpus of false-knowledge pre-suppositions whose chimeric qualities mask the effects and mechanisms of the working of the social formation. Such a corpus not only has itself to be produced, but also invested with its own legitimacy and transmitted over time from generation to generation if it is to provide the legitimating creed in which society can reproduce its socio-economic relations.'

Shelton (1990:80).

If museums are seen as institutions reproducing an elite it is no wonder their visitors do not appear to display nostalgic yearnings for the past. In fact, they have generally negative opinions of the past as opposed to the present (Merriman 1991:49). Museum visiting in this conception of 'ideology' becomes a forward-looking activity - forward-looking in terms of status maintenance or enhancement.

The reader would be right however to point out the heavy binary division of society upon which this theorisation relies. I shall modify this division in a later section of this chapter, but I am using it since it employs the 'substantive categories' (Bourdieu 1984) in circulation in the field. The binary is not just my figure but also part of the way Legitimate culture portrays the field it works within.⁷ It defines itself in contrast to an illegitimate field of the popular, a field whose forms are inverted forms of the dominant (Stallybrass & White 1986). The dangers appear when such a division is either replicated in analysis (eg Chambers 1986; cf. Morris 1988a), or, alternatively, where this division is ignored entirely and those critical of established, official histories advance more universals to replace them - forgetting that the development of new ideas of history takes place as part of the game within the field of legitimate culture as a sanctioned dynamic of the field (Bourdieu 1980), where the Young Turks challenge the old order in the name of a 'popular' idea that is taken up and then comes to serve as the new orthodoxy.

For instance, the new social history, which seeks to include the experience of ordinary

7. Although it has to be noted that the most vigorous theorisations of 'legitimate culture' come from France where it could be argued that Legitimate knowledge and status are more closely defined. I am thinking of the castigation of 'Royal Science' by Deleuze and Guattari (1987) and Pierre Bourdieu's (1988a) *Homo Academicus*. Though in the translated edition of the latter he cautions against anglophone readers trying to dismiss it as the foibles of the 'sub-species' *homo academicus gallicus*.

people in histories, is a radical departure. Yet much remains problematic when ordinary people's accounts are institutionalised and appropriated by a Legitimate academic discourse (Portelli 1981b; Geiger 1993). In this sense a proponent of radical change in museums has to confront the paradox that 'our aim of a populist museum practice, informed by notions of cultural enfranchisement for 'ordinary' people, is confounded by our very position within the process of cultural production' (Jenkinson 1989:143). It is at this point that the binary model of legitimate and popular reveals its inherent flaws. The position of these radical historians is that of a dominated fraction of the dominant class whose quasi-alienation leads them to challenge the hierarchy (Bourdieu 1984:366).⁸

Illegitimate Forms.

It is, by definition, harder to find the traces and marks of illegitimate or popular forms of recollecting the past. Chambers (1986) suggests that we may well consider these to be the forms that do not show up on the contemplative gaze of official culture, occurring in a different register - as forms that are not acknowledged or recognised by legitimate institutions. This is not the same as saying that popular memories and histories do not occur. What it does suggest is that the conventional means used by legitimate purveyors of the past do not serve well to hold and represent these forms - they silence them and exclude them. Analyses, even critical ones, of representations of the past too often follow the lineaments of legitimate institutions (eg Bazin 1967; Hooper-Greenhill 1991; Prentice 1992) without giving thought to the construction of the field of legitimate and illegitimate forms. Such accounts thereby replicate the exclusion of different forms (de Certeau 1986, 1985c, 1984). For instance, as was noted earlier a Canadian survey found 'cultural museums' to be a mass activity by broadening the definition to include forms not usually sanctioned (Macdonald 1992). However, this is not to appeal for a populist celebration or recovery of the 'illegitimised' without considering that our knowledge of them is heavily filtered, indeed that they are often made readable through the contours of hegemonic perceptions. The popular is inscribed as the absence at the heart of these perceptions, and readings of dominant representations making them into what Pred (1989) calls 'repress-entations'.

So we have a two level process of constructing the popular as the repressed and as the

⁸ Which is also my position, and, as will become clear, my positionality fits Bourdieu's model rather too closely for my liking of his work to be coincidental.

constitutive Other, firstly, in terms of what pasts are taken up and recorded, and, secondly, how the forms of recording also work to exclude or delegitimise divergent histories. In later chapters much of the argument will focus around the dialectic of dominant and dominated histories. The dominated and aberrant strategies of reading portrayals of the past will be grounded in this understanding of their relation to dominant versions. I will not be attempting to find the 'popular' as some category of resistance against which dominant versions of history can be dashed. Rather we must always acknowledge the inscription of the marks of that popular - as a constitutive absence - in the dominant and the difficulty of ever extracting all the marks of the dominant from the popular.⁹

The fixing, the freezing and the rendering visible of the subaltern is part of its constitution as Other. It is named and categorised as part of the operative structure of the field. In the case of heritage we can look to the pejorative use of the term 'Disneyfied'. It is of little use advancing the argument about how standards of aesthetic portrayal, or the popular success of Disney, as Macdonald tries to (1992, Macdonald and Alford 1988). In many ways it is precisely the popularity that seems to provoke condemnation rather than, say, Wallace's (1987) reasoned critique of the version of the past given there. If we look at the following withering account of 'heritage' events and versions of the past we can see embedded in it an implicit other version of a legitimate past:

'The familiar recipe for concocting 'dayout heritage' is again apparent: first catch your history (old house, castle, etc.), chuck in a bit of pastness (jousts, bygones, etc.) with whatever else is to hand (crafts, tubeslide, etc.), stir to remove integrity and allow eclecticism to surface, and then simmer until tacky, with froth on top.'

Fowler (1992:67).

Here is laid out in clear terms what is not legitimate, an argument about distance and distaste of what is not proper. The contrast drawn is with a Legitimate altruistic study of the past - a 'history for history's sake' replicating all the positions that allowed 'art for art's sake' (Bourdieu 1988). Such study is positioned as poorly paid¹⁰, therefore

⁹ In this it is accepted that the 'subalterns situation [is] not an exotic to be saved but re-inscribed over and over again within practices of locale and location' (Bondi & Domosh 1992:199) as it is defined and circumscribed by dominant practices.

¹⁰ This is said without any sense of irony that I can see about relatively high status academics being called poor and thus virtuous, while denigrating 'heritage' feelies whose workers are often on six month contracts or paid as little as £7 000 per year at some establishments. The difference appears to be one chooses to forsake income to study the past

marked by ascetic devotion, where enjoyment is a sublimated pleasure of acquiring knowledge through individual study and reflection.¹¹ Such critiques of 'vulgarity' cannot be made that innocently of course, replaying as it does the education against entertainment debate that, as we shall see in the next chapter, has been running for over a hundred years, a debate which has been reprised in the museum field of late as a sort of 'scholarship versus showbiz' debate (Myerson 1994). It also replays the division by class of reasons for visiting historic sites where higher status visitors talk about the specifics of the site's historic and educational features, while lower status visitors specify recreation as the main attraction (Thomas 1989:84). Merriman (1991, 1989a&b) makes a related suggestion that lower status involvement increases with falling institutional formality - and again with the distaste for obvious enjoyment expressed by commentators and the distaste, in turn, of those thus despised for the immensely formalised atmosphere of traditional museums.

Following up the idea of sanctified and illicit forms we find that Merriman (1991:107, 1989) found 4% of respondents in his survey belonged to a 'historical or preservation society' - formal activities associated with high status in his analysis. Yet some 7% were treasure-hunters or metal detectorists and were the only historical interest grouping where the unemployed were over-represented. There was friction throughout the eighties between detectorists and archaeologists. Wright (1991) describes the self-image of these people as heirs of the poachers. They see themselves as contesting the legitimacy and power of the historic apparatus to control the past, to 'nationalise it' (at least in the sense of government monopoly), and as striking back for popular interpretation

I wish, then, to conclude this sub-section by reiterating the interrelation of status and forms of history. Merriman (1991, 1989a, 1989b) found that attitudes to the past varied consistently with social background and the form of history under question. The aversion to formal presentations may be seen in the preference for associational, recreational pasts (see below) often linked to heritage 'events' and unorthodox forms. Before though I give the impression of a war of mobility occurring over the forms of the past, I want to turn to a reading of the field of cultural production where groups

the other has to work on the past to get any income. As Hewison (1991b) says it is one of the great ironies that people now appear more willing to pay to see people [pretend to work than support productive industry.

11 The contrasts made with such ascetic work can be read in the director of the National Gallery's lament that 'the threat to scholarship comes from the assumption that the enterprise of exploring the past is, or can be, an easy one. It is related I think to the whole problem of a short attention span' in our society (quoted in Myerson 1994:19)..

are acquiescing, supporting and aspiring to be legitimate. I do this since, as we saw above, the guardians of official history are resisting 'Heritage' as much as radicalism.

A Divisive Institution.

In this section of the chapter I wish to elaborate on the over-simplified yet active binary distinctions outlined above. I want to unpack the investments in the new terms and forms of portraying the past in three sections. Firstly, I will explore what might be called an 'index of affluence', in a parody of the Hewison thesis, where I shall look at what might almost be seen as a process of embourgeoisement, by changing the rules under which people interpret heritage, that is changing the competences and practices used in interpretation. Secondly, I will look at how such shifts connect through to the responses of institutions and attempts to redefine and reinterpret the positions of changing rituals of museums visiting. Thirdly, I shall suggest how the explosion in heritage interest has created scope for new issues to be portrayed and new audiences to be reached.

Index of Affluence: Competences and performances.

One of the problems bedeviling analysis and discussion of Heritage phenomena is that the terms used refer to fixed categories, positions and ideas. As we have seen above, analytic terms are a widespread currency within the field of study itself. As such the very meaning of the terms is part of the dynamic under study. We cannot assume that the language of analysis is in some way set apart from the field studied. We must be aware that the terms and descriptions have a life within the field, that their meaning and power change as they are invested with new associations and connotations. It is, following Bourdieu, less the content of the categories that is the object of contest and more the principle that organises them into a hierarchy.

In particular I want to connect this to the idea of a 'New Visitor' advanced by authors such as Macdonald and Kelly. The New Visitor is broadly connected with the idea of a New Middle Class and more closely with the idea of New Cultural Intermediaries. For instance, Kelly (1987,1986) talks of their technical competence, and familiarity with the information society (cf. Macdonald 1992). In as much as the New Visitor is a recognition of the multiple uses made of museums by multiple publics, and of the changing demands of this clientele, it is also an attempt to allow curators to critique the

old structures. Thus Macdonald has argued, and gained notoriety, for the push to use new media and Disney-techniques while others have argued for a New Museology coming out of critical theory. But both are united in seeking to change the failings of traditional methods in order to reach new publics. The investments of the critics, their 'heresies' and orthodoxies will be covered in more detail later, but for now we must note how we cannot read these developments in the curatorial field as autonomous events. Curators are gaining advantages and appropriating new forces and publics within the field of institutional politics.

Kelly (1987) formulates the concept of a 'New Visitor Class' most rigidly where he speaks of the old visitor group of high status and assured membership of the legitimate culture who felt at home in the museum and wanted to be there. This group he contrasts with the new visitors who have more interest in acquiring the status of *having been* there. In Douglas & Isherwood's (1979) formulation the museum serves as an information good telling others within the new middle classes of the taste and discernment of the visitor. The work of Merriman helps bear this out where visitors were seen to have a positive attitude to the present that may well connect with the purpose of a visit being to affirm rising status.

'Contrary to those who might see museums and visiting heritage as a refuge for those with unfavourable views of present-day society, who are nostalgic for yesteryear, the survey shows that the more positive (ie favourable) one's views are of contemporary society, the more one is likely to visit museums. ... [M]useum visiting is to a large extent undertaken to demonstrate cultural affiliations in the present, although this does not preclude a genuine interest in the past.'

Merriman (1989a:158).

Macdonald (1992:166) tries to work this materialistic attitude into an understanding of visitors, dividing them into the colloquial categories of students, strollers and streakers. Suggesting that the attentive study, or visit for the purpose of studying one object or display may characterise the first, a general browse the second, while the last spend time there only to be able to say they have been there. However, this 'New Visitor' must be situated by focusing on the practices that constitute 'post-modernity' in this field and the interests that are contrary to those of old dominant groups which seek a revaluation of the field (Featherstone 1991). Yet these practices are a parasitic trading on the legitimacy of institutions, still showing a marked preference for the most widely

known and accredited museum (Kelly 1987).¹² Perhaps we can connect them with some specific ideas of upward mobility and self-improvement. It is apparent that the idea of the self-improvement ethic, fits rather poorly with ideas of legitimate culture as an unseen whole. It does fit with a particular petit bourgeois' position of self-improvement as analysed by Bourdieu (1984). So we have a clamour for admission, a sort of vampiric use of the old legitimate forms, and yet also a desire to acquire that cultural capital in ways previously unthought, in ways that threaten its previous value. Bourdieu appeals to the idea of the petit bourgeois investing in themselves - taking a stake in educational capital, seeking to acquire the trophies of the legitimate culture.¹³

We can thus embed Hood's (1983:54) analysis of expressed values with visitors valuing activities that are 'doing something worthwhile', an opportunity to learn and give a new experience; while non-visitors value people, participation and comfortable settings. The language of self-improvement, the idea of life as a task and an achievement permeates the ideas behind the category of New Visitors (cf. Strathern 1992a). Yet this suggestion of a trajectory must be restressed and reiterated more strongly. The field of representing the past is a dynamic of two histories, that of the field and that of the user, so there are trajectories of changes in the field, there are trajectories of various groups of users, and thus relative shifts in the meaning and valuation of any space in between.

One of the concepts I want to highlight to show ~~the~~ how important to this fluidity and mobility of the field is the idea of a middle-brow taste. I want to draw this in since it embodies both the idea of cultural intermediaries as legitimate simplifiers (Bourdieu 1985:326) and popularisers of high culture - and also, at the same time, the institution is something that after the act of simplification ceases to be what was sought after in the first place. A form is created that is a crossing point of all these trajectories.

The argument I am coming to is that what often matters is less the idea of Heritage forcing distorted ideas of the past onto an unsuspecting public and more who these institutions 'call to' - less a focus on the call than the ability to hear (Bourdieu &

12 In this social context I am uneasy with the more liberal tones sometimes suggesting we should welcome all this too whole-heartedly, found in Macdonald's (1992) embrace of Disney, 'people movers' and creating a cultural 'market place'.

13. As mentioned previously, I need to position myself here. Coming from a farming family with previously no higher educational investment, yet strongly pushed to invest in educational capital in my generation (six graduates; 3 oxford, one PhD and me) I have to confront the idea that this economy of (long) deferred gratification and conversion of economic to educational capital is closely aligned with what Bourdieu (1984) analyses as the position of the declining fraction of the old Petit bourgeoisie.

Darbel 1991). The strategies and segregations of the field respond and speak to a divided public. It is not just a two way division where non-visitors 'perceive museums to be formal, formidable places, inaccessible to them because they usually have had little preparation to read the "museum code" - places that involve restrictions on group social behaviour and on active participation' (Hood 1983:54). These are also aspirants who want different spaces and different pasts told. We can thus see some elements of Heritage as part of an attempt to latch onto what new visiting publics want (Silverstone 1990; Macdonald & Silverstone 1988) - educational opportunities, social opportunities to be seen consuming and/or a sacred space where people can feel the brush of the legitimate culture (Annis 1986; Macdonald 1990).

We can then compare this segregated sense of consumption with the structure of the institutions and the practices required in them. If we turn to an institution of high culture we see, for instance, the Pompidou Centre is deeply divided among uses despite being an institution set out to be a Utopian space where there are no coercive paths, few pointers or reference points, no ideal story of a visit and an ideal subject (the intended subject as it were not the most common user) who is able to wander and drift, lingering where they choose. It is the very opposite of segregation. Yet many visitors are uneasy with such an abundance of choice and lack of structure since it forces them to call upon internalised knowledges of what to do. Any failing can then only lead to feeling that they are themselves to blame for their 'incompetence'. As such 'the freedom of individual circulation supposedly guaranteed by the neutralization of references only serves to highlight a dependence on subjectively internalized criteria, which visitors possess in varying degrees ... the outward appearance of freedom ... is likely to give rise to aimless wandering which itself becomes transformed into anxiety; the capacity to drift is not so easy to acquire as one might think' (Heinich 1989:209).

I am trying to suggest that new forms of museum are part of a struggle or competition over the value of certain competences and the ability to display them. New museums may well then call upon different competences than those inscribed in the legitimate culture. However, I do not want this to be an easy call to 'popularise' the museum through heritage. We must be aware that while 'anti-populism' is a part of the stake in this field we are not talking about a wholesale shift. In fact, new forms and new topics can be part of a new economy of voyeuristic power/knowledge as where most (66% in 1981) of the visitors to Big Pit in Wales were from professional and managerial backgrounds, 16% were Telegraph readers (in 1985, Prentice 1993:18), a paper that

supported the government that has systematically shut down the Welsh mining industry. While these are new experiences and new pasts being told; while they are opening up a closed field, and creating new discourses; this is not to say they are then necessarily progressive institutions.

Competitive hierarchies.

I want to continue to add a sense of fluidity to give a version of heritage as an institution taken up and transformed in its uses. These are ritual spaces that work in terms of transformation, for the people going through them, for the objects within them, and for the visiting practices they valorise (Duncan 1991; Shields 1991; Tomas 1988; Turner 1982). The field as whole has been transformed and in a state of flux. Heritage institutions have had to take seriously the challenge to their right to define what is legitimate. Unlike the more heavy-handed moments in earlier sections we here have to see how people have challenged such definitional power.

To comprehend this field I cannot overstress how the field of heritage is composed of a field of institutions competing not just for visitors but also for status within the field. Even within traditional museums there is a hierarchy of legitimate cultures from the privileged point claimed by art to the ethnographic and industrial museums that are often a long way down the scale (Fleming 1992). As we saw with the metal detectors, this hierarchy is under assault from popular forms and the right-wing's insistence on a language of consumer sovereignty. This is a rhetoric of consumer voices and "the 'threat from the consumers' is a very real one for institutions which have historically taken for granted their right and ability to define their own relationships with their visitors" (Macdonald and Silverstone 1990:179).

We have to be aware that this assault conveys in it the seeds of emancipatory logics for the visitors and those portrayed, since it shifts the role of expert interpreters from that of final arbiters to translators of difference (Bauman 1991). This is not necessarily the result of popular struggle but is rather the effect of the very proliferation of institutions and experts about the past. Broadly speaking the inter-textual connections mean the museum must compete with other institutions that define meanings in different ways and which are both much more familiar to many sections of the public and can speak to them with much greater success:

'An economic and political imperative has already begun to transform the museum, and to transform it on the mass media's terms: the fragmentation of displays, the drawing on mass culture's own metaphors in gallery design, the premium placed on interactivity, the peopling of restored sites by actors in accents and costumes, displays of television drama costumes. All these testify to the increasing dominance of televisual and arcade culture.'

Silverstone (1988:141)

This is truly a field full of experts in new technologies, not just the visitors but also new managers. These new cultural intermediaries possess the new competences and practices to lead in these fields, to respond to the new demands and in their practices re-define the valued spaces of the field. These cultural accountants of capitalism, as Featherstone (1991¹⁴) terms them, are in a position to play at populism and capitalise on it. This is not quite as optimistic a stance as making the more populist argument that the field is tending to increase the status of the behaviours of the dominated. Instead it suggests that commentators and experts are making capital through what Bourdieu calls a 'strategy of condescension' (1991a). This is where, as Thompson puts it (in Bourdieu 1991a:19), 'By virtue of [in this case] his position he is able to negate symbolically the hierarchy without disrupting it' and take a profit from speaking the language of the dominated from the position of the dominant, a stylistic slumming. We therefore have to again check our optimism at the popular potential of the new forms of portraying the past.

'strategies of condescension .. allow one to push the denial of social definition to the limit while still being perceived through it. Strategies of condescension are those symbolic transgressions of limits which provide, at one and the same time, the benefits that result from conformity to a social definition and the benefits that result from transgression'.

Bourdieu (1991a:124).

These may be attempts to speak to the popular but they are also ways in which new fractions of dominant groups can advance their own position. As such they are a part of the game within the dominant group. I want to position players in the game to include both visitors and commentators since we can only grasp the dynamism of the field and the tactical importance of naming phenomena if we realise that 'the partial and partisan views of agents engaged in this game, and the individual or collective struggles through which they aim to impose these views, are part of the objective truth

14. Tomlinson (1990:21) suggests the originator of the phrase was Richard Johnson.

of this game, playing an active part in sustaining or transforming it, within the limits set by certain objective constraints' (Bourdieu 1988a:xiv).

Equally the process of appropriation and reuse suggests that we cannot in any naive way look for signs of resistance. It will be vital that when we come to look at practices in these fields we see that it is not enough to take up the idea of a dominant presentation of the past without looking at how that relation is transformed and reused. To this extent, later sections will develop de Certeau's (1984, 1985a) ideas on the importance of the use of things. However, whereas de Certeau has a somewhat monolithic conception of power (Frow 1992; Schirato 1991) that calls 'popular' anything that appears not to conform, I shall also try and keep a sensitivity to the way the popular can be appropriated by the dominant, the way the popular may adopt the guise of the dominant, may accept and revel in its own status as outcast or try to appeal to the Legitimate. I want to leave room for the crossings, passings, paradoxes and complexities of a 'middle-brow' not just some epic of 'the struggle'.¹⁵

New Pasts for New Constituencies.

So far in this section I have attempted to provide a picture of a field in constant motion and some social context as to why that motion might happen. In this section I want to briefly sketch some of the movements that will be important in later chapters. Firstly, I want to briefly point out the extension of some of the categories of what may legitimately be called heritage and then, secondly, suggest the importance of the forms of presentation before closing with a brief look at how this may affect attendance in an institution similar to the Manor in chapter X.

Although the development of specific forms of institution is the subject of the next chapter we must briefly acknowledge the way that certain forms such as the industrial and rural museum have been at the forefront of recent heritage expansion, the surge appears to date from the 60s onwards (Hewison 1987:91), with a third of industrial museums founded since 1970 (out of a total then of 464), and most rural museums since

¹⁵ Bourdieu puts the paradoxes involved in (re-)appropriation thus '[w]hen the dominated pursuit of distinction leads dominated speakers to assert what distinguishes them - that is the very thing in the name of which they are dominated and constituted as vulgar - according to a logic analogous to the kind that leads stigmatised groups to claim the stigma as the basis of their identity, should one talk of resistance? And when, conversely, they strive to shed that which marks them as vulgar, and to appropriate what would allow them to become assimilated, should one talk of submission?' (1991a:95)

1960. Such new forms do not merely add to the quantity of the past represented, or to the different pasts represented, but also crucially the forms of different pasts to be represented. The previous sections should have shown that form is a crucial part of the game. Equally what has been shown in previous sections is that this becomes part of a competitive struggle whereby professionals may well gain advantages through supporting, or championing, these new forms as part of their own game, while other fractions may ironically adopt or utilise popular forms (Davies 1988).

We are not then engaged in a hunt for a purely popular or purely 'corrupt' or faked historical consciousness. We have to ask questions such as why does Hewison (1987) pick on Wigan Pier or Beamish and present them as archetypal of a corrupting trend? As Wright (1989) points out these institutions are leaders in their field, in the sense of being rare and pioneering new forms of presentation. Hewison feared a tidal wave of, or at least a 'Gresham's Law with, 'dark ride' exhibitions. However, the 'dark rides' have failed to drive out every other form of presentation. Equally, whatever qualms critics may have about the modes of presentation, they do suggest ways of presenting social history, such as the labour process shown at Wigan Pier, to an audience that would otherwise see none of it (Urry 1990:112). It can be argued that a sense of history as 'experience', as an exciting tale or a series of events (re-)producing that excitement, is a distortion. But we have to take into account that excitement is resistant against the dry pedagogy of academe - the alternative with which most commentators seem happiest. So to reach new sections of the public excluded from legitimate culture it may well be necessary to appeal to illegitimate or illicit pleasures. Thus, a reading of Prentice's Isle of Man survey (1993) reveals that the category 'excitement', or its lack, is a crucial difference between members of historic preservation or interest groups and those outside them. The table below (table 1) indicates that this is a negative relation - it is not that those already committed to historic issues find them more interesting it is that the uncommitted find them more boring.

Merriman (1991:120) found that, even among frequent visitors, museums were rated second lowest, and among non-visitors museums were rated lowest, in terms of exciting and interesting ways to learn about history, behind visiting a site and a tour and TV viewing. Neil Cossons, the director of the Science Museum in Kensington, argues that the introduction of 'excitement' through new forms of pleasure cannot be divorced from the increase in 'historic' visitor numbers from 20 to 80 million over the last 25 years (Myerson 1994).

Table 1. *Excitement and History.*

	History is exciting	History is not exciting
Member	15%	20%
Non-member	15%	50%

source: Prentice (1993:165)

One reason for picking out the membership of historic interest groups in Table 1 is their deep involvement in the spread of 'heritage'. Thus, if industrial museums have bought a new history to the public they have also been linked clearly to the spread of volunteer groups who assist and record the history of industrial sites, buildings and equipment (Buchanan 1989). The industrial museum is itself quintessentially about taking what was for a long time consigned to the scrap-heap of history and commemorating it.¹⁶ It might be possible to look on them as presenting a sense of the creative destruction of capitalism, whereby what was modern is now obsolescent, where progress creates the scrap-heap (Alfrey & Putnam 1992:2; Norkunas 1993). Alternatively, the more likely presentational strategy is a Darwinian progressive taxonomy (Alfrey & Putnam 1992) of men and their machines queuing up in a triumphal procession into the corporate future (Crang 1994b; Wallace 1990). Presenting a story of technological achievement rather than social use, with an androcentric focus on male inventors not female workers or users (Anderson 1992; Melosh 1989; Porter 1988).¹⁷

Furthermore, we have to take the point that where these institutions will alter how they appeal to the public. What are the local alternatives to this sort of taking up and packaging of the past? Are we dealing with a tourist attraction that supersedes or competes with locals' understandings of the past? Was the whole area 'on the scrap-heap' due to capital flight? Are people glad of the jobs or resentful of this permanent reminder of what they have lost? The answers to all these questions vary from case to case, a fact commentators elide by homogenising the field. In any case the boundaries of what can be considered as heritage are blurred, producing an increasingly complex map of what constitutes the valued past.

If there are still sanctioned pasts more likely to obtain uncritical support then there are

16. Though as Wallace argues (1981, 1987) this also leads to the classing of industry as historical - see chapter 2.

17. Portraying domestic products invented by men, for instance, rather than domestic tools used by women.

also campaigns to inscribe various other repressed pasts. There are movements to instate the black past in Britain. There are museums of labour and social history as well as museums of film, childhood and so on, almost *ad infinitum*. That these exist is not the same as saying that they have replaced formerly dominant institutions but they do represent a dissident voice. It is a dissidence ignored when commentators simply throw their hands up in horror at the numbers of new sites and conflate quantity and quality. However, what we can find is that whatever grand theme or genre of institution it is a general trend that lower status groups tend to be more interested in object-centred and locally-focused issues. In Merriman's survey (1991:128), when asking people to rate the interest and importance to them of various sorts of history, he found a consistent shift with status. Higher status groups valued 'abstract' national and world history while lower status groups preferred the personal and local. Such a shift appeared another key factor in deciding whether to visit or not. When questioned in terms of 'relevance to daily life', - overall 25% said presentations were 'irrelevant', while among rare visitors the percentage rose to 38%, among non-visitors to 55%, while only 13% of regular visitors thought so and only 11% of frequent visitors (Merriman 1989a:156).¹⁸

What this also shows is the importance of understanding that visiting museums is not the sum of heritage, nor are 'heritage parks'. What we also need is a sense of the multiple ways people have of engaging with the past. For instance, Merriman (1989b:162) suggested the favourite sources of historic information were, in descending popularity, a visit to somewhere historic (20%), a tour (19%), a TV programme (16%), a historical book (13%), even a lecture (12%) with libraries and museums being favourite for only 7% and only just beating evening classes (6%). It is these competitive threads and different forms that institutions have been responding to. Those responding the fastest are often using the most criticised forms but they are often trying to contact previously untouched audiences. We can see these sorts of shifts in Table 2 below.

The table shows the trends among visitors to Audley End in South East England. I think it is an interesting example of the intersection of topic and style of presentation for a number of reasons. Firstly, Audley End is a stately home in the south east - a section of the past that is comparatively over-resourced (Walsh 1993). Secondly, as a stately home it would appear to be a history of the dominant. Thirdly, unlike many

¹⁸ This balance of interest *in situ* local histories is developed later (chapter VIII) in the context of oral and local histories where the professional becomes an enabler of local history (Binks 1989).

state-owned properties, it has both performed as well as the 'independent' sector and been innovative in its style of presentation over the period in the table. Finally, within the table we can see that as it introduced falconry, jousts, downstairs tours, civil war encampments and other techniques to portray lives and activities, its visitor profile has changed.¹⁹ However, the absolute changes in visitors show that such presentations do not necessarily deter elite groups. What they do is open up presentations to illicit enjoyments - open to high status groups now as a strategy of condescension or ironic 'post-modern' consumption (Featherstone 1991).

Table 2. *Changing Visitor Status at Audley End*

social class	percentage of visitors		absolute numbers in 000s		change (%)
	1984	1987	1984	1987	
AB	43%	31%	19	27	+43%
C1	24%	38%	10.5	33	+214%
C2	16%	20%	7	17.5	+148%
DE	16	11	7	9.5	+36%

source: Eastaugh & Weiss (1989:65)

Legitimate Knowledges and Acceptable Practices.

This section attempts to position the responses of various professional fractions as they struggle to interpret, understand, rationalise, control and gain from the changes in the field. Too often their remarks have been taken at face value as adequate depictions of the field of heritage. There has also been a regrettable tendency to look on the writings of commentators as accounts *about* the field rather than accounts that partly compose it. The first sub-section therefore begins to look at the way dramatic changes in institutions and presentations have altered the positions of many commentators. Then, the second section, reflects what commentators criticise most vehemently about these trends. The third subsection dwells on a few of the ways this has impacted on our critical understanding of what the 'heritage phenomenon' is.

Displaced Gatekeepers and Arbitrators.

At this point I hope to have established heritage as a dynamic field of practices - a series

¹⁹ Eastaugh & Weiss (1989:65) actually focus on the percentile shift among social groups which does show some broadening of appeal particularly to the skilled and semi-skilled. The absolute figures extrapolated from their material reveal how the attendance is still skewed towards higher status groups.

of tastes, status and informational strategies by producers and consumers. Or to use Massumi's (1992) more visceral terms, the object is composed out of multiple graspings by the observers. The object in critical studies has been very much an 'intended object' of the commentator, created by cutting and isolating certain practices and sites. Given this I have to ask why and with what effect is heritage constituted as a separate entity from the commentators. To use Pierre Bourdieu's (1988a) laboriously careful terminology, I want to objectify the effects of our objectifications.

What I suggest this separation allows in this case is firstly a detachment of the effects of the field on the commentator and of the commentator on the field. As such it obscures the stakes where various groups have an interest in defining what is the correct hierarchy. The different specialists in 'symbolic production' 'struggle over the monopoly of legitimate symbolic violence', that is impose (or even to inculcate) the arbitrary instruments of knowledge and expression; but instruments whose arbitrary nature is not realised as such. Thus the dominant class is a site of struggle over the hierarchy of principles of hierarchization (Bourdieu 1991a). This is not the same as decrying one side as 'paid men of the bourgeoisie' and dismissing their ideas. Rather it is to see the investments in creating such camps in order to deny their own position to advance universal arguments. The difficulty, as Bourdieu suggests (1980:261), is in not ending up reducing this situation to one of two equally false conclusions - that the arguments float free of the position or that they are valueless due to their position. The enunciated and the position of enunciation are never entirely separable (de Certeau 1988; Marin 1985).

The argument is important because I think we can see challenges going on in the heritage boom whereby new professional groups and social-fractions are trying to create an institution more responsive to their needs. There are attempts afoot to displace, or at least replace, the gatekeepers of what was the legitimate past. The desperate efforts of people such as Fowler (1991) or McIlwraith (1991) to position the academic as arbiter and legislator of a single hierarchy of what is acceptable are reactions in the face this displacement. However, to call this a rise in the popular against the legitimate is to mistake what is happening. We are not witnessing a removal of the arbiters, a purge of experts rather their multiplication, not the direct removal of their power as hundreds of new cultural accountants challenge an over-extended state apparatus and begin to replace it (Bauman 1992:15, 1989). What the former legislators have is a practical impotence in the face of new developments. However, it is

commentaries from these groups that make up most of the critical literature on heritage.

We can find clear signs of this sort of displacement within the accounts of many commentators. For a start, the sort of epochal fear preached in Hewison's work is part of a late eighties free-floating hysteria where the Right was bound to win, if it had not won totally already, and counter-hegemonic challenges were scarcely envisaged. Likewise the debate over the past has been cast in the epochal tones of debates over the 'post-modern' condition (eg Fowler 1989; Hewison 1991a&b; Walsh 1992):

'These are, we are told, New times: post-industrial, post-Fordist, post-narrative, post-Enlightenment, post-structuralist, post-class, post-class war, post-Cold War, post-post-second world war - in short postmodern. Almost everyone agrees. We are at a moment of rupture. All previous certainties are in flux, old verities dishonoured. As our fingers slip from the handrail of History, we fall free of the past and into the postmodern. Almost everyone agrees. The unbelievable has happened: the clerks have reached a conclusion, and so has just about everything else. They are times of omens, portents and signs, these New Times. You can't walk through a shopping mall, watch late-night TV, attend a seminar, buy a sweater, or spend a day out at Wigan Pier, without comets splitting the heavens and metanarratives dying at your feet. On each side, prophets and soothsayers pluck at your sleeve proclaiming that the end is not only nigh, but now.'

Mellor (1991:93).

The question Mellor seeks to raise, and I with him, is to what extent does all this impact on everyday life and the ordinary users of heritage sites. We have already seen a moderately positive forward-looking attitude among visitors. We also have to ask to what extent is the fixation on nostalgia a product of the commentators or the institution? Fowler, in a more reflective moment, comments that to him '[t]he popular past really is a foreign country with its own currency and not the 'history' controlled by academic historians and archaeologists' (Fowler 1992:28).

His response is to try and argue for the values of an academic analysis and a stance he sees as being discarded. He objects to an eclectic style of presentation and inaccuracy. He admits he will be called a 'crusty old professor' but 'Heritage feelies' scare him (1989:62) and he wants rigorous analysis. Can we not hear a particular interest in a particular sort of presentation of the past? It is true that there are some terrible

examples of 'ye oldeing' and mock history but to condemn everything seems to carry 'the sound of intellectuals uneasy in their own times' (Mellor 1991:96). It seems odd that the criticism that heritage fosters nostalgia for 'a time when sun-never set on change from half a crown and you didn't have to lock your back door' (Mellor 1991:96) is not paralleled by hordes of depressed people at the sites. What I suggest this shows is that we need to look more closely at how these commentators construct their object (and themselves) and what is being commented upon in their accounts.

Sneering at Theme Parks

The result of this is a peculiarly critical but undifferentiated attitude to Heritage that has been characterised by Patrick Wright (1989) as 'sneering at theme parks'. The whole phenomenon is so bad that it is not necessary to discriminate between parts of it. It is enough to invoke the phrase and dismiss the whole field. It is valid to worry that that D-Day's fiftieth anniversary celebrations may well be an attempt to reinstate John Bull as a dimension in politics (Figure 2) or may well be posturing to flap the last shreds of the imperial ego. And it is a valid critique that too often '[t]he histories of warfare, poverty oppression and disease have been transformed into media of shallow titillation.' and are thus made more palatable (Walsh 1992:1). However, it is not acceptable to tar the whole field with this brush as a pedlar of 'shallow tawdry images of pastness' (Fowler 1992:154).

We have here a dichotomy of fun and education writ large surely. Shallow titillation is bad but profound, deep study is good. Noise and bedlam is bad; but solemn contemplation is better. There are terrible things perpetuated in the name of 'heritage' presentations but the reaction we surely need is a critical engagement with it rather than simply recoiling in horror. It is not sufficient to simply decry false images:

'As this patently consumerist heritage industry has multiplied, so it has been subject to increasing criticism. Solemn social theorists and historians attack an illusory heritage world of 'spectacle', 'fantasy' and 'landscape' in the name of the real historical world of 'political economy', 'critical analysis' and 'social relations'. The glamorous reconstruction of industrial heritage, with its panoply of postmodern techniques, is seen as a travesty of sturdy English history.'

Daniels (1993:46).

The sturdy English historiography has been replaced by a sham. Fowler expressly

contrasts the discernment fostered among National Trust clientele with the knowledge of history created by urban renovation projects. '[A] process parodied as ye olde-ing; we are then proud of, or disappointed by, the resultant 'oldified', de luxe and Duluxed middle class ghetto where architect speaks unto planner and both send Christmas cards to the Chief Planning Officer. Such a visual transformation may be justified politically, socially, economically but do not let us deceive ourselves that we have done anything other than create a 'now', not recreate a 'then' (Fowler 1992:5). Thus we have a direct contrast of popular/middle-brow pleasure with the more refined sensibility of a high status group.

However, it is a fair point that we should not believe we are recreating the past in urban renovation. But then the implication is clear - someone apparently does. Some poor fools are duped into believing that historic preservation recreates the past. The culture of the nation becomes just so much wool to pull over the eyes of the nation - which leaves, as Patrick Wright (1985) acerbically noted, very little, besides farming, for the Left to do. But for me this sort of analysis 'looks suspiciously like another 'them and us' job.. We are back at sneering at the theme park, and at the dupes who are seduced by it. We're back in the worst traditions of educated snobbery. There should be a moratorium on this sort of writing' (Wright 1989:50). But if this sort of writing is ruled out, we must consider what the epistemological consequences are.

Constituting the Object of Academic Inquiry.

In conclusion I want to try and pick up some of the threads of the relation of researcher and researched in this general field and how this affects what becomes the 'object' of study. I hope this will then help set the scene for later choices I make about what issues to study and in what context. To pick up on earlier sections, we can compare the tendency of legitimate critics to only talk about legitimate forms (cf. Bourdieu 1988a; Fiske 1988). This debate is not new - it has been all too familiar to anyone wishing to study popular culture in academia for the last 30 years.

However, there is still a second problem which comes from the first that is less clearly addressed. It is the 'common fallacy which social scientists almost invariably commit when they fail to make allowance, in the course of their scientific practice itself, for the specificity of a scientist's relationship to the object of his [sic] science. It is a fallacy of

projecting into the object of study the academic relationship to the object or the constructs which this academic relationship has made possible; in short, the fallacy of taking 'the things of logic for the logic of things', as Marx said of Hegel' (Bourdieu 1981:304-5). We saw this above where commentators talked of a field awash with nostalgia whereas they could more accurately talk about an academic fixation on nostalgia (Lowenthal 1989b; Mellor 1991). This problem in the critical literature is compounded by the focus engendered also in the curatorial, practising side of the literature. There has been a long-run tendency for curators to speak from institutional contexts sanctioned by legitimate culture that guarantees the worth of what they say. They thus help create hierarchies of importance among knowledges which has led to reducing visitors to faceless ciphers who can say little of worth (Hooper-Greenhill 1988).

More invidiously, I think we can still find its lineaments even in cultural studies' fixation with textual studies. This is not to argue against the utility of textual approaches. However, in heritage analyses, it has generally been easier to analyse texts by sanctioned professionals that say what is going on, what is displayed and so on, than to study what is actually going on or what is actually understood from the display. Academics then can place their own interpretations in the place of any other users and thus somewhat incautiously universalise their readings. In contrast I think it is vital to specify the contexts and nature of the interpretations.

Histories of Representing the Past.

Introduction.

This chapter adds some historic depth to the field of representing history. Specifically, it focuses on the changing form of and uses made of the museum as an institution centrally embroiled in portraying the past to its contemporaries. It is an archaeology of past forms which will be used to throw light upon both the institutions in question and the wider society that gave rise to them. This chapter is concerned with the various ways of seeing museums have deployed in an attempt to situate the 'museum vision', that is now commonly taken to imply an isolated 'attentive looking' (Alpers 1991), as a socially and historically specific regime of understanding the past. I regard this as an important task since a great deal of contemporary comment on changes in the Heritage field talks about how new institutions produce a different understanding of the past, basing this judgement on an implicit contrast with a prior and essentialised series of practices ascribed to the traditional museum.

"The last few years have seen a major shifting and reorganisation of museums. Change has been extreme and rapid, and, to many people who loved museums as they were, this change has seemed unprecedented, and unacceptable... But it is a mistake to assume that there is only one form of reality for museums, only one fixed mode of operating. Looking back into the history of museums, the realities of museums have changed many times."

Hooper-Greenhill (1992:1).

What Hooper-Greenhill is, I think quite rightly, trying to move away from is how many standard museum histories (eg Bazin 1967) show an enormous concern with what might be termed a 'meliorative' interpretation of the development of museums, a sort of Whig history, where the account analyses flaws in previous museum designs and their subsequent correction and significant developments. Such accounts, therefore, imply the museum had certain essential rules that have been progressively revealed, with the significance of moments defined by their relation to the present form of the institution (cf. Fabian 1991). So that although we may see changing lineaments of the field this cannot be at the cost of ignoring the diversity of other possibilities - the heterogeneous sea of different practices that did not become dominant regimes (de Certeau 1984, 1986). This chapter explores historic regimes of representing the past in

order to highlight how the technology of Heritage changes and draws on the continuing presence of atavistic, obsolete, and recalcitrant practices of observation.

This chapter will explore an archaeology of the museum, uncovering the historical embeddedness of historical representations. In a sense one is adding to a "history of vision" (Crary 1990) of how the past is displayed as a culturally and historically conditioned process of seeing (Bann 1988:40). Thus my account will attend to the historical shifts in regimes of knowledge:

"What changes are the plural forces and rules composing the field in which perception occurs. And what determines vision at any given historical moment is not some deep structure, economic base or world view, but rather the functioning of a collective assemblage of disparate parts on a single social surface. It may even be necessary to consider the observer as a distribution of events located in many different places. There never was or will be a self-present beholder to whom a world is transparently evident. Instead there are more or less powerful arrangements of forces out of which the capacities of an observer are possible."

Crary (1990:6).

My account must therefore attempt to chart not just the changing formations in representing the past but also the transformations of the observer who both deploys and is enmeshed in these representations (Crary 1988:29). I shall be mapping genres of institutions through time and space (both physical and social) in order to throw into relief the different configurations and relations of the type of institution, and its relation to others, the interior form of the institution and finally the display of objects within it (Jordanova 1989). However, in my view this typology would be insufficient without the wider context provided by also attending to the way the observer uses the space between these levels to produce understandings.

Thus this chapter will chart the technologies, knowledges and subject positions produced by Mediaeval 'proto-museums', and then those produced in the classical museum. I shall, then, attempt to situate this most familiar technology in relation to other exhibitionary forms arising in the nineteenth century. I shall consider how the viewing subject of the museum may be seen to be narratively constructed to produce a particular sense of temporality. Finally I shall suggest how the new aesthetics of

Heritage do not simply discard the 'traditional museum' but rather draw upon and transform these previous modes.

Hermetic Knowledges and Privileged Observers.

The first regime of knowledge I wish to turn to may be the first of the antecedents of the museum encapsulated in the princely cabinet, variously termed *studiolo* or 'wunderkamas' or 'kunstkamas' of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. By using the term antecedent I do not mean to capitulate to some progressive taxonomy. On the contrary, I hope by using it to undermine such ideas since these cabinets of curiosities obeyed symbolic laws that seem to disbar them from the claim to actually being museums as now understood. Indeed the inclusion of 'proto-museums' contests Bazin's (1967) criteria which looks to the birth of museums as the imposition of rational orderings on these allegedly inferior and misguided collections. I want to suggest that these were alternate ways of knowing that sustained and were sustained by alternate ways of observing and object/subject relations that cast doubt on the claim that there was an essential museum vision.

Accounts about cabinets of curiosities tend to stress above all else their 'disorder' and anarchic assemblage of exotica. These cabinets were collected by wealthy princes and merchants from the 'curios' brought back by 'archaeologists', explorers or distinguished visitors. As such their northern European location echoes with the declining fortunes of Italian princes whose collections and *studiolo* had once been pre-eminent in terms of fashion, opulence and spectacle and the flux of geopolitical power. Illustrations of the 'cabinets of curiosities' depict rooms, the German 'wunderkamera', with strange animal skins and fossils adorning ceilings and walls (Bazin 1967, Olmi 1985, Impey & Macgregor 1985). Even more grand, and overtly geopolitical, were the 'kunstkamera' or princely palaces with rooms given over to lay out the collection of curiosities with which to impress visiting dignitaries. Alternatively there were cabinets, the German 'kunstschränkè', of less imposing size (and cost) with drawers and cupboards of assorted sizes to hold specimens of ore, fossils, small animals or plant samples. Since they contained collections, organised spaces and viewing subjects they appear to share in the same field as museums. But their arrangement appears 'irrational' to modern viewers (Hooper-Greenhill 1992:79).

The apparent irrationality of these cabinets is rather a function of a different regime of knowledge - an encyclopaedic project that Foucault identifies at the end of the sixteenth century. Hooper-Greenhill suggests that we can see in these cabinets an attempt to 'spatialise material knowledge according to cosmological rules, to reconstitute the order of the universe by the way in which words and texts were linked together and arranged in space' (1992:90). Objects were displayed in relation to one another, each exhibit helping the comprehension of the others acting similarly to the dictates of the 'arts of memory' (Yates 1968). Each object articulated a moment of the world to be recalled and grasped while at the same time connecting to other moments arranged about in specific patterns, not as card index might grasp the world but as hosts of samples might be accumulated (Olmí 1985:7). Following Cosgrove (1990) one can typify the way this was arranged as relying on relations of analogy and sympathy so that the interconnectedness of the 'exhibits' related to the unity of knowledge of the world. The world was conceived as subject to laws in which picturing was an "ontological act" rather than the modern scientific construction of viewing as a transparent lens. Like the theatre, indeed a *theatrum mundi*, the cabinet was a representational mirror of the nature of the world, following a system of micro- and macro-cosms (Cosgrove 1990:345-350; Fuciková 1985:52).

The observer here was explicitly also the producer of knowledge since these cabinets were very much research tools (Laurencich-Minelli 1985:21). Hooper-Greenhill (1992) suggests that these arrangements allowed one to command the symbolic world from an exalted subject position, where the world was written on oneself (p.91). This appears to partake of the construction of a 'world-view' in Heidegger's sense, where this is an active grasping of the world (Dreyfus 1991; cf. Scheicher 1985:34). Notably the commanding position set up is in a private chamber for one observer, or in the case of the *kunstkamera*, the suitably awed emissary, where the micro-cosmic possession of the world symbolised macro-cosmic ambitions (Fuciková 1985). The knowledge and power over this world are practiced in terms of privilege and exclusion by the exalted observer. Which to return to the wider sphere is very much material and political, since even if an untutored observer would have difficulty in finding the analogies and secrets hidden in pictures and drawers a message about the wealth, privileged wisdom, status and power of the owner would be abundantly clear.¹

¹ As European power expanded so too did the opulence of these collections but the logic of display and power forced them to expand ever more rapidly as the increasing flow of specimens lessened their rarity value (Olmí 1985). Perhaps this played a part in the ending of these collections undermining their logic and demanding alternative ways of making sense of the world and alternative ways of observing it.

Detached Observers and Disciplinary Museums.

The Enlightenment project ushered in new ways of seeing the world. Certainly this visual metaphor is not insignificant for the project involved privileging an observational gaze. But this gaze was trained to operate under a different regime from the one outlined above. Thus Crary (1990), analyses the origins of the camera obscura as archetypal of these specific and 'scientific' ways of seeing. He suggests that it is archetypal as a room that engineered a new separation of observer from observed that stands in stark contrast to the cabinets just described. Speaking of Vermeer's paintings of the Geographer and the astronomer Crary notes that:

"The sombre isolation of these meditative scholars within their walled interiors is not in the least an obstacle to apprehending the world outside, for the division between interiorized subject and exteriorized object is [now] a pre-given for knowledge about the latter."

Crary (1990:46).

The observer is no longer founded on the unity of knowledge but rather on a radical detachment from the world and phenomena thus rendered visible to this detached observer were accorded 'truth values'. The knowledge of the world was then codified into tabular form, another visual organisation. The *tabulae rasa* organised information produced in the burgeoning sciences - a regime of truth that placed new rules on knowledge (Hooper-Greenhill 1989:65). In thinking of this sort of museum organisation, as being dominant in many institutions he visited, Harbison (1977:145) develops a fruitful analogy with the dictionary that may be helpful in this discussion. The dictionary is useful as an allegory since it takes small excerpts from the world and recasts them according to an abstract code of classification that is devised without reference to the original context of the excerpts. Furthermore, this is an inherently spatial reorganisation where the objects are first excerpted from their original cultural and communicative context then recontextualised in the spaces of the museum according to an externally generated syntax. The possible combinations of objects become a chance to spatially play with different sequences of remembering and time (Harbison 1977:142; Luria 1968).

The operations of power and knowledge that allow the installation of this syntactic organisation of the past are a marked departure from the cabinets of curiosities. Even if

the content stays the same, the regimes of observation are different. The cabinets proceed by analogy and sympathy between the objects as spatially displayed which is an operation more akin to glossing than lexicography. In contrast the 'disciplinary museum', as Hooper-Greenhill termed it (1992, 1989) is based on rules of difference and discrimination rather than analogy (Hooper-Greenhill 1992:134; cf. Pearce 1989). The spatial organisation is not based on linkages but rather on defining boundaries and separations between objects, defined according to a separated taxonomy to produce 'files of objects ordered by the military formations of the fields of knowledge' (Shelton 1990:98). And this organisation is typical of a disciplinary knowledge whose "object is to fix, it is an anti-nomadic force ...[which] uses procedures of partitioning and cellularity" (Foucault 1977:218-9).

'A vast tomb in which the exhibits are lined up like the embalmed corpses of the catacombs - still alive only in the eyes of the scientist, the archaeologist and the historian but dead in the eyes of the common people' Frostrand 1914, in Alfrey & Putnam (1992:28).

It is here that the importance of the archetype of the camera obscura and the emblem of the dictionary come together so fruitfully. For what has been established is firstly a separation of actor and object, which in turn enables the definition of such objects (and indeed actors) as finite knowable 'units', and also the organisation and naming of these units by an active agent according to abstract rules (Taborsky 1983; cf. Pearce 1990). The fact that museums give this concrete form then invites their reciprocal use as evidence for the regime of knowledge that gave rise to them where objects offer not 'authenticity' or knowledge but rather offer authority to the agreed, or always-already, rules of knowledge without which objects are silent texts *in potentia* (Crew & Sims 1990:163, Taborsky 1990:64).² It cannot be a coincidence that at the same time, the blossoming of the sciences was producing an ever increasing range of objects that could be made into artefacts or specimens by a separated classificatory logic (Leed 1992).

It is this formation that answers Ettema's (1987:72) shock that a procession of objects becomes equated with the flow of history. There is the move away from suggesting the intrinsic value of an object to its valuation according to how well it illustrates a typology. Thus one can look at the reorganisation of art collections into new spaces, where each school or nation had its own room, rather than aesthetic arrangement alone (eg Bazin 1967).

² To show the evidential power of museums I shall try a counter-factual example. Obviously, certain groups and people ended up doing the naming and others being named and I intend to problematise just this relation of power. For instance Porter (1988) raises the point that although women sat for a large number of portraits the pictures get classified according to generally male artist.

Of course, monetary value is not an insignificant factor nor is the crude operation of violence and dispossession confined to the realms of symbolic organisation. The violence of ethnological and exotic collections was part and parcel of the imperial project - placing what were the everyday or sacred belongings of other cultures into glass boxes according to the rules of western ethnology (Ames 1992, 1990; Bohrer 1994; Posner 1988:67):

"Ethnographic artefacts are objects of ethnography. They are artefacts created by ethnographers. Objects become ethnographic by virtue of being defined, segmented, detached and carried away by ethnographers. Such objects are ethnographic not because they were found in a Hungarian peasant household, Kwakiutl village, or Rajasthani market rather than in Buckingham Palace or Michelangelo's studio, but by virtue of the manner in which they have been detached, for disciplines make their objects and in the process make themselves."

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1990:387).

I use this quotation to highlight again the creative naming and control exercised by museums which served to reinscribe a belief in the adequacy and superiority of western classification that by naming the other rendered the world controllable (Stewart 1984:161). Museums have never operated simply as repositories of material treasures or neutral objects. Rather museum and object are reciprocally constitutive of value and worth. Thus painters exhibited in a major museum can expect to see the price of their works rise; collectors can donate one painting to increase the value of their others (Roslen 1984).³ As ever the value of the collections served to display the power and wealth of the owner - though increasingly after the French revolution the owner was the state and the statement was made to a *public audience*. Such statements being reinforced by the public iconography of such museums - aiming to appear as shrines or temples to secular, universal truths (Roslen 1984:323; Duncan 1991; Horne 1984; Shelton 1990).

However, the classificatory mechanisms are not on display. They remain hidden in the back regions of these institutions. Hooper-Greenhill (1992, 1989) points out that the public/ private division of knowledge was hardening in the nineteenth century, with a

³ Or, in the case of historical museums, Bann (1988:43-4) notices the growth in the eighteenth century both of the syntagm of dusty and old and that of ruin and treasure which opened up a need for preservation and thence also an increased stimulus to valuing the past, creating an age value to compete with an art value by further adding to the aura about objects (Bud 1988:135; Taborsky 1983).

new role for the state, pioneered in France, but spreading as the century wore on. This state power operates in the silent 'back' regions of the museum producing knowledge that is then pedagogically presented in the front to consumers (Forgan 1994; Markus 1993; Saumerez-Smith 1989). This transforms the production of knowledge by the observer, instead stressing the passivity of a public meant to absorb knowledge created elsewhere. The educational role of the institution is thus set in the model of 'schooling' rather than 'learning' where education is seen as the imparting of information to a docile recipient (Maton-Howarth 1990; Schouten 1993). The authority of the object mobilised but it is mobilised in the back regions of the institute, thus allowing the state to exnominate itself as author and produce a paradoxically authoritative discourse without the marks of its utterance (Marin 1985:267; Shelton 1990). Thus, a neutrally scientific discourse is produced that is expressed at the capillary level of power in the seriated spaces that divide, classify and specify objects of knowledge. These spaces then ascribe meanings and values onto the objects according to their placing and produce of 'useful objects' under a discipline of knowledge (cf. Foucault 1977, 1978).

The Exhibitionary Complex.

An alternative inflection to this disciplined division of objects in controlled spaces can be given by Bennett's (1988) suggestion of an 'exhibitionary complex' parallel and complementary to the 'disciplinary museum'. Firstly, the 'exhibitionary complex' stages objects for display as a means of managing 'attention' (Crary 1991)⁴. This requires not only the manipulation of the audience into an attentive situation but also the staging of objects of display. The earlier sections contained implicit ideas of a biography of objects whether that was their excerption from one context to be displayed in an ethnological exhibit, or the retrieval of ancient relics to be resanctified and displayed, as being cultural treasures (Gathercole 1989; Norkunas 1993). The categorisation, cross-tabulation and (re-)arrangement of exhibits transforms their social meaning. Bennett (1988) stresses how this process may also work so that formerly enclosed, confined objects are brought out and placed on display. We can see this process dramatically illustrated in the expropriation of formerly private royal

⁴ It is worth noting how the concept and category of attention develops as a scientific concept in the nineteenth century, with studies of attention to adverts (Crary 1991:102), or the effects of the 'afterimage in physiology (Crary 1988, Krauss 1988); and indeed to see this as part of the momentum harnessed by philosophers such as Bergson (1986) and later taken up by Walter Benjamin with concepts such as *erfahrung*, as alienated attention or deceased experience, which is the experience of the world as souvenirs (1985:49).

collections and their placement in new public arenas. Bennett looks to the rise of spectacular modernity as a more general process as well. Can it be a coincidence that at around the same time Pentonville prison was laid out upon panoptic principles (1842) the designs for the Great Exhibition (1851) were being formulated. Could it be, he asks, that alongside the carcereal archipelago is another 'exhibitionary complex' that by moving objects into progressively more public displays served to broadcast other messages of power (Bennett 1988:74)? Indeed throughout the nineteenth century great exhibitions/expositions and 'world fairs' were enormously popular - with 31 between 1870 and 1914, each having 2 million visitors and 2 having 10 million (Greenhalgh 1989). I suggest it may help inform our analyses of current events if first we look at how the positionality of the observers and visitors was actively engineered to mold a particular relation of people to exhibition and then, second, attempt to look the presentation of the past at these exhibitions.

Observers and Spectacular Knowledges.

Taking first then the interpellation of the observer at these exhibitions it is worth reminding ourselves that they occurred in the medium of display and spectacle associated with a burgeoning commodity culture. Throughout this period it seems fair to say that the exhibitions grew more commodified and spectacular, echoing the new dreamworlds of consumption being constructed in arcades and department stores (Crary 1992:99; Georgel 1994; Sherman 1994). Thus the 1893 Chicago Exposition, while allegedly commemorating Columbus, described its 'Midway' central aisle as a 'jumble', 'gorgeous', and 'pulsating' in its promotional material where the spaces of science and entertainment came together (Hinsley 1990:351). Perhaps one can term this as the 'world-as-exhibition' where the 1889 Paris fair had a globe 40m in circumference showing the mountains and oceans with 'astonishing verisimilitude'. Plans for an even larger globe were laid for 1900. To agree with Gregory, "Although these globes are powerful expressions of the world-as-exhibition, what matters is not so much their particular iconography but the wider constellation in which they are set: a spectacular geography in which the world itself appeared as an exhibition" (1994:38; cf. Bohrer 1994).⁵ The whole appears an arrangement to allow the flaneur to revel in the phantasmagoria of modernity, to consume the spectacle of peoples being displayed as ethnological exhibits set up as visible and consumable. Hinsley feels able to describe the world fairs as 'carnivals of the modern age' (1990:344).

5. But in my account I shall wish to distinguish between the 'world-as-exhibition' and the 'sort of imaginary museum without walls' that Gregory equates (1994:171).

However, this idea of the carnivalesque appears both descriptive and misplaced. It is descriptive in that it conveys the assembly of large numbers of "the people" in a space without formal distinctions (Stallybrass & White 1986).

*'Museums Should Be Fun
At Middle Wallop our young
visitors are entertained and
have the chance to get some
'hands-on experience, making
history fun to learn.'*

However, it seems to downplay the powerfully controlled and ideological staged nature of the presentations - where one of the trends was indeed an attempt to suppress the rival tradition of popular public gatherings where an alternate modernity, and an alternate morality might be manifested. So that what we read is both the inscription of a new viewing public on the spaces of modernity and the assault on the riotous and lewd popular fairs full of curiosities and freaks that had lost elite patronage and now appeared as an obstacle to modern rationalising progress (Bennett 1988:86). Encoded in this is the opposition of education to entertainment, where Greenhalgh (1988) can argue that the potential for aesthetic consumption at the 1851 great Exhibition was sacrificed to fulfil the maxims of the Victorian schoolroom (p.88). However, this prioritising was a struggle rather than a rule with sponsors and organisers consistently asserting the educative value while the commercial interests of the fair sought to minimise such aspects. The organisers of 1851 were ashamed of the fun-fair elements they justified as bait to get the workers in, they wanted to present 'entertainment without lewdness' and 'information without effort' (Greenhalgh 1988:82). But this is a struggle that altered both temporally and spatially, in an era which gave rise to Coney Island fun-fair and saw the gradual increase of the fun-fair elements at exhibitions - indeed their celebration in a French, as well as American, context.

What must also be drawn out about the practices of the observers is that while they were separated out from

Miniature World ... step into the Story Books of fact, fiction and fantasy. Return to those fond memories of yesteryear, those childhood dreams and history's greatest moments .. Space 2201 a cosmic adventure, further adventures, tiny treasures and little pleasures await all who enter Frontierland, Fantasyland, Fields of Glory, World of Dickens and Olde London Towne of 1670.

exhibits, while they gazed upon the exotic, while they, in Benjamin's immortal phrase, went botanising on the asphalt they were also promoting the activities of self-display. Exhibits are categorised but the activity of the crowd is also on display (Bennett 1988). The public is reconstituted (not individualised) as a spectacle that serves to entertain itself.

Presenting the Past.

Perhaps we can look to the presentation of the past in Stockholm's Exhibition of 1897 where *Gamla Stockholm* (Old Stockholm) was the most popular exhibit (Pred 1989:67). I want to pay careful attention to this space since I think there are echoes of current heritage debates in its 'romanticized imitation of the urban past imitating other romanticized imitations of the urban past' (ib.68). To set this in context, other attractions included a fake mine (3m deep) with a moving diorama to present the illusion of deeper travel and stocked with dummies and mannequins which Pred terms 'the living dead of the commodity fetishism underworld' (ib.65). *Gamla Stockholm* itself was set apart over a bridge, and as set apart to create:

"An illusory space in which collective historical memory is to be shaped and buttressed through direct bodily presence, through the physical suggestion of authenticity. A dreamworld space, a time-capsule trip, in which a constructed national pride, a fabricated national heritage, and invented national community, is to be reaffirmed. A mythic space set aside."

Pred (1989:67).

The resonances and echoes of this certainly suggest connections to current accounts of the heritage industry. What Pred makes of the ideological impact of the display is also worth quoting at some length in order to see how he tries to transcode current concerns about modernity into the nineteenth century. He suggests that what was presented was:

"history as a legitimating, deceptive transfiguration of the present. *Gamla Stockholm* - history an illusory space idealizing the past so as to idealize the present. *Gamla Stockholm* - history as a wonderland space of the 'good old days', as a comprehensible and uncomplicated space devoid of hunger and misery, of human subjects enmeshed in problematic social relations, of labor-versus-capital struggles. *Gamla Stockholm* - history as a hyperspace where a past, present and future collapse into one space, but where the everyday conflicts of the present are all the same escaped. *Gamla Stockholm* - history as a fantasy space where the past is commodified... *Gamla Stockholm* - history as a spectacular articulation of modernity."

(1989:70).

Let me suggest that this treatment by Pred gains its rhetorical force by drawing on the current cultural milieu to rejuvenate an antique institution. The parallels and availability

of this cross-fertilization, the ability of the present to be cited as an interpretation of the past cuts both ways. Very much in the spirit of Benjamin that the obsolete reveals its newness and takes the new to be a return of the same (Buck-Morss 1989). I do not thus propose that heritage is not different from *Gamla Stockholm* but rather that no simple transition narrative can cope with representing modern cultural development (cf. Thrift & Glennie 1993) and we must conceptualise such phenomena as Heritage without relying on "the narrative encoding of history ... the historiographic chain in which moments were clipped together like magnets" (Gregory 1989:26).

It would be too hasty to dismiss the role of transition or other narratives though since they are precisely part of the *internal* dynamics of how heritage presents time. If the disciplinary museum hung upon the tabula rasa that linked and connected events according to various principles, then the nineteenth century also saw the emergence of a form of display of stages that served to connect Western civilisation to nature via a series of temporal stages inscribed on spatially segregated peoples so that space could be made to stand for time (cf. Fabian 1981; Leed 1992:171).

The Mobility of the Observer and the Narrative of Progress.

This brings us to one of the dominant modes of conceiving time as expressed in the world in the nineteenth century and as I shall endeavour to show it is still a powerful, if modified, form to this day. The mode is that of the progressive narrative. Let us firstly think of the coming together of disciplinary organisation and exposition. Taking from Hooper-Greenhill's account an idea of the transformation of private royal collections of paintings in France into new public galleries, not only were the paintings now subject to a seriated discipline of display but also the spaces had a logic laying out paintings by geography and temporality into a picture book history of art positioning the spectator to see the fixed panorama of history, with the seriated spaces showing the inevitable and naturalised order of things (Hooper-Greenhill 1989:70). The inevitable order mobilised was the temporal sequence expressed in each space as an advance over the last (Hooper-Greenhill 1992:188).

"The relationship of objects in time are transposed into a spatial context, and that regrouping is imprinted in the memory of the visitors. This transformative capacity of museums, their ability to function as machines

for turning time into space, enables them to be used as a system of social memory."

Yamaguchi (1990:61).

The result is to interpret history in the light of how it contributes to the present position of the gazing, knowing subject looking back on its origins. Certainly this 'developmental' understanding of time was dominant because it both recognised and supported the Victorian conviction of a unique place in history (Bowler 1989:13).

Through the nineteenth century I want to pick out a steady rise in the role of narrative display. Colonial areas were emplotted as primitive in an account of progress, by their physical placing in a series⁶. creating 'narratives of fulfilment' (Fabian 1991:193), using the same poetics as omens, to position primitive Others so that they 'predict' the western present as the pinnacle of a global history (Bowler 1989:44).⁷ One effect is to position the observer at the conclusion of a unilinear civilisation. Moreover industrial products come to stand as symbols of this culmination of history in the exhibitions highlighted above - colluding in the reification of the products of labour. The fetishised products become the climactic moment, downgrading the process of production. Such a taxonomy can be quickly laminated to one of race and civilisation (Bennett 1988:95).

Such a vantage point becomes increasingly unstable as worries of imperial decline and the material progress of the age undermine it. Imperial power is threatened, decline threatens the certainty of a position at the apex of civilisation with possibilities of cyclical decline (Bowler 1989). Meanwhile the explosion of new visual techniques in the late nineteenth and twentieth century leads to many new, previously impossible technologies that begin to undermine the certainty of any single viewpoint (Crary 1990, Krauss 1988). I wish to briefly highlight the importance of how the narrative of progress becomes expressed, and is still expressed, in the physicality of the observer's experience. To do this I wish to highlight the importance of understanding the observer as mobile and following a path among the objects of the museum. The analogy of the dictionary stresses this activity:

6. The same primitive/simple/natural to industrial/complex/civilised and the naturalisation of victories by the hegemonic group can still be seen in the public history accounts of such places as Monterey (Norkunas 1993)

7 Needless to say this is a logically flawed process which reads the teleology of conclusions, that is retrospective signification looking back, as a predictive law of historical Progress, overlooking progressive contingencies (Ricoeur 1984:150).

"Like the dictionary a museum cannot be enjoyed passively. The spectator must decide what is background and foreground. Nothing tells him [sic] he is not supposed to look at everything: he must learn it is not feasible. Instructions for using a dictionary or a museum have not been written because they would be instructions for using the mind, these skills are much harder than they look."

Harbison (1977:145).

The observer constructs a whole series of linkages as s/he passes among the objects of the museum. But I wish to challenge the latter half of the quote since the layout of many museums does provide guidance as to the sequence in which this objects will be encountered and the route between them. Thus Duncan and Wallach (1979:28) can point out that the layout forms the 'script' for a visit implying spatial arrangement can place exhibits in a story.

In an analysis of the Museum of Modern Art in New York they illustrate how the route 'progresses' from a

Dean Heritage Centre - Discover dean - the story of a forest and its people.

shared, realistic portrayal of the world to art that grows increasingly abstract and subjective portrayal where each work of art becomes 'so many moments in a historical scheme' (Duncan & Wallach 1979:34) with the exhibits and rooms linked together as if in a chain so Guernica ceases to represent the horror of carpet bombing and instead symbolises a shift from Cubism to Surrealism. Perhaps we can begin to discern the wider figurations of this trope of progress by thinking again of how it inscribes time on space. Passing through spaces becomes the central activity of accumulating knowledge of different times which is the very structure of western knowledge Leed (1992) discerns in late eighteenth and nineteenth century imperial travel accounts. The same wide configuration of narrative emplotment of spaces that de Certeau (1988) finds embedded in early French ethnology and prompted him to suggest the huge mutual entanglements of travel stories, narrative and knowledge (1986). Entanglements still being sifted through in modern anthropology (Fabian 1982) and underwriting the reporting of the exotic in journals such as the *National Geographic* (Lutz & Collins 1993; cf. Bohrer). These are implications and tropes that I will return to later in the thesis.

Narratives and Affective Portrayals: Travelling in Time.

If one moves to the post-war period and the more recent heritage boom, one finds that narratives have become the dominant organising principle in several institutions. But the narratives have subtly changed from the ones above. The reasons for these changes I have suggested are the rapid expansion of constituencies demanding that they see their past portrayed and the linked suggestion that given increasing societal pluralism institutions cannot rely on the audience all grasping or sharing one hegemonic taxonomy (Macdonald and Silverstone 1990:181). But, certainly, increasing demands for better interpretation, and increasing awareness, both within and without institutions, of the loaded nature of displays has led to reappraisals and the criticism of former display tactics. First Nations, ethnic minorities, women, subordinate classes and their advocates have demanded a stake in representing themselves in museums (Ames 1992). The idea that the object is central to a display and accurate labelling of it guarantees impartiality has been used as an empiricist mantra to try and stave off criticism (Jenkinson 1989:144), a point which highlights the continuing prevalence of this perspective:

"Underneath the new veneer, however curators still hold many of the attitudes of their predecessors: ... a fascination with the way things work, rather than who works them, and to what end."

Porter (1988:102-3).

This residual focus on the 'fetishised object' (Gathercole 1989) seems to run into problems not just in terms of an ethical or representational critique. For even as this criticism grows, the tastes and interests of the established clientele of museums is shifting with more visitors having a better awareness of the 'tricks' of display, being themselves involved in cultural production (Kelly 1987). This position of greater equality and knowledge for the observer has added to the cries of the subordinate that the position of the curator should be 'depowered' (Macdonald 1992:160). Nor can museums rely on didactic measures to please the increasingly critical public since a large section of the potential audience does not seek an intellectual or cognitive experience (Annis 1986). Driven by market pressure, a crisis of representation, a changing audience, an increasingly media saturated world institutions have to compete with the levels of vivacity offered in television (Corner & Harvey 1991). Thus, as Macdonald (1992:168) notes, 'it is not museums that establish public expectations on how information is packaged and communicated'. Unless museums react to this changing symbolic economy they risk being ignored. They have had to respond to changing regimes of knowledge where the disciplinary museum is no immediate

guarantee of success. In fact many professionals would argue it is nearer the kiss of death. I want to briefly look at some of the shifts that have been noted by commentators, starting with the way exhibitions now struggle to downplay the role of displaying objects and creating artefacts as a *raison d'être*.

"The ultimate logic of the new type of museum is the museum that has no collection, the Heritage Centre, where the original purpose of having a museum, ie to preserve and interpret in a scholarly manner a significant number of objects, has been almost entirely displaced by the desire to give the visitor some kind of more or less pleasurable 'experience'".

Hewison (1989:19).

It is true that many heritage centres are not founded on the basis of collections of objects and tend to downplay the custodial role of museums. Rather than conceiving of themselves as shrines or treasure-houses of priceless relics they exhibit *in situ* features and items from the everyday.

Typically they focus on the use of the objects, the *History surrounds you at Helmcken House* displays are better able to fill the lacunae over the lives of the users, in 'conventional' displays. I hope the importance of seeking the history of representing the past is now apparent, since the claim that museums were once about scholarly perusal can now be seen to rest on a limited assessment of both the practices in museums and the range of institutions.

Looking at institutions as facing a rapidly shifting field perhaps we can begin to sketch some responses in a more balanced way than in the critical literature. Firstly, heritage museums have had to innovate and to do so they draw on precisely the tradition of display found in the Great Exhibitions. They draw on the panoramic, cinematic effects (Breitbart 1981; figure 3). Secondly, in conjunction or alternately they seek to display objects in contexts of use and in a restaged original context and thus draw on a different museum tradition from the 'glass case' - turning instead to the 'ecomuseum' that displays reconstructed folk environments in their totality (Alfrey & Putnam 1992; Macdonald & Alford 1989; Poulot 1994).

Such open air museums have been around since the late nineteenth century

Open the Door to the Dark Ages .. at the West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village .. A Living Village

- in such places as Skansen, where they formed a sort of 'salvage anthropology' in

recording and preserving a rural way of life seen as threatened by an encroaching modernity (Bazin 1967:238). Finally these two combine to favour linking exhibits to visitors through affective narratives. They are story driven rather than object driven displays so that Hewison (1991b:25) comments that the difference between a museum and heritage centre is that 'one is a collection of significant artifacts, the other is a collection of significant artifice'. These narratives are often aimed to encourage visitor identification with past peoples via the bond of a shared humanity, and particularly through a sense of the everyday (Silverstone 1988:140).

Which connects again to earlier more critical comments about the spectacular display of the great

The Museum of East Anglian life: A variety of displays cover subjects as diverse as domestic life, agriculture and industry - in fact everything to do with East Anglian Life.

exhibitions. Although a focus on the everyday lives of people may bring recognition to a previously neglected area it also binds it up in the nexus of power/knowledge of display till they commit a genre error where:

"one man's [sic] life is another man's spectacle. Exhibitions institutionalise this error by producing the quotidian as spectacle; they do this by building the observer into the structure of events, that left to their own devices, are not subject to formal viewing."

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1990:407).

So that the power of visibility may serve to bring previously untouched areas into a second order spectacle where we watch our own lives displayed back to us in commodified form (Greenwood 1977; Morris 1988; Debord 1977).

However, this may turn the everyday into spectacle it does serve to transform some elements of representational politics.⁸ What is stressed in these displays is not the value ascribed to objects by the museum's particular recontextualisation and sacralisation but rather the values given to them in their *use* outside the museum. The biography of objects is given by situating them in narratives, in terms of illustrative vignettes of their use. The vignettes rely on a recontextualisation that shows the activity of the objects in use, deploying interpretive means such as costumed interpreters, video

⁸ But it should be noted the impact of these shifts does vary between fields of museums (art museums tending to be most conservative) and with newer institutions adopting more fully these forms of display since in a time of public stringency few museums can afford to renew their whole exhibition policy and area - there is thus a huge inertia to the field.

Figure 3.

Mis-en-Scene in the Museum.



The pictures show how far things have changed from glass cases of exhibits. Top are recreated nineteenth century rooms at the Royal Museum of British Columbia and, below, early twentieth century scenes from Burnaby Village museum.

displays or reconstructed dioramas to situate the object.⁹ It is important to note how this sort of display upsets the careful aesthetic 'universalisms' that have been claimed for the 'disciplinary museum' with its emphasis on '[t]he taste for isolating this kind of attentive looking at crafted objects' that is peculiar to, a supposedly, shared (ie Western) culture (Alpers 1991:26-7).

It is worth drawing out from the above the emphasis of a new observational activity and position. If we acknowledge that the museum as a way of seeing, as Alpers suggested, is circumscribed and historically and socially situated we may also suggest how it is now changing. Museum professionals are coming to the realisation that the much vaunted neutrality and impartiality is an arbitrary construct (Vergo 1989:3). The realisation is that these displays also work, not by letting the "object speak for itself", but by positioning it in a story - traditionally one which revolves around scientifically authorised importance¹⁰. Much of the argument over simulations is embroiled in the debates over object oriented versus thematic display. The point emerging is that object's meanings are driven by the context of display, even in object oriented displays (Duncan 1990:95; Vergo 1989:46; Porter 1988).

Thus such an "object led story", depends on certain cultural competences to interpret it. Taborsky (1990) provides a useful inflection on how the visitors' positionality may be embroiled by focusing on their interpretive activity, connecting an interpretation (often one pre-given within a socially group) with an object so it becomes a sign of the discourse that interprets it. Pearce (1990) shows that this is not a voluntaristic process with the shared basis of interpretive communities restricting the number of discourses an observer in a given social group could justify. This theoretical angle also highlights how the communicative weight has shifted from the objects displayed to a more thorough understanding of the role of how they are displayed - from didactic content to

⁹ The connection of these forms of displays to the paths and routes of the spatially active observer is something that I have dealt with at greater length elsewhere (Crang 1994). Examples and accounts of spatial narratives as they occur in museums might include Jorvik in York, the 'Timewalk' in Weymouth, the Amsterdam Historical Museum and parts of the Amsterdam Tropenmuseum, the Canadian Museum of Civilisation (Macdonald and Alford 1989), the Museum of Modern Art in New York (Duncan & Wallach 1979, Roslen 1984), the National Waterways Museum at Gloucester Docks (Crang 1994), the Iowa state historical farm sequence of 4 farms depicted from the nineteenth century to the twenty-first (Anderson 1984:53), or the Epcot display that also projects its narrative into the future (Wallace 1989, 1987:45-7).

¹⁰ "The problem with things is that they are dumb. They are not eloquent, as some thinkers in art museums claim. They are dumb. And if by some ventriloquism they seem to speak, they lie ... once removed from the continuity of everyday uses in time and space and made exquisite on display, stabilized and conserved, objects are transformed in the meanings they may be said to carry." Crew & Sims (1991:159).

assessing the aesthetics of display (Swiecinski 1989:203). It is an aesthetics that is not focused around silent contemplation. Rather it is one in which displays are converted into 'events' that happen as the spectator travels around the site (Farrar 1992). It is important here to try and bring together the criticism of heritage and these changing observational practices since the intersection of the two is fundamental to my later formulations of how Heritage is consumed in historic sites.

" a journey of participation, exploration and discovery of how lead mining shaped landscape and lives"

From a critical perspective Walsh suggests that the new aesthetic is more concerned with providing events that are made to connect to the everyday by fictive persona and thus 'unsubstantiated phenomena' than accurate interpretation (Walsh 1992). There is a mutual feeding of fictions based on history and historical interpretation using fiction so that "Fiction criticises history while cannibalizing it; history derogates fiction's claims while adopting fictional insights and techniques." (Lowenthal 1985:228). Equally Wallace (1981:74-6) points out that the creation of displays showing ordinary folk often dodge class issues by banishing any mention of the rich, and indeed any idea of dynamism and conflict. However, we may equally see an increased emphasis on the local and personal as reflecting the interests of subordinate classes (Merriman 1991:128; Radley 1990). Likewise the difference of fictive and factual stories about the past is not clear cut since both accounts rely on the same mechanisms to configure the account (Ricoeur 1988).¹¹

The new regime of display also works to create new politics of pleasure that rest ambivalently between commodification and populism. The provision of tableaux vivant, mis-en-scene dioramas and dramatisations

"Step back in Time... to 1861. As you step on board HMS Warrior you are entering another world - that of a Victorian Sailor ... Become a part of History."

can act to try and recreate a reality where a visitor is invited to become a 'time traveller'. Corner & Harvey (1991) suggest this results in the end of museums as a way of seeing and their reconstruction as a series of spaces, or events as individuals move through these spaces, that form 'experiences':

¹¹ Indeed momentary doubt over the absolute truth of what is displayed has been used in dramatic reinterpretations of events precisely to bring into question museum claims of a final and definitive version of events (Greengold 1987).

"The provision of thematically organised experiences of 'witnessing' or, indeed, participation, replace the fetishistic pleasures of the 'old object' as the primary source of popular delight, and a new kind of sentimentalism and whimsy is introduced into the visiting and viewing relationship. The past becomes essentialized around costumed characters in self-contained and entertaining narrative episodes. The most common claims made by the newer heritage displays, that they either 'bring the past to life' or allow visitors to step back into it, are ones which now have to work within a strongly competitive sense of the levels of vivacity and sensation expected by those who pay to enter."

Corner & Harvey (1991:56).

This summary speaks to the role of a museum as a communicator that has to cope with the media of our time (Macdonald & Alford 1989) and with the increasing number of visitors that are already familiar with information technology and expect high quality provision (Macdonald 1992:169). Equally it suggests a new subjectivity performing the role of observer, but a role where the old divides of the camera obscura are broken down and even witnessing implies some coequality of subject of knowledge and observer - a coequality allowed by an anachronistic and imaginative passage back in time. But there are further connections to spin out from this new subject position. Firstly, we can see the connections of spectacle and competitive display as echoing the extravaganzas of the world fairs and indeed perhaps as some afterimage of the display of the department store with all the overtones of aestheticised and desirable objects and the association with selling (Posner 1988:69; see figure 4). But secondly, we can look to how this coequality of event and spectator may in fact comprise the engulfing of the spectator reducing their ability to stand a part from events and thus their critical distance from the display (Delaney 1992:143). Finally we can also see something in this observer which is an evasion of the dry pedagogy of the disciplinary museum. It is with some consideration of this that I shall conclude the chapter.

Education, Entertainment and Learning.

The account of the disciplinary museum focused on the way knowledge was produced by a back-stage authority and designed to be received by a front-stage, passive

Figure 4.
Antique Village, MetroCentre, Gateshead North East England.



Antiques Village, Metro Centre, Gateshead

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audience, a production-reception model in which facts were transmitted via contact with specially presented objects. Such a model of learning behaviour has, not surprisingly, come in for considerable criticism as a basis for museum construction.¹²

If this chapter has served its purpose it will have destabilised the assumptions of the production of neutral facts and the recall of them by a monadic observer. What I propose here is that such assessments miss the strengths of museums as learning environments. In fact what they do is replay the opposition of education to entertainment highlighted as the perpetual worry of the bourgeois organisers of world fairs in Britain (Greenhalgh 1989). Rather what I would highlight here is the possibility for alternative learning bound up in the position of the observer at heritage sites. If we take Ivan Illich's distinction of 'schooling' and 'learning' we may begin to see that there is a possible shift from a model where the 'student' is expected to ingest information imparted and one where the 'student' is an active part of the learning process (Maton-Howarth 1990). This suggests that museums should not be judged on the inculcation of 'facts' but rather on the opening up of interpretive opportunities and chances to engage with the past. The same has to be seen in the media trend towards 'infotainment' which is an area with which heritage is in competition with visitors just as likely to have seen historic reconstructions in terms of period drama as in a museum. So it may be that the struggle of museums is to produce events that contribute to 'landmark learning' as Gurian (1990; 1984) calls it providing the moments of vital inspiration, that may later be followed up in other media, but are so crucial to the learning process since they supply 'a feeling of awe for wonders of the world. Because a world that is not full of wonders is hardly worth the effort of growing up in.' (Bettelheim 1984:19).

Such educational possibilities do not guarantee beneficial changes though. For instance, while society is turning to leisure learning the left's wholesale dismissals of it leave the field entirely open for reactionary interpretations. Likewise imaginative 'landmarks' are not automatically correlated with technical wizardry, which on occasion serve to become both ends in themselves and baffle visitors (Fewster 1990), while awe and wonder can still be evoked by understated displays and 'reticent interpretations'

¹² Although it is still used by some geographers in reverse, where they assume learning experiences are quantitatively summable and testable in terms of recall of discrete facts (eg Prentice 1991). It seems that such accounts fail to see that "the result of a museum visit is more than the sum of the pieces of information learned by reading the labels. Visitors learn from objects in museums, but the experience is more than a recounting of the specific objects remembered" (Munley 1987:127).

(Greenblatt 1990: Waterson 1989). Of course, it is the number of reconstructed displays that now bestows an aura on simpler methods as being *under*-stated not, as I hope to have shown, *un*-stated and thus unproblematic. Now perhaps the media is the message in museums (Stevens 1989) and maybe as every location tries to recreate and restage the past the effectiveness of each will be diminished. It is worth recollecting that so much attention has focused on a few key institutions (Jorvik, Beamish, Ironbridge Gorge to 'round up the usual suspects') that from the literature it is easy to lose sight of the way these were always exceptional not typical (Mellor 1991). Meanwhile the authenticity of the museum effect is located with the impact it makes on the observer rather than with the designation or provenance of the object, which is fine as far as it goes. But it does leave the way open for blatantly false displays with what Fowler (1989) terms 'bikini-like ethics'.

It is clear that it is not sufficient to simply lament some epochal shift in the 'museological economy'. Rather, I shall look to the subject positions created through the concatenation of regimes of knowledge. Thus, I wish to turn to the intertextual impact of the aesthetic effects laid out in this chapter, as they operate in the field of Heritage to form new technologies of pleasure and knowledge.

Spaces of the Past.

Introduction

In this chapter I want to explore the geographical nature of the 'heritage phenomena'. I wish to undertake this task on two related levels - that of the means of understanding heritage - the epistemology of analysing it as an institution - and also its spatial ontology. My plan is to begin with the former but to focus most of the chapter on the latter. Thus I wish to begin with the idea of mapping in terms of its implications for commentators' conceptions of heritage then look at the way that this metaphor can be extended to help conceptualise more fully the field of heritage practices. The way this field operates, its symbolic economy, then forms the next section. In it I suggest that the spatial metaphor reveals quite a lot about the constitution of heritage. I suggest that we are watching an act of symbolic violence in casting diverse forms on the same map - creating a quantitative field of distinctions rather than qualitative differences between sites. It is here that I shall try to outline my own conception of Heritage not as a category but as the action of organising and categorising the past - in as far as it *spatialises history*. By paralleling the metaphoric ideas of 'spatialising' history with the spatial ontology of sites I hope then to suggest more than a textual metaphor or analogy. Building through the second section and into the third I outline the importance of a particular spatiality to the material practices of heritage. In reflecting on these I consider the theoretical implications of this conception of space having an antagonistic relation to time. In response I outline a modified spatial ontology of practices which incorporates a different relation of space/time by emphasising the similar serial experience of space *and* time in heritage practices. This theorisation will then begin to lay the ground for chapter VI which will develop this argument further into ideas of spatial performance via travel.

Multiple Heritages and Multiple Experiences.

Mapping Knowledges and Situated Commentaries: Reconceptualising Heritage as an 'Object'. This sub-section tries to suggest the implications of the way 'the heritage phenomenon' has come to be a singular and analysable event for commentators. I do not propose to reprise the contents of earlier chapters but to attend to some of their implications. Chapter II outlined the general ways in which heritage phenomena had been discussed, Chapter III attempted to situate this commentary socially and Chapter IV tried to give some historical depth to the terms, forms and debates circulating.

Throughout these chapters there has been a scarcely concealed tension between treating heritage as a unified phenomenon or as a plurality of phenomena. We have seen how

grouping many different forms together can serve to elide significant differences and become the basis for a dismissal of all forms. I have tried to suggest some of the social and historical stakes in these procedures. Here, however, I want to highlight the analytical effects of this, not in just in terms of an abstract review of the literature but as part of the process of reasoning I went through in deciding how my research should approach the topic.

It should be clear by now that I regard some approaches, especially those predominating in the geographical tourism literature (eg Ashworth & Tunbridge 1991; Herbert et al 1989; Prentice 1992, 1993), as naively empiricist. I did not believe that further pursuing the rigorous quantification of visitor behaviour, background and site characteristics would yield a great return in explaining or describing heritage phenomena. Since the impact of sites becoming Heritage 'cannot be inferred from arbitrarily isolated and then quantified acts of consumption. [Since t]o make them a measure of knowledge would be oneself to assume the extinction of [qualitatively different] experience and to operate in an 'experience-free' way while trying to analyse the change in experience: a primitive vicious circle' (Adorno 1993:12). In my view this sort of comment still holds since what is never properly analysed is how heritage itself as a category and a term, as a unifying concept, is more than a label but a substantive part of the topic. I am frustrated by the way heritage was taken as though its categories are written in advance and only need to be crunched in enough ways to deliver all there is to know about representations of the pasts.

I also began to see this approach as replicated epistemologically in other approaches that though outwardly more highly 'theorised' still take the object of study as though it exists independently of the observer, as though it stands as a revealed truth (Morris 1992). In this way I began to think of Mapping heritage as a concept that evoked precisely this stereotypically Enlightenment, imperialising knowledge; a knowledge that depicted a world as object, the viewer as transcending it from some Archimedean point outside the space and time of those portrayed.¹ There are too many attempted *transcendent visions* (Bondi & Domosh 1992) and omniscient, indeed panoptic observers.² Observers operating in a position they have tried to constitute as outside the discourse they comment upon yet whose gaze is fixated upon it (Morris 1992). They are spell bound in an 'erotics of

1. I should add that in this they map our fantasies and fears, as I shall try to draw out in the concluding chapter. Such 'imperialising ontologies' and colonising knowledges are systematically critiqued in various literatures (Young 1990) - the ones I draw most from here are derived from authors such as Levinas (1989; Godzich 1986) and Bakhtin (Holquist 1990; Todorov 1984).

2. Of course, many claims are seemingly modest and specified. However I still felt de Certeau (1986) was correct to decry this as a false modesty where the modesty of the enunciated was belied by the immodesty of the position of enunciation. As Bondi and Domosh (1992) noted if pure detachment is admitted to unobtainable it is still posited as a desirable ideal against which a work is to be judged.

knowledge' (de Certeau 1985a, 1984). As far as I was concerned it was the - often ignored - structure of these relations of observer and observed that created Heritage as the 'intended object' of and, perhaps, for intellectuals. Before this gets out of hand I must also say that I chose the metaphor of maps because they also need not be about this form of knowledge/power; ideas of cultural maps can imply a plurality of perspectives (Jackson 1989). I had begun to hope to develop an array of possible perspectives that placed and located heritage, as a phenomenon to be studied, in Maps of the cultural terrain. These Maps would try to acknowledge the implication of the observer in the observed. By doing this I wished to suggest that what intellectual commentators experienced and termed 'heritage' was not unproblematically generalizable, that there were specificities in what it meant to whom and in chapter three what it meant when.

Heritage is not an object that exists independently of how it is experienced. Rather as a 'Thing in itself' it is sum total of 'graspings' and understandings to which it lends itself, or again the potential angles of intervention it provides to outside bodies (Massumi 1992). The object, as portrayed in the literature, is composed of these 'graspings' by the observers. It is not an object seen from some transcendent nowhere. It is also not only an object seen from one particular somewhere. The Thing-in-itself always exceeds the concept, or rather there is always a remainder unaccounted for in any one grasping (cf. Adorno 1973). What I have to try to present is a sense of an object possibly shot through with a vast number of scrutinies (Merleau-Ponty 1962:69). In each one, some practices are necessarily reduced to a background while others are thus made to comprise the object itself - the object rendered visible through this shifting dialogue of object and horizon never available as a single entity.

The existence of the object is not a matter of a voluntaristic intention, nor is there a true essence to be uncovered behind distorting images. The object is instead always an object towards something where neither subject nor object is extant as an isolatable element (Dreyfus 1992; Holquist 1990; Merleau-Ponty 1962; Todorov 1984). In this way we can rephrase our idea of Maps as always being made *in situ*, recognising multiple vantage points. Instead of seeing a single phenomenon we see a multiplicity of objects - real and potential. This approach then allows us to highlight the irony of Hewison's text where his epistemic creation of *an* object, a unified field out of the various examples he uses, parallels the ontological creation of heritage as *a* phenomenon, an industry. In both cases, as I shall emphasise later in the chapter, a transcendent signifier is created for the field. Each singular part is torn out and made exchangeable in a totalised system.

I have already sketched out some of the ways that while simply reversing this perspective

can result in an over-simple romanticisation of the popular it nevertheless highlights the perils of generalising from the 'contemplative gaze of official culture' (Chambers 1986) with its particular blindnesses and investments in particular legitimate visions. I cannot claim to be able to cover here either the full range of partial objects that form heritage - it would not exhaust the object just the reader - or the full experiences of those objects. It must also be remembered that in as much as *their* knowledge of the object is a grasping, so too is our knowledge of their knowledge. Popular culture can only be seen as ruins in a scientific gaze 'which assumes the oppression of the very reality it objectifies and idealises' (de Certeau 1986:121) since 'popular culture can only be grasped in the process of vanishing because, whether we like it or not, our knowledge requires us to cease hearing it, to no longer know how to discuss it' (ibid.:131).

What I hope the analogy, between epistemology and Maps, does, for now, is to position our knowledge in between as neither a fixated gaze on an idealised popular nor a perfect knowledge of the object. The analogy should remind us that what I deal with are *representations* of actual practices, constructed from amid a context of multiple locations. Equally it highlights both the necessity for and perils of a reflexivity in this project. It is necessary to understand how we constitute others knowledges as objects by as active a process of grasping as we ascribe to them. It is perilous because, as in Borges story, the perfect map is a perfect regress - where on our map there should be, be it ever so small, a representation of ourselves holding a map - on which should be... and so on ad infinitum.

Mapping Relations to the Past.

Let us begin to look at both the role of multitudes of heterologous practices from which I shall take a few angles, and how their very multiplicity then affects any conceptualisation of heritage. As I have been trying to outline, 'Heritage' is TV (drama and documentary), museums, theme parks, costume re-enactments, school curricula and more. Such diverse forms cannot be treated as a unity. But under the sign of heritage, I shall argue, multiple histories are transformed into a field, and, too often, into a geography of national heritage, with the multiple differences being transformed into an order of competing distinctions. To portray this spatialisation of history, I will use the concept of mapping the past to relate to the ontology of heritage as well as my own epistemology.

However, many authors, by basing their accounts on their own reading of representations, have ignored the diversity of both heritage phenomena and the frames in which they are intended to be received. Instead we are presented with an implied reader, a solitary figure responding to the jingoistic call of Heritage. This figure becomes what Patrick Wright

called the 'Imaginary Briton' perfectly interpellated by the symbols of British nationalism. However, one effect of realising the multiplicity of heritage is to limit the existence of the 'imaginary Briton' due to the multitude of ways sites are appropriated and used (Bommes & Wright 1982:264), and because of the ability of visitors to construct their own paths around sites, to reorganise space/time narratives to suit themselves (Silverstone 1988:239; Macdonald & Silverstone 1990). This has to qualify some of the more determinist readings of heritage and nationalism.. However, there are important power structures in the way this multiplicity operates that cannot be ignored by a naive celebration of what is tantamount to consumer sovereignty (Seaman 1990; Curran 1990; Morley 1992, 1993).

For instance, it is important to be aware of how such consumerist ideas replicate the very operating structures of the field of heritage, operating structures that are important for how history is presented. We can see the connection between an ethic of 'human' stories³ and one of unfettered consumer choice fairly clearly:

"The change of focus, the broadening of interest and social sympathy which now makes "Everyman" - and of course 'Everywoman' - the chief heroes in the heritage stories has had a marked effect on what we recognise as having 'historic' meaning - and therefore on what we collect in order to illustrate it. Indeed, so marked is this revolution in awareness, coupled with I sense a bittersweet recognition born of general social uncertainty, of the ephemeral nature of our surroundings, that there is virtually no item in general daily use no familiar part of our world, which has not become a subject of study, research and collecting."

Sorensen (1989:72).

The effect is to convert the everyday almost *en masse* into a historically charged zone. It is at the level of consuming this engorged past that Malraux's idea of the *museum-without-walls*, where the whole of society had been transformed into a museum, fits. It suggests that modern subjectivities are constructed perpetually in the symbolic arena of a medley of coeval others. This is not a sense of temporal movement and distance from others but as an aesthetic attitude to life where they coexist alongside us (Hoffman 1989) and are thus available for consumption. In this vision we can not not be conscious of the construction of all our myths and cultures because they are all on display.

It is often alleged that this loss of a sense of progress destroys any sense of temporal hierarchy, it destroys any privileged vantage point from which to tell the past, or to distinguish among the present.⁴ Consumers can choose lifestyles, furnishings and anything

³ I have already suggested how there is less of a focus on "dead exhibits" extracted according to scientific categories and more on the human use of exhibits. Objects become plotted in affective tales that appeal in terms of connections to the everyday.

⁴ An example of this process within museums might be the museum of religion opening in Glasgow and being

they wish as a bricolage of dissociated elements of the past. The past is no longer bound in an overarching story, thus it has less meaning, less bearing, and less compulsion (cf. Knapp 1989) on consumers who are freed to pick and mix as they wish. We can choose to live as a Tudor, experience the Blitz, or whatever. The experiences not only compete in terms of veracity but also provide an immediate confrontation with a part of the past - not with a theory elements together. This is how maybe we can begin to account for the almost wilful eclecticism of some displays - look at how Bickleigh castle is written up in promotional brochure:

"The mediaeval romance of the former home of the heirs of the Earls of Devon. Enjoyable 900 years of history lie within the walls of Bickleigh castle - a Royalist stronghold - still a lived-in home. See Tudor furniture and pictures; exhibitions showing the castle's maritime connections including the Mary Rose (Sir George Carew, vice-admiral i/c lived here), model ships, and an intriguing feature on the Titanic. The museum shows 18th to 20th century agricultural and domestic objects and toys, whilst the display of World war II spy and escape gadgets is of interest to all ages. Recently the castle won the Heritage education Trust Award for the second time and 'spotter sheets' covering Norman, Mediaeval, Tudor and Stuart times are available for the budding historian."

We can move glibly from the Tudors to the Mary Rose to the Titanic to spy gadgets. Now it is true that the only unifier here is the absence of any history of struggle, indeed it would be difficult to make sense of such a history since there is no narrative, no goal, no sense of progress and change to struggle over. It is this point that must be highlighted, for amid the celebration of diversity we find only the representation of ourselves, of our views of time and society. The past is held up in the broken shards of how we now experience time. We have "the installation of a spectacular display in which the 'past' enters everyday life, closing time down to the perpetual 'extension' of an immobilised but resonantly historical national 'present' " (Bommes & Wright 1982:264).

It is apparent that, in terms of displays, a spatialised "juxtastructure" (Shields 1991:275) becomes the dominant mode of apprehension of history. Where what may be most apparent is the smorgasbord of objects and themes in a plurality of eclectic displays (Gurian 1991). Perhaps we are watching a combination of the narrative display at the level of individual sites with effectively a 'countryside' of curiosities at the level between sites.

It is possible to argue that we need to situate a proliferation of signifiers of the past not in terms of progress and on-rushing modernity, but in terms of the exhaustion of that unilinear thought of Progress. These ideas have surfaced in the guise of a debate on

favourably received by all but the established churches in Scotland who were deeply angered to find that they were depicted as just one among many religions, and these others were not read in the terms of a christian faith.

'postmodernity' and 'post-modernism' most particularly in architecture. I do not here wish to deal with the underpinnings - economic or theoretical - of such terms or their importance since contending interpretations of both abound (eg Harvey 1989; Hutcheons 1987; Morris 1992; Featherstone 1991; *ad infinitum*). It has been suggested that the availability of so many past styles and their utilisation all at once, the celebration of so many past periods and so many interpretations represents a critical difference from past utilisations. However, the Victorian period saw a wave of Gothic revivalism and interest in a Romantic chivalrous idea of the past (Palmeri 1992; Clive 1985; Lowenthal 1985). This has been suggested could be caused by a sense of forward motion in time - a unilinear Progress (Roth 1989). How then are we to explain our period with mock-Georgian (explained by some as imperial nostalgia eg Wright 1985), and mock-Victorian, and Tudorbethan, an explosion in interests in mazes, in romanticised fantasies of the past (16% of archaeology candidates at Leicester university expressed an interest in games of fantasy role-playing; Walsh 1992), in historic films (Craig 1993) and an endlessly diverse amalgam of others? Do we, as Fowler seems to (1991), assume that listing the diversity is enough to indict society with an ill-considered and credulously romantic view of the past? We have here the opposite of a sense of temporal distance increasing a longing for the past. We have a sense of copresent availability. Both have been suggested as causes of the Heritage phenomenon, despite their mutual incompatibility. Certainly a sense of the availability of so many styles seems linked to the logic of aesthetic consumption (Hannerz 1990).

Yet surely ending the tyranny of grand narratives is a benefit to those who were excluded from them? For if temporal distance collapses so do fixities of perspective, vantage-points of interpretation and privileged visions. This is one of the thoughts we can draw from Emberly's argument that the new sense of time is one of an ever extending present.

'Time is now deprived of its universal and homogeneous character, its continuity and irreversibility. Its coordinates are revealed to be relative to the reference system in which it is experienced. Position and succession are replaced by active tension. The thought of the eternal recurrence is an attempt to think outside of change ...⁵ sequentially ordered and graduated, outside of the irreversibility of time, and outside the causality which posits one instance immediately before another. Eternal recurrence signifies an instantaneous present always being renewed.'

Emberly (1989:754).

Whatever else, this sense of time would render history as an adabracant assemblage (Sontag 1977) so it becomes susceptible to a peculiarly spatialised language. While this may disempower the previously hegemonic interpretations there is no guarantee that it

5. It is only fair to note that Emberly is speaking of succession and progress as defined by time conceived a series of temporal spaces. I have elided this here so as not to confuse the terms I am using, however I will deal with this later.

provides the terms for any opposition outside the arena of capitalist consumption. The metaphor of Trivial Pursuit is telling for where we can no longer distinguish between the trivial and the significant. Like the man who could not forget, history becomes a junkyard of assembled minutiae - unable to be ordered (Luria 1968:xii; cf. Roth 1989). If this emphasises situated knowledges then we must also account for the spatial rather than temporal ontology this idea of history seems to entail.

The Symbolic Construction of Heritage

Signifying the Past

If the above subsection is correct then it is important to look at the mechanics of how the strands of history are taken and reduced to specific, detached instances - how time as process is reduced to rubble? How has political struggle over which themes are claimed as large and small, relevant or to be forgotten, been diverted into a plural realm of equivalences? (see figure 5) Although providing a direct confrontation with alterity such 'experiences' of the past can never amount to a sustained critique or alternative. They are already parts of the system, already mediated vignettes, which offer no resources or externality from which to find a point of resistance. Indeed, points of resistance are now made in to part of the spectacle. The human appeal of heritage often results in the staging of formerly 'back areas' - the servants' areas of stately homes, the fascination with other people's labour process (Urry 1990:107). But as we stage the areas that formerly lent human meaning to lives so we also risk annihilating them as a foundation for values:⁶

'The assertion of values over and against the nihilistic effects of the technological impulse, does not restore meaningful contexts and places in which human stories are related. Instead, it recirculates old images and projects, as endlessly refractable signs, infinitely permeable and disposable. They are no longer conditions of our lives, nor points of resistance to the dominant self-interpretation, but rather collaborating and reassuring elements of the dominant technological ensemble'.

Emberly (1989:782-3).

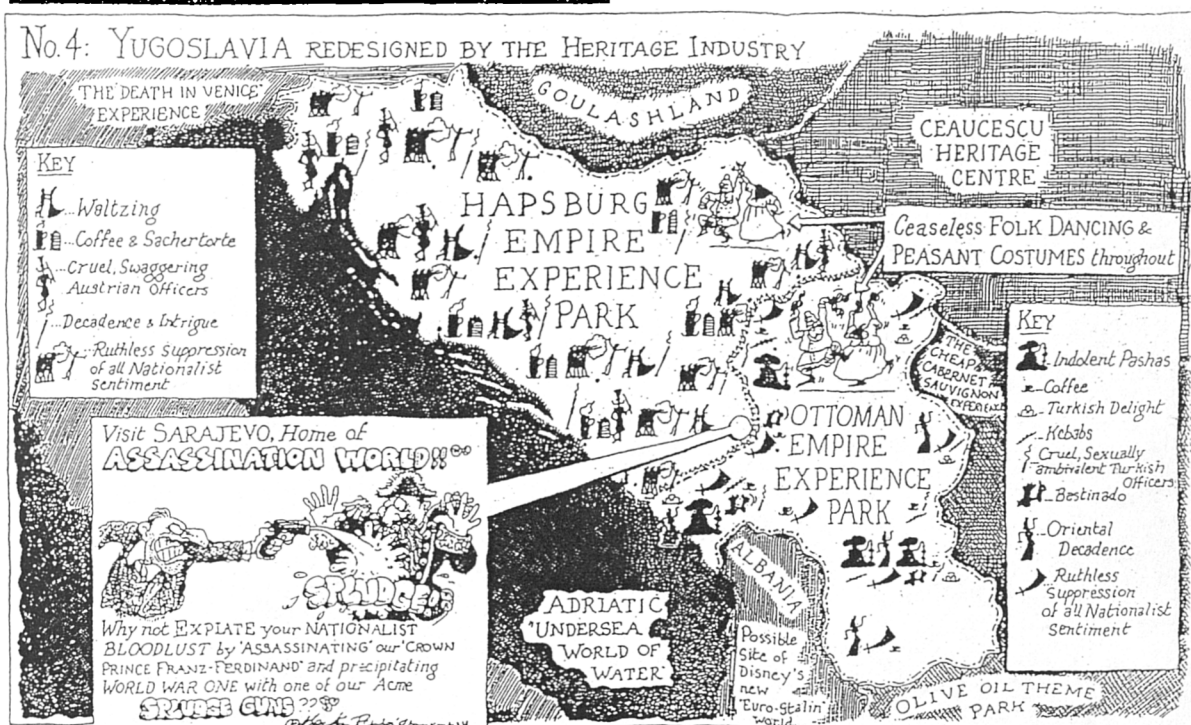
From Emberly, I want to pick out and develop the suggestion that in large part this is a

⁶ It is worth cautioning here that while analysing the undoubted staging of the life-world we do not replicate a simple model of its colonisation by capital or Debord's (1983,1990) spectacle. If we do that we are likely to end up seeking and valorising a non-discursive being-in-the-world as 'authentic' with all the concomitant risks that entails (Bourdieu 1991b). I shall attempt to displace this problem in the next chapter by examining the pre-ontology of the allegedly inauthentic experience in heritage.

Figure 5.

Packaging History for Consumption.

IN AN IDEAL WORLD BY MARTIN ROWSON



SATURDAY-SUNDAY OCTOBER 26-27 1991

The cartoon was published in the Guardian in 1992. It neatly encapsulates the conversion of 'blood and identity' issues into a consumable realm of the same. Of course, it also suggests limits to this process, since I don't think the troubles of the former Yugoslavia would be treated so jocularly now.

case of places and things losing their 'thatness', becoming mere bits of information - enframed as a standing reserve of signs readied for deployment as just any number of bits of interchangeable information. An important point to draw out from this is that the technologies of heritage are not innocent in all of this since '[t]he intensification of the experience of synchronicity and the concomitant destruction of diachrony - the loss of a sense of the past - are promoted by the heritagization of history.' (Walsh 1992:68).⁷ The organisation and technology - in the broad sense - of heritage are a triumph not for a sense of history, as a connectedness with the past, but for what Nietzsche decried as the blind rage of collecting (Game 1991:164).

I stress though that the way history is made into an asynchronous system can be conceptualised through both a spatial analogy and ontology. Each site has its place which is defined in relation to other sites as internal parts of heritage - hence the fervour over internal distinctions (eg DiMaggio 1990; Fleming 1992; Lawley 1992). Each site relates not so much to the past as to other sites in the present. 'Abstracted and redeployed, history is purged of all difference; it has become a unifying spectacle, the settling of all disputes. In this respect, the heritage relation appears to work analogously to exchange value. It brings all its different sites into a system of equivalence, and within this system sites have meaning not in relation to everyday life but overwhelmingly in relation to each other.' (Bommes & Wright 1982:290). We have mutually referring spaces rather than reference to the passage of time. Heritage as a phenomena forms a field, a space which is both homogenised and compartmentalised. Divided up into thousands of heritage sites, the localisation of its parts supports the unity of the abstraction (Lefebvre 1991:310) of Heritage which can be conceived as creating an abstract space. ⁸

Such an analysis also highlights the way Heritage operates by creating sanctified spaces, by marking spaces as 'historic' in contrast to the rest of everyday spaces. To this extent, I am not attempting to define what events, places and things fall into a category called 'heritage'. What I aim to do is to analyse and contest the construction of such a category. In this style of analysis Heritage is the action of sanctifying and marking out some elements of the world as historic, not the historic elements themselves. Wright (1985:18-24) suggested this process was the removal of historical consciousness from the everyday:-

⁷ Lowenthal suggests that the present redefines its relation with past - absorbing it or at least rebuilding the past in a parallel, not a previous, world. It is a world which one can go to, a world apart but accessible: "Now a foreign country with a booming tourist trade, the past has undergone the usual consequences of popularity. The more it is appreciated for its own sake, the less real or relevant it becomes. No longer revered or feared, the past is swallowed up by an ever expanding present; we enlarge our sense of the contemporary at the expense of realizing its connection with the past." (1985:xvii).

⁸ However, as I argued in chapter III, this apparent equivalence serves to euphemise power relations, since these practices fit only certain fractions of the population (cf. Betz 1992).

"National Heritage involves the extraction of history - of the idea of historical significance and potential - from a denigrated everyday life and its restaging or display in certain sanctioned sites, events, images and conceptions. In this process history is redefined as 'the historical', and it becomes the object of a similarly transformed and generalised public attention."

Wright (1985:69).

The focus is not on ideology as distortion, but on the action of reification. The creation of this order of difference is a profoundly spatial process, a truly material discourse. The focus of the chapter II and the issue again highlighted by Wright above is the location of heritage in 'extra-ordinary' sites set apart from daily life. If we take the way sites are 'created' or at least consecrated we can quickly draw the parallels with a Saussurian system. Sites are marked out as historic by 'markers', signifiers that set the site apart, that show its difference against the surroundings, that foreground it. Such markers also serve to re-mark the difference with other sites, they are intelligible because they are recognised as signifiers of 'the historic' and they serve to differentiate this particular bit of history from all the other bits marked out (MacCannell 1976, 1991). They thus have a dual effect, first to separate the marked objects from the rest of the landscape and then to make them all comparable.

It does not take a great leap of logic to see that the presence of the markers can be more important than the actual thing marked: '[t]he marker itself can become a sight, and the sight is inevitably seen as a marked site, one which, like the Saussurian sign, exists only because it is different from any others' (Abbeele 1980:4; cf. Urry 1990:129). The practice of marking may be provide the aura of authenticity. To turn Benjamin around it may be the possibility of endless reproductions and their availability that cues people to see the original as auratic (Benjamin1973a; Berger 1972; Camille 1990). This raises not just the role of souvenirs in proving someone 'was there' but other epiphenomena that cue people to know where to go, that do not just inform but discipline and direct the tourist gaze 'defining the historic' (Urry 1990:1; cf. Klinger 1991). Together the marker and site might be said to form the historic sight (to adapt Barthes (1972) formulation) or form a practice of seeing.⁹

⁹ Such a process of markers and sites adding validity to each other, or of creating a sacralised reality through surrounding discourses, is not new. There is an ever growing literature that parallels tourism to pilgrimage (eg Horne 1984; Graburn 1977; Kelly 1986; Nash 1977). And certainly the role of markers as intertextual creators of meaning can be brilliantly illustrated by the *fifth century* Roman creation of a Holy Land: 'The creation of holy sites and a sacred literature occurred simultaneously from the fourth century on. The sacred sites demonstrated the truth of the text, while the text supplied meaning to the sacred site. A sacred reality is created through its representations, through its reproduction in literature, artifacts, relics, and souvenirs, just as it is materialised in chambers precincts and itineraries. The "true" and the "authentic" is created with the reproduction that furnishes the conscious and unconscious mind of the traveller with a vision of place essential to an experience of its "power" and magic.' (Leed 1991:142).

The purchase of souvenirs, the role of artifacts and so on is not a series of separate consumption acts, rather the brochures anticipate and lay an ambush for the event, prestructuring it, while its successful achievement is marked in the successful acquisition of souvenirs and records of its occurrence - the event then becoming the means to the signs of its own achievement. The spatial system is deeply embedded in what will be experienced as Heritage.

Such an argument may seem to fly in the face of studies of consumption as an active process (Allen 1991; Moores 1988). I shall return to these issues but it is important not to celebrate popular choice to the point that essential power relations that are embedded in this extended consumption process are over-looked (Morley 1992, 1993). Celebrants of consumer activity often quickly come to cite de Certeau's (1984) idea of tactical use of materials as subversion. This seems to miss the point of what can be a very pessimistic reading in which de Certeau is at pains to highlight a system from which there is no escape and counter-points his vision of 'tactics' as weapons of the *weak* against the 'strategies' of hegemons. Perhaps we can begin to reconcile some of the contradictions if we remember the way that the system of extended consumption neither finishes nor starts with the act of purchase:

'Advertising is part of a system which not only sells us *things* - it sells us 'choices'; or to be more precise, sells us the idea that we are 'free' to 'choose' *between* things.'

Williamson (1986:67).

What I am suggesting is that despite all the fury over 'packaging the past' (Anderson 1990) commoditisation has been theorised too naively as being about money and transactions. Instead what I wish to suggest is that Heritage commodifies history in so far as it creates an exchange value between sites and events, whereby they are rendered equivalent - distinct from each other not qualitatively different.

Past as Alterity or the Same.

The above sections suggested that Heritage reduces historical differences to the realm of the Same - all the instances, can be placed on the same Map, no matter their heterogeneity. All the parts are exchangeable, they occur on the same ontological level. This is why the metaphor of the Map seems so descriptive. It uses the connotations of two-dimensional representations portraying a diversity of instances and forms in the same language. Such a process of exchangeability is, I suggest, furthered by the way Heritage works to construct this equivalent field. It is this operation, the disembedding of history and its re-

contextualisation I want to focus on in this section.

I began to explore the role of the extended system of consumption in the previous section. I believe it is vital to look at this area to understand heritage. If I am unhappy with accounts that rely solely on promotional materials as though they were adequate descriptions of consumption, I am more unhappy with accounts that privilege the visit as an isolated event and ignore their role in structuring it. The latter it seems to me ignore how 'the fugitive appearance of individual examples of promotion .. belies the fact of a historically insistent and influential industrial practice' (Klinger 1991:123) that serves to foreground certain elements for consumption and disperse history into assortment of capitalizable elements (cf. *ibid*:129). Or as Haug (1987:123) suggests, the commodity has to be surrounded by imaginary spaces that organise the meaning and function of acts in them.

Sights work in an intertextual environment not about past events but about current representational strategies. The self-contained narrative episodes, that promise to allow the visitor to witness the past or to step back in time or bring the past to life, spatialise time into a series of these discrete narrative episodes. They provoke intertextual effects reliant on the increasing dominance of televisual portrayals of the past - where the TV simulacra of the past may spawn simulacra of themselves - and where authenticity is not judged against an extra-textual real but against other texts/discourses, that compete to form a "confident representational world" where myth and mimesis blur (Silverstone 1988:141). According to Bauman we can trace the role of this intertextual nexus where:

'the most consequential impact of the centrality of the media in cultural reproduction appears to consist in the tendency to construct the world as an assembly of images which are neither causally determined nor leave a lasting trace once they vanish, of happenings, of mutually unconnected and self-enclosed episodes, events grounded solely in the elusive and protean motivation of the actors; and the massive invalidation of memory (except the peculiar, programmatically chaotic and random form of rota-memory deployed in Trivial Pursuit's) - the very faculty on which the construction of changeable reality as development must rest'. (1992:32)

This replacement of the referent by a system which prefers to base its values on a field of intertextual, aesthetic comparisons leads to the sort of obscenity that has so outraged commentators. How else can we explain the following advert:

The American Civil war - See it.... experience it ... one of the cruellest wars in history depicted in vivid detail in pictures and words.

Time Life Books.

That seems more intent on boasting of its representational strategies rather than seeming showing concern with the past it depicts. I have suggested earlier how many displays allow

elements of new knowledges - about the ordinary people in the past - to be generated. However, perhaps here we can see how the logic of the system means such presentations can not form critiques but simply generate more choices in what Bauman (1991) called the devastating equanimity of the market.

The particularities can thus be remanufactured as the appearance of difference, reincorporated as a marker of the 'historical' rather than conveying a sense of history. In a similar vein we can say that accuracy or connection to an authentic past becomes less important than matching the appearances in other sites. Since in this world of mass images, one never approaches the relic fresh, in order to compete with glamorised images it must be reconstituted, in order to appear 'real' (Lumley 1988:12). The semantic economy of traditional museums is destroyed when the value of the original appears eroded (Taborsky 1983; but see Camille 1990).

However, one can equally argue that the most "themed" sites are not imitative but use some few facts to support an obviously fictional scenario (Game 1991:154).

"the search for verisimilitude, like the acquisition of more 'information', only reinforces the dissonance between the illusion of exactitude and the recognition of artificiality. No one believes a reconstruction really *is* its original, although they do place confidence in its accuracy."

Jordanova (1989:31).

We cannot say that every viewer believes the 'soft, disjointed, insubstantial reality' (Bauman 1992:33) presented is the past. We can however, try to suggest that placing all history in the same frame does work to deny its use as an alterity to critique the present. It cannot offer an escape, or indeed a platform in the form a multiplicity of the same images. It is this that makes Hewison's thesis outstanding, because ~~he~~ if it is read ironically it seems to grasp this very action. I have argued his is a totalising account (Crang 1994a) but here it can also be read as a strategy revealing the very action of the field. To paraphrase Morris on Harvey he [Hewison] 'can only analyse postmodernity [heritage] by first rewriting as 'the same' all the differences that constitute it for him as a topic for debate in the first place' (Morris 1992:258). Yet surely this is precisely the action I have been trying to show is at the very heart of Heritage.

Master Signifiers and the Economy of Heritage.

Specifically, I suggest this action of Heritage can be taken as the creation of a Master Signifier. I wish to argue that the effect of seeing 'heritage' as a transcendent signifier is to recognize it less as an object and more as a mode of organising certain parts into a

reactionary whole. It is a whole organised according to what Godzich (1985) terms *a mode of repetition*, where energy (and capital) is increasingly invested in organising and structuring demand through a process of semiotic design and differentiation. However, in praising and stressing the qualities of design all this does is to stress auratic qualities of difference and ignore the homogenising effect of the whole field (Godzich 1985:433).¹⁰

The symbolic action of Heritage as a Master Signifier is the production of repetition, of Sameness, under the guise of heterogeneity. It is an action of totalisation. To develop this idea at an abstract level a signifying system, in Lacan's reworking of Saussure, is comprised of a series of absences in an endlessly self-referring chain. What the Master Signifier does is to make this chain circular and self-referring (Zizek 1991a, 1991b, 1989). It renders them intelligible in terms of themselves. It is absent from all of them and thus constitutes them as equivalences. It is this ontological position that I wish to argue is that of heritage. It organises the terms of exchange between forms of historic awareness it renders equivalent to each other.

It is necessary to have an analysis that does allow for a critical understanding of how Heritage dictates the positions available, and controls the understanding of the past. If we again turn to critiques of more general trends in advertising and commodity culture we can see this action explained cogently by Williamson:

'Every society has some kind of map, a grid of the terms available to think in at any given time. In ours consumer goods are just some of the chief landmarks which define the 'natural' categories we are accustomed to. It takes the law to define 'crime'; it takes medicine to define 'sickness'; it takes science to define 'nature'; and it takes *Hoover* to define *three kinds of dirt*.' (1986:227)

What I am suggesting is that it takes Heritage to define the different forms of history and their availability. Heritage is the organising Map by which society is being told to understand the past. They become a part of the Same, quantified and equivalent. A master signifier guarantees their exchangeability - they all become the same form of Experience. On the M4 there is a sludge brown sign that points its single arrow to:

- Castle.
- Royalty & Empire.
- Safari Park.

The differences are spatialised, become mappable, become a distance to travel, become a

¹⁰ Rather as with modernist avant garde movements that sought to exalt the unique as resistant to a culture of sameness all that happened was the provisioning of more material for cultural industries that required the production of novelty (Bennett 1990).

"monumental geography of national heritage" (Bommes & Wright 1982).¹¹ This geography organises how we can relate to the past and how we organise our understandings of it. I want to link this process again to that of consumption more generally as a way of being-in-the-world. 'If it is language that channels our physical perceptions, it is the language of consumer products which defines our daily life. Whether we feel consciously 'for' or 'against' consumer society, the terms of our experience, the language of our delight or protest, are the same. ... *products map out the social world, defining, not what we do, but the ways in which we can conceive of doing things - rather as a building maps out space. ...* all products are part of this material landscape, whose contours chart our very vision of life and its possibilities, and whose boundaries mark out our channels of thought. These are not fixed but cannot be shifted by an opposition that fits into the same slots. (Williamson 1986:226-7 emphasis added). It is this sort of role, controlling how we envision the past that I am trying to argue is the effect of Heritage.

For instance, the stress on a shared humanity, as common denominator amid social diversity, tends to occlude relations of oppression from the experience. The visitor is encouraged to imaginatively identify and understand, and is drawn into a new politics of pleasure. The human interest format, with its focus on shared humanity as a common ground for the audience can elide a huge range of different subjectivities in the name of a spurious humanism and can promulgate a 'presentist' reading of past events - ignoring that past actors may have had very different thought processes from those we use as a baseline in assessing a 'shared situation'. Such an approach seems to bear uncanny echoes of what Levinas (1989) terms ontological imperialism, where the other is possessed through a violent disclosure and loss of its distinctive Being (Godzich 1986:xiii; Young 1990:3-13). Such an imperialising project appears to deny the role of the past as alterity. Alterity becomes the always colonised ground of the fantasies of the present.

Space and the Organisation of Heritage

Space versus Time as Concept

So far I have tried to mobilise the connotations of mapping to raise issues about the processes involved in constituting Heritage. However, I must begin to spell out here why I find this only a beginning step in conceptualising this processes and some of the limitations that tend to come with this metaphor. I do not mean to discard it but to be clear about

¹¹ Just in case it is feared this example is a little too anecdotal, I could equally well have chosen the sign on the M5 to Regency Cheltenham, Historic Gloucester Docks, Cathedral, Forest of Dean. Or to speak of homogenisation The signs that say "XX Historic Market Town and Local Services", of which there are identical ones, save for the name, at both ends of journeys I make from Durham to Exeter.

some of its theoretical baggage. In this subsection I want to start this process by laying out the often implicit and inadequate conceptualisation of space and time that is used to underwrite the idea of mapping.

The usage of the idea of the map often entails the depiction of space versus time or more precisely space as the absence of time. A position Harvey (1989) has (wrongly) criticised as being implicit in Heidegger or that Thomas (1991) uses to suggest archaeology allows a confrontation with alterity, and a time of activity that could lend meaning to space. I am not going to argue through each of these ideas (cogent critiques can be found in May (1991), and Massey (1992)). It is this idea of an inert space which underlies how the Map can be used to symbolise the extension of the present, and thus Heritage as bringing the past into the present. Following theorists from Bergson (1991), and others who have followed his approach, space becomes an almost pejorative term. Bergson celebrated the idea of multiplicity in time as *durée*, as forming qualitative differences. Against this he counterposed the idea of space as being one of quantitative repetition. Such a distinction has a widespread currency, forming part of Ricoeur's (1988, 1985, 1984, 1980) or Castoriadis' (1991, 1988) theorisation of time. One of the arguments they make is against the understanding of time as a succession of moments (t1, t2, t3, tn) enchainé like beads on a string (Carr 1986; Thomas 1991; Cohan & Shires 1990).¹²

Ricoeur argues cogently that time does not operate like this and I certainly agree. However, it remains to point out that the metaphor used for this bad, quantified, homogenised, 'public' time is spatial. The spatial is quickly enrolled on the negative side of an a/ not-a relationship (Massey 1992). In using the metaphor of the Map I have tried to capitalise on this. I do think the conversion of alterity to the realm of the Same is one of the strategies of Heritage, and thus it is highly susceptible to this theoretical language. However, Massey (1991) and others are right in calling for a better theorisation of space. The above analysis has considerable problems and is not sufficient to account for the phenomenon because in the same moment as grasping it also precludes a sense of activity.

Timing the Space of Heritage.

Implicit in the dualistic accounts of space and time is an almost unreconstructed Cartesian account of space as the *res extensa* as opposed to the *res cogitans*. It seems to me that this still lurks in Bergson's (1991) work but there are ways of leading from his ideas to a

¹² The resemblance to accounts of a signifying system may show the pervasiveness of the use of space to represent the absence of time. If we take Saussure's system, it is clear that it is synchronic and thus fits with the use of this conception of a spatial vocabulary. The relations of this tendency to post-structuralist theory - derived from Saussure - and the sudden penchant for spatialised vocabularies should also be fairly worrying.

different conception of space/time. In part I think this alternative can be found in his conception of flows rather than images which will be the underlying shift in the next chapter. First, however it is necessary to alter the terms of the debate somewhat to avoid replicating the dualism, as I think he did, even while trying to bypass it, as I think he was. He attempted to breakdown the dualism by redefining the subject as a multiplicity of vectors (Deleuze 1991) that is distended along lines of memory and action. However, he left the category of space unrefined - positioning it as the antithesis of his idea of flows. The reformulation he attempted was confined to the acting subject. Thus he regarded ideas of action as a series of images and states as insufficient, however instead of then trying to suggest the problems in general of this model he displaced it onto a negative spatial ontology.

It may be that such is a response to what might be called the *ontic* conception of abstracted space - that produced by analytic abstraction. In responding thus, what is produced is an echo of this analytic abstraction not a reconception of the ontology of space (cf. Dreyfus 1991). I suggest that in Heritage we have an excellent opportunity, and a necessity, to rework space as involving a temporality, not as excluding it.¹³ let us begin to consider the sense of spaces involved in our Map of Heritage. Let us try and look for a start in the concrete way spaces are related to each other. If I can draw on Merleau-Ponty (1962), a commentator and reviser of Bergson, I want to draw out just that point - that the spaces do relate to each other. Unlike an image of discrete objects/spaces set about the world he provides the idea of an object that can only exist in relationships. Merleau-Ponty (1962) develops a series of ideas, that also seem strikingly congruent with Mikhail Bakhtin's (Folch-Serra 1990; Holquist 1990; Todorov 1984), which position all objects in a relation of foreground and background. An object only becomes distinguishable in terms and against a selected background. Thus a heritage site/sight requires the surrounding area to be reframed as non-historical to make it appear as a separate entity. The one cannot be understood, indeed exist, without the other.

However, Merleau-Ponty goes further in adapting a Sartrean metaphor of existence where the self is connected to an establishing external gaze (Jay 1994). I have already cited his idea of a multiplicity of gazes forming the full potentiality of an object and that no observer could ever exhaust the multiplicity of possible perspectives. Like in Bergson they were real but virtual patterns. Again, like Bergson, he sought the realisation of some of these virtual 'objects' through the temporal activity of the subject - leaning in part on a Husserlian idea

¹³ It seems doubly surprising since one of the major operations in refiguring time has been to dismiss the ontic conception of time as a succession of moments in favour of a different ontology. This has been done by analogising the ontic sense of time with space. I find it remarkable it was not considered that what was being analogised was an equally limited ontic sense of spatiality.

of a 'tempo-object' as an object completed only over a time (cf. Carr 1986), yet also creating a 'spatio-object'. The famous example Merleau-Ponty employs is that of a cube. As he points out, from any one angle some sides are hidden yet we still understand the object as a cube which requires us to accept the virtual presence of the other sides. So far then we can argue that in Heritage, the existence of any one site not only implies a background of non-Heritage but also the virtual presence of other Heritage sites.

The virtual presence of these other sites can be best understood as not only necessarily spatial but also temporal. The virtual presence of the other sites is a part of the role of memory and expectation. The spaces of Heritage cannot be experienced simultaneously - some are present in anticipation, others in memory. This spatial existence cannot then be separated from time since the virtual spaces that constituted the object are temporally separate. This virtual constitution is what by-passes the problem spatialising time as movement between "places" of memory' (Emberly 1989:746). The places are instead only constituted through such movement - it is the movement that binds the places and their times together.

Such an idea gives a new grip on the spatial technology of Heritage. We have still a Lefebvrian ascription of social activities to places (Shields 1991:51) and a sense of the symbolic violence of a geographical Heritage as an ascription of meaning to places and a removal of direct relations with people who live there (Rée 1992:10). Yet a sense of movement links this geography to a sense of temporality. We can find such virtual movement embedded in the structure of heritage. At a concrete level managers advising good practice, such as Parkin (1989), suggest 'routes' of sites linked together are vital in setting up a total experience - ie a single site feels incomplete with all the virtual sites abounding.

To go further we can look at the role these routes play in constituting the experience of any one site. For instance, the metaphoric Map becomes pastel shaded and from amid the detail, key routes emerge marked as trails - heritage trails. (Figure 6). Game (1991:154-9) points out that this affects the experience of the particular instances encountered. Each experience is given an order, it is seen in light of what has been experienced and what is expected to be experienced. In turn each experience allows a revisioning of what has been experienced. The subject becomes the act of passing through the sites.¹⁴

¹⁴ It will be clear that this bears a striking resemblance to a narrative theory of existence, a parallel upon which I will elaborate in the next chapter.

Figure 6.

Mapping Heritage.



The top picture is a postcard bought in the North York Moors, illustrating the array of Heritage on key routes. Bottom is the cover of a promotional leaflet for an industrial heritage campaign of 1993. Notice the inset little captions 'transport', 'printing'. Both areas are reduced to a range of equivalent attractions

For now I want to keep in mind the spatial ontology of Mapping heritage. This is a mnemotechnic that bears parallels to the classic works analysed by Francis Yates (1968):

'The recollection of "places" or *topoi*, of memory was mnemotechnic which organized knowledge and experience by a visual space of discrete points, planes and boundaries engendering the notions of spatial exclusivity, enclosure, visibility, and distance as well as those of association and order. It was made possible only by reiteration, by a trusting adherence to those things, and by the sequential arranging of places that were sufficiently different from one another to prevent infinite substitutability and transference from confounding the order.'

Emberly (1989:747).

I suggest though that the idea of routes serves to transform the duality implicit above of spatially distinct places that exist like Kantian objects. While we may have created a space for memories (de Certeau 1986:143-4) - both social in terms of the sites and personal in terms of memories of those sites - these memories are not placed independently. They exist in a series and on a route they are *ordered* in both the temporal and spatial senses of that word. So the subject we are envisaging is more than a spatialised sensorium with emotions and memories tied to places (Shields 1991), it is a spatially and temporally distended subject that exists in part not as accumulation of events but as a path, a trajectory. If it is geography that holds together the bricolage of the subject by attaching feelings and events to places (Bishop 1989), then it is a narrative route that binds these into one subject. It is the unifying experience of travel, of movement through the already given world that is reflected in the construction of knowledge (Abbeele 1991; Bishop 1989; Leed 1991).

The structure of the route emphasises the overall idea of travel, of accumulation and linkage of heritage sites into one field. The Map is then part of this organisation of memory and expectancy. Never is anyone site complete or adequate, in the map it is set against other sites that express the lack that is at the heart of orders of difference. The Map represents the shift from fragments of the past scattered about to an industrial organisation of segments of the past, divided up and marked out (cf. Wollen 1991:57). Yet each piece is not on its own, it makes sense only with reference to the others that can only be experienced in a sequence, and as a sequence such sights can give rise to a different whole than the sum of the parts, it is the sequence itself that creates meaning (Eisenstein 1986; Taylor 1990). I want to conclude then by embracing the mutual implication of map and travel, fixity and mobility that parallels the relations of image and narrative. The making of maps is often a product, a representation, of information from travelling; while maps also guide the itineraries of travellers, giving journeys a teleological drive - setting out in order to find that which is already marked out on the map (Abbeele 1980).

Placing Time or Spatialising Places?

So far I have been concerned not just to explain the action of Heritage establishing a field of 'historic' sites through the metaphor of the map but also to use the idea of the Map to approach some ideas on how such sites are experienced. I have been at some pains to try to show how 'Maps, with routes carefully marked, combine both landscape *and* time. Routes are the temporal and spatial threads around which the *bricolage* [of experience] is organised. No matter how wide the digressions, no matter how disparate the topics, the route provides the datum to which we can and must return' (Bishop 1989:3). I want to suggest this goes further than just saying that the routes on the map organise memories (Harbison 1977:126; cf. Luria 1968). What we are turning to is the activity that maps promote, the practices through which they are constructed and used - which I want to suggest is primarily travel. I want to then turn to the next related metaphor of the Journey. Moreover the metaphor *Journey* focuses on the construction of experience as a spatio-temporal practice, as opposed to the enactment of cultural 'maps', emphasising a process of creating cultural facts and allowing one to distinguish the *event* from the *place* (Probyn 1990:179).

The Map seems to focus unduly on the intended experiences of heritage, not on the activity and actual practices that go on. It captures neatly the way heritage inscribes values on the landscape and places the past in demarcated sites. However, such Maps do not control how these places are performed, the events that occur through them, and how they are used. Subjects cannot be read from these possible positions. The Map metaphor is much poorer in capturing a sense of what de Certeau (1984) called the spatialisation of places. Beyond the Map is the multitude, the heterology of practices (de Certeau 1986) that in using heritage produce qualitatively different experiences. This seething activity cannot be read off from textual determinants, it is not entirely controlled by the structures of Heritage. As de Certeau (1984) pointed out it is an activity that is invisible to the dominant gaze, that subverts its categories yet never 'escapes', it has no elsewhere, it invokes no outside point. However, I want to keep a sense of a dominant reading and a sense of the spatiality of practices. Not only, as Merleau-Ponty put it, is space existential and existence spatial (in de Certeau 1986:115) but it is the spatial context that informs and sustains the practices that compose Heritage.

What I will try to do is capture a sense though of how the existential participation of people occurs through these spatial practices. In this way I hope to treat heritage sites as events rather than representations. I want to turn to Travel as an epistemology that allows us to look at the activity of Heritage, not to treat it as representations. In other words,

Travel serves as a metaphor for the creation of knowledge by the public and by commentators (Morris 1988a:15). The relation developed here, of Maps and Journeys, denies the "givenness" of facts; facts are constituted by a continuous process of discovery. Both for me as analyst and for those engaging in heritage practices. This focus then allows me to look to how people's participation in Heritage occurs through various culturally mediated means - the plurality noted earlier - and at how they can go beyond or rather transform the positions Mapped out for them while interacting with them. I thus want to turn now to Travel as part of this dialogue between practices and places as constituting the activities of Heritage.

Performing Heritage, Producing Knowledge and Travels in the Past.

In the last chapter I outlined how Heritage could be conceived of as an ontological transformation - a rendering of multiple pasts into a single field. I suggested the violence this did to the multiplicity of perspectives, forms and types of pasts that were then subsumed in this category. To suggest the interaction of this sense of unity and difference, I employed the spatial metaphor of 'mapping' heritage, a metaphor grounded in the organisation of Heritage sites as well as in academic knowledge about them. I begin this chapter, by again trying to find an exemplary allegory that will connect to the ontology of Heritage but will also signal an epistemology that avoids some of the pit-falls I highlighted towards the end of the last chapter. I want, then, to provide a modified epistemology using Travel as a metaphor. The focus on Travel helps to draw out the sense of activity in the practices that constitute, animate and consummate heritage.

In this chapter I start from a focus on the 'Writing of Heritage', to echo de Certeau (1988), looking for these practices in the strategic blindnesses of accounts. I thus begin by briefly looking at some of the approaches that seem both seductive and popular but which serve to suppress knowledges about the actual or potential practices that comprise Heritage. The first section explores the possible theoretical problems of assuming that heritage is an analytic object and attempts to argue for restoring a sense of *fluidity* to it. The second section then sets out to restore some activity to the ordinary people and practices that animate heritage sites and events. This section begins by outlining the importance of practices which evade the knowledges of academy. Then it turns to what popular knowledges may be produced, while attempting to retain a sense that these knowledges cannot escape or ignore the power relations such as those outlined in chapter 3. In the third section, I outline the way the activity of travel can frame the experience of heritage through ideas about a knowledge embedded and connected to the world. I use travel to suggest a conception of a series of experiences that does not dichotomise time and space so drastically. I then explore what this may mean for understanding the agency of the interpreting subject of Heritage. I conclude the section by pointing to how the use of Travel metaphors does not remove or evade the crucial issues of power/knowledge but rather allows us to maintain a sense of dilemma and ambiguity (cf. Morris 1988b). In the final section I outline how this leads me to conceptualise the actual places, groups and events I studied in terms of mobility and dispersion rather than as bounded entities and how I have tried to create, through field-materials, not a textual sense of delving deeper but a sense of irruption through replication. Finally, I conclude with a consideration of which events were chosen for their ability to create these effects.

In order to develop these issues 'empirically' the next section considers what impacts this way of framing the issue has on the research process. I thus begin by considering the relation of my knowledge about heritage, derived from an experience of research sites as equally seriated, as knowledge about the past derived from the experience of heritage sites. I then go on to highlight two specific dangers thrown into relief by the travel metaphor, derived from the authority of travel. The first is the obscuring of the places and people visited by the account of the travel and traveller and the other being the creation of a 'reality effect' through eye-witness authority.

Performance as Ontology

Becoming Heritage.

I have already spelt out the reasons for my opposition to accepting at face value the category Heritage and suggested that we need to look towards the activity of categorisation to recognise that '[t]radition resembles less an artefactual assemblage than a process of thought - an ongoing interpretation of the past' (Handler & Linnekin 1984:274). It is not some-*thing* that is inherited. Heritage is the construction of some-*thing* in the present that is valued for a particular past association

Focusing on Travel as a spatial practice (de Certeau 1984) emphasises the sense of creative movement. It also tries to undermine a sense of closure found in the idea of a thing, an Object of study; a closure aided by the Map's sense of space which, in common usage, supports the relations of outsides and insides, boundedness and demarcation (Massey 1992). The Map implies that although the object is shot through with a multiplicity of gazes it is possible to locate and define it. By focusing on process I want to suggest how the object is always and specifically disclosed by the action of understanding it, and that it is impossible to hem it in, to look from all around, since each gaze can only take place after another. To counter Merleau-Ponty (1962:69), while objects may be shot through with vast numbers of scrutinies they are not co-present gazes. This sequencing is not unimportant. It means that at any given moment all we have is a piling up of insufficiencies (de Certeau 1986) which can never equal a whole since each is always missing a part. Each requires a supplement - so our theoretical object can never exhaust the thing conceived (Adorno 1973:5, 111)¹.

The sense of Journey then is meant to undermine the stability of an object by emphasising the practices rather than the results. To emphasise the results of travel misses what I want to make into the key difference of the two approaches. Maps, as the results of Travel,

1. It may be apparent that I have some considerable sympathy with the objective of Adorno's negative dialectics to 'penetrate' the hardened object and reveal the potentiality locked within its becoming (1972:52).

appear to produce several possible perspectives on heritage, much as Patrick Wright (1991) does in his *Journey Through Ruins*, where his travels reveal successive facets of the object. But I suggest that this is a flawed strategy since the act of placement (or location) freezes the processes through which users animate heritage. Instead this thesis reflects a process of knowledge creation that is an encounter, an *event* that is neither stable nor transcendental

By focusing on movement I hope to prise open the object of study. At the same time as embedding Heritage within this structuring process I also hope that it retains more of a sense of agency and activity than many other post-structuralist spatial metaphors, which often seem to verge on defining the subject simply as *res extensa* instead of *res cogitans* following the sort of logic that 'the system is, therefore I am not' (Anderson 1992:78; cf. Dienst 1994:148). Rather I hope the Journeys I undertake will help to spotlight the practices, struggles, capitulations and stories of the 'unsung armies of semiotics' (Culler 1981:127) - the tourists and the everyday interpreters of the world.

Against Representations of the Past.

Given the above and the hierarchies of taste outlined in chapter 3 it should be clear that I want to find ways of speaking to different forms of understanding, different performances, different knowledges.

'Official culture, preserved in art galleries, museums, and university courses, demands cultivated tastes and formally imparted knowledge. It demands moments of attention that are separated from the run of daily life. Popular culture meanwhile mobilises the tactile, the incidental, the transitory, the expendable and the visceral. It does not involve an abstract aesthetic research amongst privileged objects of attention but invokes mobile orders of sense, taste and desire. Popular culture is not appropriated through the apparatus of contemplation, but, as Walter Benjamin once put it, through distracted reception.'

Chambers (1986:12).

Such a desire for the popular is expressed often enough in geography - as is the desire to escape the dialectical mill Chambers seems to construct where what is not official is constituted as popular and thus a "Good Thing". However, a focus on Heritage as a representation seems to be the answer looked to most often (eg Daniels 1993; Hughes 1991; Pocock 1992)². The concern with 'representations' seems to take precedence too quickly over lived experience and materiality (Berman 1991:60). Moreover it seems a somewhat static idea of Heritage again, as a text, as a series of images, for the analyst to deconstruct.

² In fact a certain style of approaching images seems to be gaining dominance - whether it is associated with the East Midlands 'School' of the UK or the idea of landscape as text. In either case we have an academic 'boom' - a term which as Meaghan Morris (1988b) perceptively points out, includes an idea of a pre-emptive constriction of what is doable as well as sense of increase.

This model seems to depend largely on the creation of an 'assumed reading' of the pictures, one that often results from a process of deep contemplation - far removed from the sort of practices outlined by Chambers (1986 above). What too often occurs is that '[t]he actual brilliance often displayed in the art of living in modern society by people of all classes, and the use of the ambiguities, inconsistencies, resistance, framing, and such devices in individual and social strategies are lost' (Miller 1987:155). A focus on representations tends to lead to their interpretation via the Saussurian idea of *la langue*, as a structure generating meaning. Such a focus tends then to downplay performance to a simple enactment, *la parole*, of this structure - indeterminate actions which are ultimately uninteresting compared to the textual structure.

Instead, then, I want to draw attention to other aspects of re-presentation as a *practice*. Rather than based on the always-already interpellation of the text, such a re-presentation stresses the sense of connection or what Taussig calls the 'sympathetic magic' of mimesis (Taussig 1993, 1994) - connections that imply transit and movement, and the possibility that the message can be transformed or miss its destination (Derrida 1987; Dienst 1994). Heritage is about making the past present, re-presenting in this active sense. Any theoretical approach has to allow for the spectral presence³, the mediated connection, of the past to the present, if it is to understand the power and appeal of the past. Images may well circulate as part of this 'tele-communication' (Derrida 1987), helping form some of the connections, but it is on the sense of motion and circulation that this thesis will focus. Images do not stand in silent depiction, they are passing and moving from one legible position to the next (Fynsk 1992), they are stamped with the imprint of various carriers forming part of certain behaviours at certain times.

I do not want to downplay the importance of 'images'. Rather I want to see them, not just as texts burdened with meanings to be unpacked, but as part of the activities and practices that constitute heritage experiences. For instance in creating and marking out site/sights:

'The proliferation of markers frames something as a sight for tourists; the proliferation of reproductions is what makes something an original, the real thing: the original of which the souvenirs, postcards, statues, etc. are reproductions. The existence of reproductions is what makes something original, or authentic, and by surrounding ourselves with markers and reproductions we represent to ourselves ... the possibility of authentic experiences in other times and other places'

Culler (1981:132).

Thus representations are important, not as static images of the past, but because of the role they play in making it present - indeed it is possible to query which has ontological pre-

³ The concept of spectral presence has been loosely inspired but not rigorously derived from Derrida (1994).

eminence, or the possibility of authenticity as an experience of self-presence, when the telecommunication of pictures always leads elsewhere (Camille 1992; Derrida 1987). Describing and unpacking the images (signifiers) is not the same as analysing the practices of signification (Morris 1992:264), even if the two are sometimes closely intertwined.

Speed and the Academy.

Perhaps we can examine academic travels around Heritage in terms of two competing archetypes - one bound up in a more traditional model of knowledge and the other bound up and prophesying a post-modern knowledge. Here I am taking two extremes, but Travel is not about dichotomies but a continuum of durations of attention - different structures of experience. Experiences that are constituted and organised by the type of Journey made.

I want to suggest that these differing structures of feeling, expressed in relations of speed (Thrift 1994), provide a sense of the multiple types of Heritage experience created. This heterology of practices has often been missed due to intellectuals generalising from their particular modes of comprehending the world. Firstly, we can look to a more traditional contemplative relation to the object of study. To give an example of how specific this way of *uttering* heritage is, one can refer to the BBC programme "*a Perfect Village*" (1992) which involved the classic motif of a journey through rural Britain seeking an idyll - the Journey, of course, began in London and was by Morris Minor. Such a way of consuming the past is uncannily echoed in the ways many intellectuals study the past:-

"Geography is first of all knowledge generated by observation... The mode of locomotion should be slow, the slower the better, be often interrupted by leisurely halts to sit on vantage points and stop at question marks."

Sauer (1956:296).

Subjecting the modern world to that sort of gaze simply drains the life out of contemporary culture. It seems to capture, perhaps nostalgically for me, an academic travel writing that was an art of punctuation - a sentimental travelling with no particular destination (Sieburth 1987) - not a luxury afforded to many current academics. But rather than discard this way of apprehending the world we should realise its specificities and implications, specificities which are foregrounded if we look to a second mode that seeks to study an alienating geography of hyper-reality. This is the Journey of the high-speed academic⁴ or what Meaghan Morris (1988d:195) terms the 'cruising grammarian reading similarity from place to place', reading how a sense of place is produced, but neglecting too often the specificities of its use.

4. The particular works I have in mind are those like Virillio's *War & Cinema* or Baudrillard's *America* and in a different vein Horne's *The Great Museum*.

However, the high-speed reading of difference does grasp some of the ways that amidst the homogenised space of modernity, 'we' ⁵ collect signs of the particular. Resisting the obliteration of the past, we desperately mark out the particular. Markers that tell us of particular instances become more important than the instances themselves, and places are objects of a gaze focused on such markers (Urry 1990:12, 125). 'The past-in-the-present is now a look, not a text' (Morris 1988a:2; Bryson 1988) and certainly not a contemplative gaze. Starting from glimpses, the whole process becomes a scanning of the historic landscape where the difference of one place from another is indeed an optical illusion:-

"The difference is mere variation apprehended in a high-speed empiricist *flash*. Indeed, the rapidity with which I 'recognize' the difference is the sign of its pseudo-status."

Morris (1988a:5).

Entering upon this Journey one is swept up in a world with no time to pause, no time to listen to contrary voices. The world of space-time compression is that of instantaneity and velocity. In this Journey, Heritage works at the creation of 'place effects'. The subject disappears in accelerated time. Velocity becomes the world of hype, a world of the hyper-real where the fakes are more real than the real. Endless acceleration spirals into superlatives. To stand out in the landscape, a site must be more X than X. Amidst the vertigo of this world, heritage sites compete to divide and establish their place in the geography of national history, marked and signposted, to distinguish them from the background, rendered visible to speeding travellers. Such places exist by their inscription, discursively constructed for high speed utterances. They are 'minimally readable' (Morris 1988d:194) precisely for such pace of utterances and because of their marking. They form itineraries organising history. They need and produce postcards, always better than our own photos. Souvenirs produced to be taken away; metonyms not of the place but traces of a passage through it. This is Heritage as brochures suggest it is experienced - calling out to a subjectivity that above all needs to 'be there', to be in the midst of a recreated past. But given the number of experiences, what the subjectivity produces is a need to 'have been there'. To have been and added the event to a collection of experiences. This truly recognises tourism as a history of speed, as an 'accelerated impressionism' forming an aesthetics of disappearance (Sieburth 1987 in Morris 1988a). We may set out to see the Past, but all our itineraries can take us to see are more signs of tourism (Morris 1988a:10) in a landscape of quotation (Roberts 1988:545).⁶

5. This 'high velocity academy' dangerously blurs the analyst and consumer, surreptitiously supplying both with an archetype based in the analyst. I use 'we' to flag this.

6 One need only think of the tours of Europe that 'do' the sites in a fortnight or the visitors to Britain that follow an itinerary around London, Oxford and Stratford-upon-Avon. Lest I sound holier-than-thou my diary of a brief trip to visit friends in Washington DC is a procession from the Capitol, to Annapolis Naval College, to the Smithsonian, to Colonial Williamsburg and on.

In such a world of endless displacement, the victory of abstraction eliminates places of resistance. All that is left of settled duration is the Journey itself (Prato & Trivero 1985). We have Maps that portray routes that desire to be nowhere, only to be going (Harbison 1977). In following this idea of permanent motion we are invited along with the Theorist who becomes a 'post-structuralist tour guide' (Grossberg 1992:378) telling us what is noteworthy as the world flashes past. It is this perspective that seems to fit the idea the idea of Heritage as quantifying each point as a moment in time until you can travel through 1000 years of history in 140 miles of scenic tour (Game 1991:153).

It should be clear that I have deep reservations about this seductive approach although it operates well on one level and undoubtedly provides valuable insights. This is because these insights seem compelling and powerful yet also almost impotently abstract.⁷ It is important to beware the amnesia of travel in reading these 'postcards without people' (Probyn 1990:183) and ask who has been silenced, what alternative practices have been suppressed. Such accounts have to be situated as emanating from strangely detached explorers (Bondi & Domosh 1992). It is not just, as Anderson (1993) charges, that theirs is a systemic anti-cogito at work that, as Massumi (1992:30) suggests, treats 'I' not as an expressive subject but as a linguistic marker of supra-individual context. Rather I want to examine how the specificities of their context occlude alternatives. In a sense it is inevitable that any account will foreclose some, probably most, options but with these accounts we must remember to look

'beyond the question of methods and contents, beyond what it says, the measure of a work is what it keeps silent. And we must say that the scientific studies - and undoubtedly the works that they highlight - include vast and strange expanses of silence. These blank spots outline a geography of the forgotten. They trace the negative silhouette of the problematics displayed black on white in scholarly books.'

De Certeau (1986:131).

It is to the 'blank spots' and practices obscured by such accounts that I turn in the next section. I want to look to other possible Journeys, other spatial stories constructed out of these sites.

Heritage as Activity

Silent Productions.

7. I think the gendered language is in order since as I will argue later, despite using feminised terms of 'seduction' these seem powerfully male ways of appropriating the world (Moore 1988).

If the systemic grasp of the above, abstract theories is impressive and appealing - offering the security of dealing with 'big issues' with 'big theory'⁸ - then the gaps within it attract me more. The vision produced above certainly portrays a certain 'erotics of knowledge' (de Certeau 1984, 1985a) promising a privileged view, yet it also produces a world where meaning is produced through a celibate machine (op.cit 1984). The system generates meaning as if by itself, or in some phantasy of autogenesis, ascribing the agency of the theorist to the system while denying and concealing the scope of activity by others. Such appears to rely upon a theoretical blindness. These accounts analyse the products of Heritage, but one of the important reasons for focusing on practices and a processual approach is to be able to find the insinuating, dispersed form of production which is not manifested through its own products but the use it makes of others' products (de Certeau 1984:xii).

Both the systemic power and its scope are a reality but a theorisation must also allow for the inability to control everything within that scope. The practices of people are not fully conceptualised by outlines and products of the system since 'the system in which they move is too vast to be able to fix them in one place, but too constraining for them to ever be able to escape from it and go into exile elsewhere. There is no longer an elsewhere' (De Certeau 1984:40). Instead of seeing consumers as an appendage to the commodity (Tomlinson 1990:20) I want to pay attention to the aleatory and indeterminate manipulations, 'the mobile infinity of tactics' that consumers use (de Certeau 1985a). In the context of visiting heritage sites we could suggest that what visitors do at these sites jars the promotional copy, their activities slip away from the cruising analyst:-

"While I copy down the "What is a Bank?" text for detailed deconstruction at a later hour, five-year-old Steven Roberts urgently tugs at my legs. I'm a passing adult, so I must know things."

Farrar (1992:33)⁹.

Memorialising events is not done by developers or professionals, but in the practices of visitors. Practices serve to mark, enliven and put back the spatial activity into sites that appeared equivalent on our earlier Maps. Displays cannot control the connections made to visitors' life-histories. For instance, a Weymouth (UK) museum had a display of life between the wars. Amid the background of period photos was the very camera used (or maybe not). "That's like mum's" said a young girl. The mother was beckoned over and sure enough she still had a similar camera. She blushed and explained how she had saved long and hard for the camera and was one of the first people in her area of rural Devon to

⁸ The genre of theoretical blockbusters -state of the art, state of the globe, Big Speculations (Morris 1988c).

⁹ This short article remains one of the few accounts that takes this on board, though there are some 'visitor studies' (eg Falk & Dierking 1992; McManus 1987, 1988, 1994) that focus solely on the activity of the visitor.

have one that was so modern. She began to add details about the small prints that she got then. This interactive process of interpretation moved far beyond an exhibit on the rise of seaside holidays. Yet it also returned to it, as the woman spoke of how she had had few seaside holidays, since the war had meant the beaches had barbed wire and tank traps on them.

As visitors stroll along there are noticeable shifts from a passive attention to the site to a sudden keen interest; a gentle strolling tempo is punctuated by sudden stops (Falk & Dierking 1992; Annis 1986; Macdonald & Alford 1988). It is at these moments, de Certeau's *kairos* (1984), that a personal past is brought in to provide a personal meaning. These imaginative Journeys bring in diverse sources to reorganise and create associations. The objects and exhibits set off chains of associations into the personal past and drawing upon all diffuse and non-specific sources of historical images people carry in their memories (Merriman 1991). The focus upon these Journeys connects again to the ideas of Henri Bergson where 'Movements cannot occupy space, they are duration' (Game 1991:94; Bergson 1991; Deleuze 1991) or, as de Certeau (1984) puts it, they spatialise places by drawing in the anti-museum of memory creating the interpenetrating states of qualitatively different memory. Movement provides the key to a memory understood as the process of juxtaposing multiple spaces in single picture.

I suggest that it is this which allow the richness of de Certeau's (1984:115) suggestion about studying knowledge creation through tours and journeys, not maps, so that all knowledge, all stories, become travel stories. Such a conception allows further work on the gendered knowledges produced echoing and speaking to women whose history is of moving in the interstices of categories constructed by patriarchy (Kaplan 1987:187). It allows a grasping of the bodily reactions and pauses that signal a 'cognitive' or mental escape from the everyday (Lindlof and Grodin 1990) and a connection with invisible knowledges. At the same time as focusing on the bricolage of use it still foregrounds the existence of the products, the boundaries and contexts not of their own choosing within which people act.

Wandering subjects.

Refocusing on the use of cultural products has been a trend in media studies over the eighties and this parallel deserves some attention as it has informed some of the recent geographic focus on consumption (eg Burgess 1992; Sack 1988). Certainly in some pieces of work there are strands that need to be pulled in to develop some theory of Heritage use and the creation of knowledges about the past. Interestingly this work can draw on some of the concepts and metaphors used by literary theorists such as Iser (1989), Jauss (1982),

Fish (1980; Scholte 1985) and to some extent Ricoeur (1984, 1985, 1988) in describing a reader-oriented poetics. There are technical problems with these approaches which should provide warnings that they cannot be unproblematically 'lifted' and applied to Heritage. For instance, the first three theorists whose work is noted above make the eminently sensible claim that it is less important what may be structuring the text than how it is used. However, if everything is down to individual taste then self and society will truly fragment (Tomlinson 1990:129). As Bennett (1990) pointed out this slide tends to be avoided by replacing the individual reader with the idea of 'interpretive communities' which are then equally determinate of individual behaviour. However, the existence of genres and the undoubted existence of common and shared readings seems to narrow down the cornucopia, or Pandora's Box depending on your view¹⁰, of possible readings.

What I want to draw out though is not Fish's 'affective stylistics' which seem at first enticing - replacing knowledge with experience, as heritage sites are said to have done. Instead I want to focus on the sense of temporality embedded in these works in their attention to poetics. Thus I do not want to seek the 'implied reader' of Iser but rather the 'temporal happening' of later works of Fish (Solomon 1988:122). The understanding of the text is transformed into one of events where the text is a sequence of operations - anticipations, remembrances, connections, diversions, twists and so on. The reader becomes the figure of a 'wandering viewpoint' (Allen 1991:509; Ricoeur 1988:168), and it cannot be insignificant for that the syntagmatic movement of that viewpoint is likened to that of uncertain tourists with sketchy maps down rural back-lanes (Allen 1991). Such a stance forms a remarkable congruence with readings of the poetics of museums and heritage sites (Duncan 1991, 1980; Duncan & Wallach 1979; Crang 1994b; Roslen 1984) where the wandering path of the subjects becomes a key focus for understanding the production of knowledge.

The advantage of this concern for poetics is that it still retains a sense of intended, preferred or dominant readings. In drawing on this part of reader-oriented literature I hope to avoid some of the pitfalls in accounts of consumption practice where, for instance, they ignore the fact that the context of consumption is disempowerment in other areas and that such pleasures as are derived may therefore be purely compensatory (Williamson 1986:229). Or in following de Certeau (1984) over-enthusiastically miss the point that his

10. Note in passing the gendering of these comments, since this will form part of one of the later critiques of these theories. The sense of indeterminacy may also reflect the current moment in the way Ricoeur (1988:202) puts it 'intellectual honesty demands the confession that, for us, the loss of credibility the Hegelian philosophy of history has undergone has the significance of an event in thinking, concerning which we may say neither that we brought it about nor that it simply happened, and concerning which we do not know if it is indicative of a catastrophe that still is crippling us or a deliverance whose glory we dare not celebrate'. Typically, and significantly, Ricoeur does not see fit to elaborate on who feels all this, on what 'we' he is talking about (cf. Probyn 1990).

idea of tactics of use instead of strategies of production is about a weapon of the weak - of those denied strategic power, the difference being between having power over a text or over the agenda of what texts there are (Morley 1993:16).

Too quickly people have gone from finding that the audience is active to a mythology that it is always resistant (Curran 1990:145) which relies on 'an undocumented presumption that forms of interpretive resistance are more widespread than subordination, or the reproduction of dominant meanings' (Morley 1993:14, 1992:332). Even if we avoid recreating some sovereign consumer¹¹, the point is that, as de Certeau put it above, there is no 'escape', and this can be a pessimistic reading where all that is left is to tamper and re-appropriate, not remove, the roots of alienation. Nor is it clear whether this forming of a comfortable habitation resists or perpetuates the situation in hand (Seaman 1992:301). That there are power relations in this system cannot be ignored. They must be seen as diffused not defused (Morley 1992:337).

The whole debate still remains shackled to an apocalyptic model where analysts seem to be either prophets of doom (studying the 'system') or populist cheerleaders (Morris 1988b:23). As Morley (1993:16, 1992) more acidly puts it, after the despair of the eighties, the left appears to have discovered an almost Christian faith that the sins of the industry are redeemed in the afterlife of reception. Certainly such a model appears to only reiterate many of the nostalgic divisions inscribed by Heritage. I want to ask what is the redemptive focus on reception doing if '[i]n heritage discourse there is nostalgia for the authenticity of craft production, the memory of which is itself being mass produced. While memory itself is being mass produced the notion of memory as individual or personal is constantly appealed to' (Game 1991:165). Surely we have to be careful when using theories that appear to privilege just this idea of memory and action as personal.

Certainly, a sudden focus on pleasure as escape and resistance seems a strangely reciprocal reaction; if one aspect of theory points to the decentering of the subject and text, their hollowing out into moments of subjection to societal forces, then the other reinscribes the subject as transcendent through pleasure rather than knowledge (Bennett 1990). When there is a sudden romance with reader response, and the construction of it as the 'black sun' behind theory (de Certeau 1986:195; Ungar 1992) that is unknown if not unknowable, that is *terra incognitae*, are there not echoes of the construction of a new feminised territory? When the audience is characterised in terms of 'fluidity and indeterminacy' is it part of a 'philosophers' delirium of abstract femininity' (Morris 1988d:195)? If we turn

11. Seaman's (1993) flawed polemic does point out how close those on what he calls the populist left have come to reinventing a cultural neo-classical theory. For an argument about the populism as a perpetuation of elitism see Berman (1991).

against contemplation is it dangerously close to simply valorising the other side of the binary so that the contemplative, male, science versus distracted, unknown consumption polarity both valorises and feminises the latter through the mass culture as woman trope (Morris 1988b:18)?

Utterances in Context

The poetics of the visit, the Journey, is vital in understanding the role of structure as neither a cultural grammar people follow blindly nor an aggregation of instances (Knorr-Cetina 1981). The Journey is a performance in space and time. It is a poetics where motion follows uses and redistributes elements of the dominant reading (Silverstone 1988:235). The narrative, the spatial story, of the visit is the connecting of the abstract, the past, the Other to already accumulated understandings and expectations.

The serial nature of Heritage experiences can again be used as a guide. In the last chapter the role of markers and brochures was raised. Here I have begun to mention how a vast array of sources inform the bricolage constructed. There is then no bounded text and no isolable act of consumption. Now this has to be pushed more rigorously. Heritage is what Silverstone (1988:232; Bud 1988) called a mythic phenomena where the abstract contacts the everyday.¹² The practices that animate heritage thus operate at the intersection of the participants' life-stories and the stories told by the displays. I suggested above that the stories woven appeal to everyday experiences. But in order to be domesticated in this way, they must be opened up to people's (class, race and gender influenced) experiences. Each time heritage is performed it is open to alteration. The way heritage appeals is to invite the actor to take the proffered readings of the past and reorder/domesticate them into a story that makes sense to the actor. Their motions and their experiences are the performance - what I term the *utterance* - of these places. They transform them, use, subvert and appropriate them.

Equally, it is an appropriation which is necessary for Heritage to work which encourages the taking up of multiple textual positions and digressions as part of the reading process, using the epiphenomenon of brochures and different media to make these links (cf. Klinger 1991). Utterances are not a simple enactment (*parole*) of the structures ordering the text (*la langue*). Nor are they an autonomous act. They are a border position, an in-betweenness (Holquist 1990:47-61, Todorov 1984). They are the relation between elements in dialogue, since the appropriation of heritage would be impossible were it not already trying to interpellate the actor.

¹² Such abstract discourses as the grand narratives of "our island story" in the UK, or foundation myths of how the "West was won" in the USA.

McManus (1987, 1988, 1989) and Hood (1983) stress the social nature of visiting and the rarity of solitary wanderers. The academic flaneur is a poor allegory for understanding Heritage experiences since the effort that visitors place on interpreting and communicating amongst themselves can be crucial in understanding an exhibition (cf. Falk & Dierking 1992; McManus 1987, 1988, 1989, 1993; Perin 1992).¹³ Quite often the account given is not personal memory but a story that they themselves were told many years ago - possibly in similar circumstances. Sometimes it is comparative material from other heritage sites, or from watching historical programmes on TV. Visitors ask each other 'did you see?' or 'do you remember?'. These multiple sources of information allow connections to be made, suddenly transforming how a display is regarded.

The process of producing knowledge is thus an articulation that responds to the types and purposes of groups travelling through Heritage. In all these cases the utterance of heritage is a context-specific form (cf. Moores 1990). Here again the metaphor of the Journey fits well as the medium for the discourse of discovery and exploration (or rediscovery and repetition) that dominates so much of learning through Heritage - inviting people to discover 'what it was like to be ..' or to 'relive as it was' and 'rediscover the world we have lost' (Game 1991:156). The Journey provides a language to speak about the context of a discourse of exploration and also, at the same time, a discourse that functions by placing the past on prescribed routes. The Journey includes a sense of before and after, a sense of being an event which hopefully allows it to escape the voluntaristic location of response in an autonomous subject. The metaphoric use of Journey as utterance avows that existence is the event of co-being and interconnections, that existence is the response to the inchoate world, the process of making it meaningful, through a provocation in dialogue not an originary action of the subject but an answer in a sequence (Holquist 1990:45).

The sense of Journey implies such sequences so that '[e]xistence is not only an event, it is an utterance. The event of existence has the nature of a dialogue in this sense; there is no word directed to no one' (Holquist 1990:27). The sequence presents time as a process of passing, not as a spatialised instant (Carr 1986; Castoriadis 1991; Ricoeur 1984). Utterance is a border phenomenon of past into present, linking the two in action. Thus the self of the utterance is not self-present in time and is also constituted relationally both by whom the dialogue addresses and the relationship of the speakers (Todorov 1984). Thus, as in Merleau-Ponty (1962), the object is also not self-present but exists *for* that relationship, set out as an object against a specific background. The whole is made up of speakers' mutual constitution occurring through the context of interaction, a third term that binds the

¹³ Or not. For given familial power systems, this reinterpretation may well involve social mis-interpretation, where an adult is put on the spot and bluffs about an exhibit they know little about - rather than lose face and admit ignorance.

dialogue together and gives it illocutionary force (Massumi 1992:30). The context is internal to the utterance, for '[i]n no instance is the extra-verbal situation only an external cause of the utterance; it does not work like a mechanical force. On the contrary, *the situation enters into the utterance as a necessary constitutive element* of its semantic structure.' (Mikhail Bakhtin in Todorov 1984:41).

Ways of Knowing

Pre-ontology and Being-in-the-world.

Theorising Heritage experiences then calls for an *in-gear* sense of knowledge (Collier 1991) where understanding is not detached from the world but embedded in that world. Against a traditional ontology of contemplation (Dreyfus 1991:83)¹⁴, the self is seen as part of the knowledge created. Following a Heideggerian leaning, what is of concern is not the epistemology of what people can know about the past but an ontology of knowing and how this impacts on the intelligibility of the world. As such it is a move away from an anglophone scientific preoccupation with epistemic subjectivity to a view of it as ontological (Collier 1991).¹⁵

The focus is upon the shared practices, and modes of practice that render the past 'available' for use, that determine what parts of it become accessible (Dreyfus 1991). '[T]he system of experience is not arrayed before me as if I were God, it is lived by me from a certain point of view; I am not the spectator, I am involved, and it is my involvement in a point of view which makes possible both the finiteness of my perception and its opening out upon the world as the horizon of every perception' (Merleau-Ponty 1962:304). By stressing the context of knowledge in previous sections I hope to have suggested that a study of Heritage should not proceed by depriving the world of its worldliness, it should

14. Somewhat scathingly Lепенies (1992:57) refers to this as the 'intra-mural illusion of a self-begotten intellect', fostered by the subject-object world division of knowledge embodied in such technologies of science as the camera obscura (Crary 1990, 1988).

15 It remains something of an irony, and a cautionary note, that Heidegger still seems despite debating with language to not treat his own as an instrument of action and power (Bourdieu 1991a 37). Thus I wish to remain slightly askance from his concepts of authenticity set against 'the mob' as inauthentic, to be aware that there are 'tabooed meanings [which], though recognizable in theory, remain misrecognized in practice; though present as substance they are absent as form, like a face hidden in ambush ... [a form of theory that] mask[s] the primitive experiences which are its source, as much as to reveal them; to allow them to speak, while using a mode of expression which suggests that they are not being said.' (Bourdieu 1991a:145, 1991b). One of the ways I hope to counter any remnants of this is by conceiving Dwelling as travel and mobility rather than the allowing in the spectral presence of blood and soil in Heidegger's own examples.

not simply establish abstract rules that correspond to 'occurrent', that is isolable, behaviours (cf. Kapferer 1988).¹⁶

However, it is not possible for a study of Heritage to, as Ricoeur (1988:73) seems to suggest historiography can, align ontology with an originary sense of historicity and epistemology with the process of historiography. The experience of Heritage is an ontological moment in connecting to a past already refigured by historiography. What is then put in place is a system where the spatialisation of time, discussed in the last chapter, already defines certain elements of the past as occurrent and available in a particular format. To speak more generally;

'Heidegger has taught us how we must see this technology not only as an ensemble of machines, nor even simply a mode of consciousness. It is a context which increasingly constitutes us in our practices and skills, our self-interpretations and our desires. It is a way of being or, better, revealing being, where Man [sic] must enframe the world: a mechanized procuring in which Man composes, rearranges and orders the world, constituting it as a 'standing-reserve' ".

Emberly (1989:751).

Heritage then becomes a technology that brings forth certain parts and forms of the past (cf. Gosden 1993:109). Theoretically this thesis is committed to understanding the ways people construct knowledges through Heritage and thus to finding some means of seeing what elements of the past, and their re-presentation, signify to people who are encountering them. Heritage, seen as technology rendering the past present, forms contexts that affect how those significations act, for they do not follow some immutable law for all people in all times and places. 'A sign's signifying must take place *in a context*, and it signifies, ie it can *be* a sign, only for those who *dwell* in that context.' (Dreyfus 1991:102).

Travel is, then, my metaphor for people's different ways of dwelling and thus different 'pre-ontologies' which render different parts of the past available to them.¹⁷ Studying the experience of the past through Heritage then requires 'the making explicit or bringing to light of the prescientific life of consciousness which alone endows scientific operations

16. I am attempting here to use Heidegger's ideas to help avoid the Scylla and Charybdis of conceptualising an object outlined by Merleau-Ponty (1962:28) where 'empiricism is ignorant that we need to know what we are looking for or we would not be looking for it, intellectualisation ignores that we don't know or we would not be seeking it.'

17. I am aware that in using travel as a half substantive half-metaphoric concept it becomes open to the misuse Adorno highlighted in the same concrete yet indefinable use of Being in Heidegger, that is it is a debtor concept owing its persuasive powers to what it does not have but borrows from elsewhere. 'That Being is neither a fact nor a concept exempts it from criticism. Whatever a critic would pick on can be dismissed as a misconception. The concept borrows from the factual realm an air of solid abundance, of something not just cogitatively and unsolidly made - an air of being "in itself" .. From the mind which synthesises it, it borrows the aura of being more than factual; the sanctity of transcendence' (Adorno 1973:76).

with meaning and to which these latter always refer back' (Merleau-Ponty 1962:58). The study has to grasp consciousness in the act of learning through the empty but determinate stance which is attention itself (ibid. p28). This mode of attention is part of multiple ways of being-in-the-world and is thus part of an indissoluble link of knowledge and context because '[t]hought is no 'internal' thing, and does not exist independently of the world and of words' (ibid. p183; cf. Shotter 1993).

Travel as a mode of dwelling accents certain issues of theoretical knowledge already mentioned and leads into other areas. Clifford's (1989) reworking of Said's idea of travelling theory forms a useful point of departure with its emphasis on understanding, locating and mapping oneself as being a dynamic process of becoming aware of discrepant attachments. The metaphor works further, for not only is the structure of 'pilgrimage' and travel deeply embedded in tourism as a time apart (Graburn 1977; Kelly 1987; MacCannell 1992; Moore 1981) but also in recent years mobility has become characteristic of the everyday and a primary activity of existence (Prato & Trivero 1985:40). This connects to the figure of the modern nomad as an image of 'dwelling-in-travel' (Clifford 1989:183). It functions as

'a figure for different modes of dwelling and displacement, for trajectories and identities, for storytelling and theorizing in a postcolonial world of global contacts. Travel: a range of practices for situating the self in a space or spaces grown too large, a form both of exploration and discipline.'

Clifford (1989:177).

Travel allows changes in ways of being in the world to be recognised and thus new dialogues with the self - through the sense of motion as bodily extension where mobility is an unfettered *flow* which also stands as a pointer to more senses of the intersection of knowledges in Heritage. Firstly, it strikes back to the sense of time Dasein implies, where the past and future are not extrinsic to the present but are parts of its innermost and most permanent possibilities through the directionality of "thrownness" where the subject is moving to the future, the present is always passing and thus the structure of attention means that *Dasein* is also always being-ahead-of-itself (Ricoeur 1988:63-79). Flow then conjures up the way the experience of the present is one of passing and time itself flows. Secondly, flow is a metaphor that has been seized upon to describe the seriality and technology of mediated images in relation to television (eg Dienst 1994; Houston 1984) where it has suggested both bombardment by an inescapably mediated and re-produced world of permanently mobilised instrumentalities until 'the procedure gradually constitutes the essence' (Emberly 1989:759). On the other hand, it is not just that Heritage provides a flow of experiences but the subject that becomes a fluid process (Bergson 1991; Deleuze 1991; Deleuze & Guattari 1987; Massumi 1992). The next sub-section then begins

to deal with the flow of heritage spaces, their segmentation and their motion before addressing the idea of the subjects as also being not merely *in* motion but *as* mobility.

Seriality and haunted spaces.

Heritage does not just create Maps to render parts of the past available or visible. It also creates sequences and trails that organise which will become visible after each other. It is an ordering of the past in both the disciplinary and temporal sense. As Game (1991) points out, Heritage involves the touring, accumulation and succession of sites and not merely their isolation and placing. (figure 7).

Touring the past, then, converts it into an available stream of images at an occurrent level, segmented parts rendered visible in a sequence rather than merging as part of a flow - an experience of *erlebnis* rather than the flow of *erhfarung* (Benjamin 1973a, 1985; Dreyfus 1991:134).¹⁸ The idea of motion reintegrates these segments since not only do past experiences always go before the Traveller to organise what will appear relevant and available but also create the *future perfect* of travel stories (cf. Carr 1986). It is not that a Tourist comes with a past and anticipates a future, but also that the past creates the expectations as to what is supposed to be experienced (Redfoot 1984:293) and thus a drive as to what *should have been* experienced. The instant of any site is then surrendered to the past and future (ibid. p295) rather than standing as present to the subject. Thus every site includes spectral others on the route, sites that have been visited or are yet to be seen as part of the organisation of what will be experienced at that given site or event (Perin 1992:193). Thus we return to the idea of Heritage as a technology, a machine¹⁹, that creates a particular knowledge of the past.

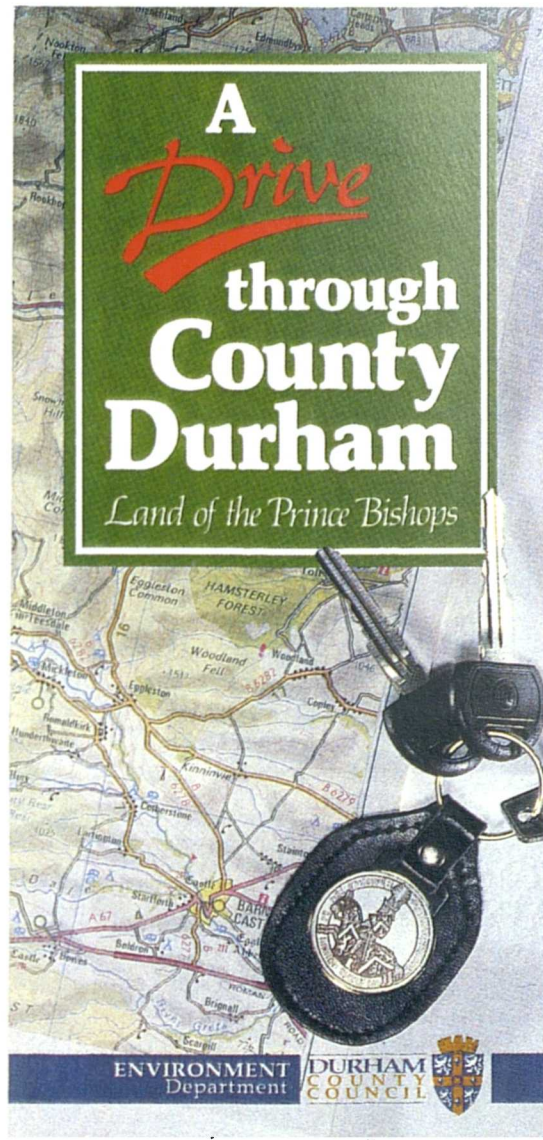
The past is not exhibited synchronically, the subject does not confront the past or a structure of representation but only ever the parts and fragments rendered available in a sequence - a similar seriality to that embedded at the heart of consumption (Krauss 1990). The process of consuming Heritage is not about an experience of immediacy in confronting alterity but about instalments in a stream of consumption goods. No analysis can then look at a site in isolation. Heritage does not provide some experience of plenitude in re-capturing lost times and places. Rather, it keeps the visitor in a state of activity searching for a place of rest amid the rhythmic, mitigated positions that always require more of the same (cf. Houston 1984:184). Such is also the perspective on the process of

¹⁸ It is worth noting that the valorisation of a flowing experience (*erhfarung*) over the pointlike and segmented 'now' or image (*erlebnis*) in Heidegger actually serves to position the latter as the Other that forces the rest of the analysis to unfold - revealing a central aporia where the idea of Dasein as the past in the present cannot cope with the scale of historical time (Ricoeur 1988:79; cf. Sternberg 1990).

¹⁹ Caution is needed in using the metaphor of the machine suggesting a soulless, reproducible manufacturing (Dienst 1994) that plays into the very hands of a nostalgia for the individual, the particular and the crafted. It seems worth risking this though since it also stands well for the idea of how this longing is also manufactured.

Figure 7:

Touring Heritage



Travel provided by writers such as Abbeele (1992) and de Certeau (1986) where motion is driven onwards by a series of 'insufficiencies'. As each point is reached it becomes apparent that it too needs the next to be fulfilled and so on *ad infinitum*. MacCannell (1976, 1992) draws on this in his figure of the questing Tourist, always seeking that unavailable kernel of reality from some back region to render their experience authentic. Thus '[t]he heart of this process does not lie in the satisfying object but in the needing subject.' (Haug 1987:122). The figure for the consumer becomes Tantalus who reaches for satisfaction only to find empty space (Haug 1983:35).

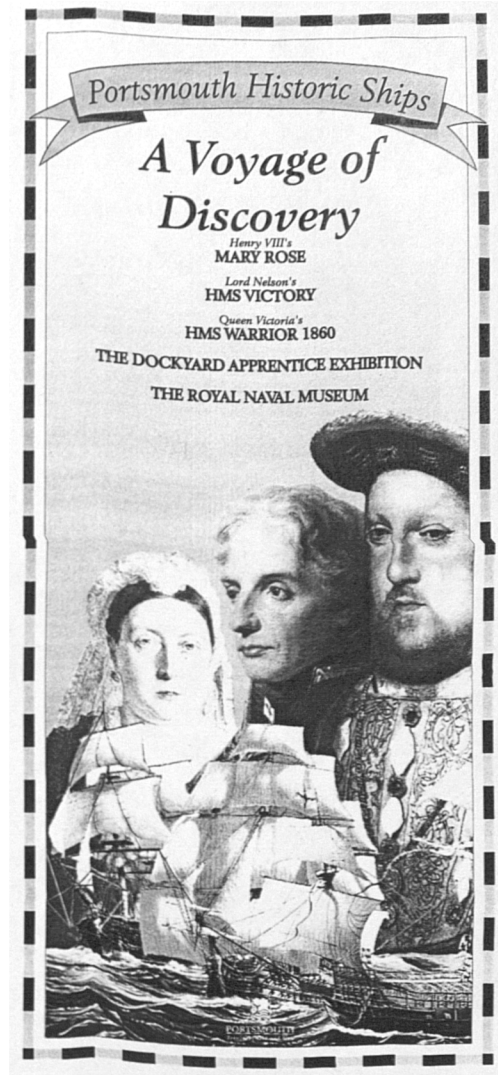
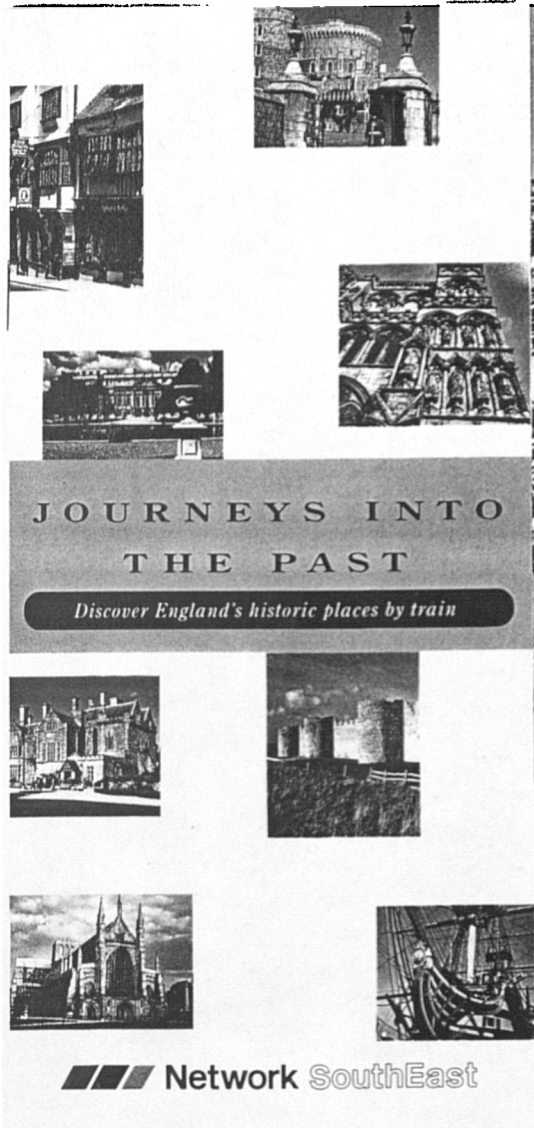
Such seriality destroys the dreams of plenitude offered by the glossy brochures promising the chance to 'step back in time', 'relive the past' or to 'experience how things used to be' (figure 8). Each implores us to get closer to a Real past, a past that is an authentic totality. A sense of shared humanity is needed to link us to these created places. So the presentation of the everyday multiplies. We commit a "genre error" and stage the quotidien as a spectacle (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1991:407). The back stage is illuminated in the quest for the authentic (Urry 1990:107). Yet the questing tourist will never arrive at this final destination, for the authentic is also a product of the Journey.²⁰ The authentic is always displaced by the quest for it. We may now smell 'the past', touch or see it brought to life - but we cannot hold on to it. Site after site is added to a personal itinerary. Each is insufficient, even in the moment of promising the authenticity of immediate contact; immediacy is ruined by the self same process of travel that finds/creates it (Abbeele 1980).

Such represents the segmentation and seriality Heritage manufactures. The concepts of contact and the spectral others embroiled in each experience go further however. Not every practice, not every site is in an organised sequence. Whether they are or not, people come to them bearing a host of spectral others - personal resonances that are set off, memories and connections triggered by the event (Jordanova 1989). People's imaginations are a part of the experience as much as anything else. They need not be 'escapist', rather they are part of a normal activity. As Lacan has suggested, reality is merely a prop on which to lean our dreams (Lalli 1989:107). As outlined above, by fitting imaginary routes around the installations of heritage, visitors appropriate the sequences and narratives to themselves as expressed in the routes and tempo of visits. For, if the site divides time by space, it is equally open to actors to dawdle at one point, to skim over another (no matter how important the designer thought it to be), to physically wander from topic to topic as their thoughts wander (Silverstone 1988:239). Through these narratives the public can

20. The experiencing of 'authenticity' is still a product of a journey, it is marked and constructed as 'real'. The Journey creates a sense of a naive, untouched authenticity as some 'real' historical base whose truth is unchanging (Bishop 1989).

Figure 8:

Journeys in Time.



connect their personal histories to abstract concepts.²¹ A more subtle analysis has to link this process of Travel to that of narration (cf. de Certeau 1984, 1986, 1988; Macdonald & Silverstone 1990; Silverstone 1988)²² allowing a series of temporalities to be deployed. The brute fact of sequence and series can then be counterposed to the logical connections. The role of expectation and memory is what makes Travel more than simple sequences of events. The whole of a flow, a movement, becomes more important than any one of the discrete parts - a synthesis from the motion itself rather than an accumulation of successive discrete points like the proverbial beads on a thread (cf. Bergson 1907; Merleau-Ponty 1962). Such a stance accords with perspectives that see action as ontologically narrative (eg Carr 1986) or at least as only narratively intelligible (Bruner 1987; Crites 1972; Ricoeur 1992, 1988, 1986, 1984 1980; contra Sternberg 1990). Certainly the understanding of motion deployed here owes a great debt to ideas of narrative structure - in suggesting the mutually implicating, chrono-logical links of events (Cohan & Shires 1988). That is, we can only define an event in terms of the rest of the narrative/Journey (Cronon 1993), and in turn our understanding of an event (and/or what comprises one) will change as we move through the story (Fabian 1991). It is here that the idea of a wandering subjectivity can be picked up again as bearing multiple sorts of time. If the sites attempt to create a time of the object (the story recounted) then the wandering subject embroils both the time of the narrator (recounting the story) and the time of the reader (the actual time taken to read or perform the story). From this it is possible to pick two significant ideas. Firstly that the time of the narrator is profoundly structured by expectations, memories and anticipations - even faced with a smorgasbord of objects it is this level of mimesis that configures and recasts them as significant (Ricoeur 1988, 1984). Meanwhile, secondly, the time of reading itself becomes the framing for the type of Journey - be that day-tripping, taking time out from routines or the more poignant sense of life itself as a Journey.

Travelling Subjects.

If Dwelling is to be retrieved from the romanticised and reactionary overtones bequeathed it by Heidegger then it is necessary to consider what effect the idea of a mobile Dwelling has. Certainly the idea of 'nomad' thought and 'nomadology' seems to figure prominently in current debates attempting to establish a post-identitarian subject (Miller 1993). Such a clumsy neologism serves to signal the negative status of the figure, marking out not so much what it is as what it is not - it is not defined by differentiation from or exclusion of

21 To foster these contacts, as mentioned earlier, there is a concentration on a past just sufficiently distant to be different but close enough to seem recoverable, or a past alien and different yet presented in terms of shared humanity.

22 To see the roots of such linkages, or is that the routes of their entanglement, it is only necessary to look to the way Tourism is treated as a quest, as an experiential Odyssey and as, finally, quixotic to see the heavy intermingling of travel and writing (Abbeele 1992; Leed 1991).

others and the resultant bounding of the self. Drawing from Deleuze and Guattari (1987²³) many have looked to find in Travel such a progressive figure. The 'nomad' subject is composed of lines of flight, of connections, or trails of passages composed of multiple links and crossings with others - thus entanglements and intersections with others rather than divisions and differences. Mobility, then, stresses that the self is a multiple phenomenon: it has been given the task of not being merely given. It is trying to inscribe itself on the future (Holquist 1990:23; Ricoeur 1992). Moreover the drive forwards fits with the entanglements and intersections so the self is not only the border of *here & there* but also *then & now*. The self is the unfinished crossing and making sense of these connections.

Thus there is not so much the post-modern fragmented subjectivity suggested by the bric-a-brac of the museum-without-walls (Glass 1993). Instead, the nomad is a permanently active and articulated identity (Grossberg 1988). The impending and past positions and connections are grasped by the present and thus each moment must encompass those that occur throughout the movement. 'I am not in space and time; I belong to them, my body combines with them and includes them.' (Merleau-Ponty 1962:140). To be clear about this, the nomad is not intended to be a figure that travels, rather it is meant to be a becoming-Travel composed out of vectors and flows:

'You cannot travel the path before you have become the Path itself'

Gautama Buddha.

Again the connection to a sense of flow seems apparent where the subject becomes dispersed or extended through the techno-assemblage of modern media. It becomes an actant, the traditional separation of tool and agent is blurred until the subject is best understood as a line of force incorporating the whole assemblage of technology and agent.²⁴ Such is vital to understanding the way audiences are constituted through and with technology rather than as users of it; the subject is a part of the technology not an external agent (Grossberg 1988).²⁵ This trajectory-as-self, though, apprehends contingent experiences in specific ways, re-ordering the world away from an auratic experience, rooted in the uniqueness of objects, and replacing it with sequential experiences. This is the displacement of each object-in-itself into a part of a series. The understanding of an event places it in a series (Abbeele 1992:65) where it is intelligible by how it was arrived at and

23. I must acknowledge the role of A.N.Other in helping me think through this section. A.N.Other was/is the collective name for the reading group(s) on Deleuze at the Department of Geography, Bristol University.

24 In a sceptical note Dienst (1994:148) suggests Deleuze's use of Bergson here allows him 'to put phenomenology in reverse, spewing the inward out, forcing consciousness to become a wandering orphan among the things called images'.

25 Let us note, however, how these lines of force and the techno-assemblages celebrate speed and technology in terms of 'body expansion', a technophilic jouissance that leads to an altered sense of self through contacting and mingling with Others. This omits the multiplicity of forms of travel that Prato and Trivero (1985:39) call 'body containers' which serve to suppress all sense of difference and maintain the traveller in their accustomed environment - never risking self-identity.

what it leads to in a 'progressional ordering of reality' - we are always being-towards-something.

Deleuze and Guattari (1987) hold out the more extreme possibility of mobility in and for itself. Here the seriality of destinations is subsumed in the being of travel, where we aspire to be nowhere, only to be going (being-towards-motion itself?). Yet at the same time do not such smooth flights, such mobile knowledges, bear with them traces of 'objective science', as created by an 'alienated eye' where the detachment of the traveller is keyed into distanced objectivity, and the traveller's experience and ordering of instants - allowing the objectification of the world (Leed 1991)?²⁶

If it is true that subjects are composed of multiple linkages, actions and associations then the full effect of de Certeau's (1984) *kairos*, as the ability to juxtapose and make connections, is felt. If the subjects can spin webs of associations from actions then any analysis that focuses on a single product or site or type of action risks artificially delimiting the uses it can find (Radway 1988). In effect, the risk is of predefining the users by the anticipated use - inventing the audience (cf. Ang 1992). So instead we must think how 'the task of cultural criticism is less of interpreting texts and audiences than of describing vectors, distances and densities, intersections and interruptions, and the nomadic wandering (whether of people in everyday life or as cultural critics) through this unequally and unstably organised field of tendential forces and struggles. To describe a practice is to consider its place within a dispersed field and how it occupies that space in relation to structures existing at different levels of abstraction.' (Grossberg 1988:383). Furthermore, the sensitivity to contexts foregrounds the spaces, both physical and imaginative, produced in these connections. If the weakness of the nomadic figure could be its unwillingness or inability to deal with actors who speak about and reflect upon their actions, then its strength is that it provides an active spatial element the more textually minded narratologists tend to forget. It is to how that spatio-temporal organisation affects the self as process that must be dealt with next.

Dispersal and Accumulation

Again the argument returns to the relation of flow to segmentation (Dienst 1994) where certainly Deleuze and Guattari (1987) seem to use mobility as a guarantor metaphor of creating a heterogeneity which cannot be Mapped onto a single plane. It offers what Abbeele (1981) seems to seek as the answer to MacCannell's Tourist questing for authenticity - a liberation from the quest by relocating authenticity into the process of

²⁶ The re-unification of the subject and its separation from its context remains an imminent danger here as in the tropes of the travelogue that affirm unity of traveller in a confessional genre (Bishop 1989; Hughes 1991).

Becoming itself.²⁷ However, the figure of the Nomad as the actantial hero of modernity seems to erase the subjectivity of the actual nomad as object of a touring gaze (cf. Morris 1988a). If we are not careful it is the dominant, knowing subject that suffers the problematics of identity. There is something about the heroism of the nomadic stance, its wilful refusal of so much that should alert the reader to the scars this leaves on the concept. Nomadic flight re-inscribes the gap of departure, the boundary of transgression, its point of origin, even as it tries to evade and destabilise the notion of boundaries and origins. The erotics of departure (escape and flight), the comforts of return and the refusal of the confinement can form a technology of gender (Cresswell 1993; Leed 1991). The isolation is the nomad's, and re-inscribes a contrasting, static Other that does not have the option of flight (Ganguly 1993:38).

Flight is from/to a home. The purposiveness of travel can bring order to the contingent eventfulness of the world:

"theorizing, nonetheless, always lags behind the voyaging, he [sic] is always already *en route* and caught up in a chaotic, fragmented universe that needs to be domesticated. The very concept of "the voyage" is this domestication in that it demarcates one's travelling like the Aristotelian plot into a beginning, a middle, and an end. In the case of the tourist, the beginning and end are the same place, "home". It is in relation to this home or *domus* then that everything which falls into the middle can be domesticated."

Abbeele (1980:9)

The nomad tries to escape, but the attempt defines further what it is avoiding. Producing, not a subject dispersed among wandering paths, but centred in a spiral of displacement (de Certeau 1988). Ulysses may wander but the economy of wandering still inscribes a need for a home, for a place where the value of wandering is recognised. There is a sense of the heroic in the nomad and heroic travel tales have repeatedly been embroiled in re-iterating a place of return:

"If, however, a voyage can only be conceptualized economically in terms of a privileged point (*oikos*), the positing of a point we can call home can only occur retroactively. The concept of a home is needed (and in fact it can only be thought) only after the home has already been left behind. In a strict sense, then, one has always already left home, since home can only exist as such at the price of its being lost. The *oikos* is posited *après-coup*. Thus the voyage has already begun."

Abbeele (1992:xviii)

Beginnings are always constructed retrospectively (Leed 1991:142) leaving only the fiction of an origin. Home is always lost. Even in nomadism then a narratological study implicates

²⁷A reading that could be supported from Deleuze and Guattari's works yet one I suspect they would object to strenuously.

a stable topography of exploration - home and abroad (Clifford 1989). If the quest and doubts of the Tourist can be read as an 'ontological vote of no confidence in modernity' (Redfoot 1984:304) it still places a heavy reliance on the private sphere and a commitment to valorisation of Travel at some (impossible and indefinitely postponed) home.

The figure of the nomad suppresses some the duality of mobility expressed in Abbeele's (1992) study of the economy of travel. Travel is bound into western power-knowledge as one of its most cherished notions and a locus of huge emotional and intellectual investment. Flight and mobility are not innocent metaphors since "just as the practices and ideologies of actual travel operate to exclude or pathologize women, so the use of that vocabulary as a metaphor necessarily produces androcentric tendencies in theory" (Wolff 1993:224). Travel and mobility have strong links both to the actual material exclusion of women and the construction of a masculine identity. Deleuze and Guattari draw on semi-metaphoric examples of mobility - examples that further show the double-sidedness of their ideas. Teasingly they associate nomadology with the advent of the mounted warrior, conjuring up the sweep of the plains and expansive fractious empires of the fourteenth century steppes in tune with a constellation of man (yes), technology and animal. However, rather than look to fissionable empires of movement, another facet is mastering the horse while moving through the landscape - a sense of mobility yet a sense also of separation, control, containment and dominance (Abbeele 1992). The masculinity of certain ideas of mobility is revealed best in another fourteenth century mounted figure that evokes a:

'conception of arms and mobility as a calling, implies that deeds of arms and travel are not so much means of doing something as ways of *being* something, personifying rather than merely instrumental activities.. In other words travel and mobility have become symbolic of a new species of social being, defined as permanently detached and always in motion: the knight.'

Leed (1991:38)

The heroic side of mobility is then implicated in creating mobile but bounded spaces cut off from the world, the knight errant is defined by what he has left behind - the castle moat and hierarchical society - in order to become the embodiment of freedom. The fluidity of the nomad, as used in Deleuze and Guattari, also appears founded on the emotional heroism of one willing to let fixity go. It may be said that this is reading too much on the heroic scale of travel or that it is failing to see in the nomad the expurgation of other 'inferior' ways of Becoming-mobile. Certainly the nomad has to be read precisely as a rejection of much of the economy of travel found in Tourism where 'Tourist travel involves the experience of a modern Ulysses who robs the reality he traverses without being caught up in it, without losing his identity; for his aim is to return home.' (Prato & Trivero 1985:26).

The richness of the idea of mobility surely must come, not in a Utopian disregard for or purging of (successfully or not) other modes of Travel but in looking to how they may suggest the emplotment of the spaces of Heritage in different ways. Indeed, if we are not very careful, the willingness to renounce a home implied in nomadology and its cosmopolitan stance towards the other implies a specific context of privileged autonomy in being able to choose travel as home (Hannerz 1990). Such a cosmopolitan stance may be embedded in a project of accumulation where the upwardly mobile work on a basis of deferred gratifications (Bourdieu 1984; Friedman 1991). Travel can be framed in other ways besides the figure of Tourist or Nomad if we look on the self as a trajectory or a vector; thus, in the next chapter, the life course is treated as a Journey.

Meanwhile the linking places and events still allows an approach to the experiences of Heritage for '[i]f maps trace routes between designated locations, linking places in space, narratives link events in time' (Kaplan 1990:27). The characterisation of narrative as a travel story then allows us to read again de Certeau's (1986:146) suggestion that narrative is the capitalisation of observations, a line of circles where each departure goes out to the Other and this knowledge is accumulated and valorised at home. The poetics allow the totalisation or emplotment of events into a coherent whole as a Journey, a spatial story. The Nomad operates in an economy of renunciation, renouncing the stable point from which to valorise travel, instead always being Other. Perhaps here we can take nomadology to say let 'home' go, forsake this loss. In so doing a masculine heroic is reinscribed within the nomad for it comes to be the loss of a loss, the loss of an impossible home - cast aside your boyish dream become a man! So while these vectors and figures of Travel can create the possibilities to think otherwise, to develop schemes that refuse the fixity of existing categories and allow new Heritage experiences to be found they simultaneously, as Deleuze and Guattari put it, serve only to move the same pieces of furniture around, raising an interesting thought about the oppositional potential, or otherwise, of the mobility metaphor:

"What if critique of a system were itself coded as an institutionalised part of that system? It would seem in fact, that the ways in which we question our world are themselves a product of that world. Should we conclude pessimistically, then, that critical thought can never escape its entrapment by that which it supposedly criticises?"

Abbeele (1992:xiv)

I see this as the great value of mobility, Travel and Journey in understanding Heritage. As a metaphor it preserves the sense of ambiguity, of dilemma that is all too easily lost. It is not a utopian analysis that seeks to redeem Heritage nor does it necessarily despise it. It

speaks to the double-sidedness of a range of practices that go to constitute, bypass and evade Heritage.

Academic Journeys.

Travelogues: Knowledge in Ruins.

Metaphors of travel serve to foreground the dilemmas not only of how people create knowledges from Heritage, but also the academic praxis that creates knowledge about those people. At several levels the idea of the Journey raises issues of power/knowledge and reflexivity. We can start by asking what investments does the employment of Touristic travel metaphors reveal on the part of the commentator. Implicit in the choice of Tourist metaphor often seems to be the sort of typology where 'The explorer goes in search of unknown territory, the traveller moves within a territory already discovered by history, while the tourist exists within an area that has already been surveyed and prepared for him and her by advertising and the travel agent' (Prato & Trivero 1985:25; cf. also Fussell in Clifford 1989).

However, this ignores the fact that travellers are part of the same economy - global and symbolic - as Tourists. Indeed they are functional to tourism in opening up new areas for later packaging. And upon those areas being packaged they move on to bring in new areas again - the evaluative opposition of the two terms is both functional and integral to the economy of tourism (Culler 1981:129). So why do the anti-Tourists of academia invest so much energy in 'sneering at theme parks' (Wright 1989)? Perhaps it is true that these are 'cultured despisers of tourism who see tourism as a metaphor for the general inauthenticity of modern life' (Redfoot 1984:303). As Eric Leed sees it this action is symptomatic of the very nature of modern mobility:

'Self-contempt and a sense of fraudulence distinguish the attitude of contemporary self-conscious travellers. There is a touching desperation in the attempt of professional tourists, well-funded anthropologists, and recording travellers, to distinguish themselves from the travelling masses and run-of-the-mill adventurers. The most characteristic mark of the tourist is the wish to avoid tourists and the places they congregate. But this is merely evidence of the fact that travel is no longer a means of achieving distinction. It is a way of achieving and realizing a norm, the common identity we all share - the identity of a stranger.'

Leed (1991:287).

The opposition of this romantic sense of tourism, as being about solitude, with a sense of mass celebration remains a central dialectic of the expanding industry (Urry 1990). What it also tends to replay is a nostalgic function whereby the current generation has always lost

the ability to travel 'authentically', unlike forebears whose Journeys had a sense of unmediated reality (Bishop 1989). The effect is one of a continuously vanishing horizon of authenticity (Frow 1991:129). Often in the search for an 'encounter with Being' that un-reflexive state is located in the past but it is equally systemically created by more highbrow texts. Even the 'great and good' such as Levi-Strauss can be found opining:

'either I can be like some traveller of the olden days, who was faced with a stupendous spectacle, all, or almost all, of which eluded him [sic], or, worse still, filled him with scorn and disgust; or I can be a modern traveller, chasing after the vestiges of a vanished reality. I lose on both counts.' (in Redfoot 1984:301).

The contours of the pastoral allegory, in seeking for an almost tangible static past located just before our arrival can surely begin to be attached to this, and paralleled with the work of Heritage on the edges of memory - both creating an authentic period (cf. Rosaldo 1989).

Indeed the role of mobility in academic discourse goes further than creating detached observers, it aids and abets the idea of some static past. Travel has deep connections to the objectification of Others where they are experienced as an array of successive things (whose time is closed is thus closed (Todorov 1984; Leed 1991:65)). The role of mobility must then be interrogated not only in terms of the figures applied to others but the activity of research itself. Certainly we can begin to extend the economy of travel Abbeele (1992) spoke of above - where the academic goes out into the Other to return to the academy and valorise the experiences. Perhaps, then, the Tourist figure can be more nearly applied to the academic than any one else:

'the ethnographer can be conceptualized as a tourist travelling to an alien world of the native. The tourist is constantly seeking to make the strange familiar by bringing it home in the form of travel notes, photographs, postcards, and souvenirs. These travel mementoes guarantee the tourist's identity as a traveller who has encountered authentically foreign sites, attractions, and people in the purposeful movement through space known as a trip.'

Grossberg (1992:379-80).

The pejorative tones of a touristic project can then be located in the academic project itself in terms of research as travel and in textual form. Not just in the sense of going to get a bit of the Other or bring back some of the Real (Moore 1988; Kaplan 1987) but also in the role of markers located in the literature that create an object as Real and the 'mementoes' of the field signifying that same Reality - so it is both posited and produced, the place of study producing the sources it will use (de Certeau 1988:72; Radway 1988). Moreover the quest to find this self-producing reality echoes that of the Journey, where each temporary halt is found to be a failure, a piling up of insufficiencies that drives the (spatial) narrative along (de Certeau 1986:69). It is at this level that the ruinous nature of knowledge can be

located.²⁸ No single point is sufficient or equal to the essence of the Journey as a whole (de Certeau 1986:113).

If that were not enough there is equally the sense of the impossibility of writing the practices of research. All that can be left are the ruins of the experience, the souvenirs and mementoes. The authentic experience of the field²⁹ is lost as much as any Tourist may have lost authentic experience, and its loss is manufactured through textual reconstitution - reflection destroys the immediacy. Indeed the only 'solution' appears to be a doubling of the problem by being deeply reflexive about the praxis of knowledge creation.

However, such realisations of the ruinous state of academic knowledge must not lead to what Ashmore (1989:97) identifies as the response of many to reflexivity - that is to avoid empirical work altogether in the hope of thus avoiding what seems to create the problem. Such a choice echoes in Okely's (1992) commentary about a Brahminic division of labour in anthropology with those who do fieldwork and those that 'stay home' and deconstruct the Other without ever sullyng their hands, until 'the politics of reality are reduced to the epistemology of writing at home' (Grossberg 1988:381). In order to avoid a critical strategy that seems to retreat thus or one that erases the politics of culture in favour of an endlessly reflexive politics of criticism (Cintron 1993; Conquergood 1991; Grossberg 1988), this study prefers de Certeau's (1986:139) idea of doubling the narrator and Traveller - to be truly fellow travellers *because* the dilemmas of travel *do* throw up the unavoidable dangers of knowledge.

Tales from the Field: Explorer and Hero.

If the Nomad somewhat heroically forsakes the possibility of a return, much academic ethnography relies of the circular structure of the Journey both as a rite of passage and a trial by ordeal. The academic is emplotted not as Tourist but as explorer - making, in the words of Bristol University's doctoral requirements, 'an original and substantial contribution to knowledge'. Such an original 'finding' is rendered 'substantial' upon the researcher's return to the academy and production of a suitably weighty tome. The emplotment of the academic as 'explorer' seems to risk amplifying the tendencies outlined in the previous section. In anthropology there has been a continual impulse to find the pure, primitive and authentic informants and peoples (Rosaldo 1989). Which fits with research drifting into being a 'quest for an authentic domain of being. It [the research

²⁸ To look at Hewison (1987) there is no presentation of a total 'heritage industry' rather there is a succession of partial points - country houses, politics of ownership, national decline - each insufficient to account for the events recounted but by piling up the lacks the hope is a totality may somehow emerge.

²⁹ Which, perhaps significantly, I originally miss-typed as the 'filed'.

process] is thus a marker of the spiritual self-reflexivity of modernity and directly parallel to the consciousness of intellectuals about their own alienation' (Frow 1991:129; Friedman 1991). The urge to find some truly popular, non-academic users of heritage as an authentic voice or object of study has to be guarded against. Indeed this has to be doubly guarded against for me both socially - in the attempt to cope with feelings of inadequacy for not having a 'proper' topic, a field site and so forth - and theoretically when employing Heidegger whose categories of Being are redolent of an unself-conscious authenticity and full of a 'politics of nostalgia for a pre-modern world' (Frow 1991:140).

Guarded against and at the same time worked with for such dangers are also the truly double-sided measure of the appropriateness of travel metaphors. For the debate on authenticity continually throws up the idea that how natives 'really' live and work is a powerful topos in Tourism (Culler 1981:129). This makes it a useful mode of engaging with the production of knowledge - first by those under study and then by me. Further, the doubling of the two modes of knowing by focusing on the mode of participation/observation seems to avoid retreating into the Brahminic position of those such as Clifford (the unnamed but obvious target of Okely (1993)) whose textual strategy seems to involve the academic production of unproductive bodies which by focusing on textual forms 'back here' leaves 'Others as phantoms that serve only to produce the named position of scribe' (Tomas 1992:4; cf. Ganguly 1992). By travelling somewhat self-consciously these tropes can be confronted in the connections of here and there, practice and writing. Instead of following the scientific trope of *distinguishing my practices and* (ostensibly) separating them from those under study travel allows an engagement with the more metaphoric and symbolic elements of the praxis of research (cf. Lalli 1989; Hunt 1989).

Finally, double-sidedness includes and acknowledges the twin dangers and productivities of narratives that produce the 'scientist-as-hero' (Rose 1992) both as intrepid explorer, whose hardships in the field form credentials from a trial-by-ordeal,³⁰ and as the angst-ridden protagonist. The doubling of form of study and way of being-in-the-world hazards a great deal but seems to correspond to Adorno's (1973:63) admirable summary of critical philosophy in that 'it puts the question above the answer; where it keeps owing what it promised, [thus] it has consolingly raised failure as such to an existential rank. ... But this does not mean that as some keep parroting Kierkegaard - the truth lies in the questioner's existence, in his [sic] mere futile search for an answer. Rather, in philosophy the authentic question will somehow almost always include its answer. .. [there is no] fixed sequence of question and answer'.

³⁰ A figure and self-image of the researcher Phil Crang jokingly named 'Helmut Pith'

Populist Realism.

One reaction to the current 'crisis of representation' has been to react strongly against what could be seen as '[t]he compounding of personal and anthropological narcissism .. [which seems] more likely to plummet the field into a stagnant autism where no matter where we go we can never leave home' (Friedman 1991:96) and whose textual experimentation has little or no impact on the wider position of authority of anthropologist or indeed on the politics of the wider world which seem to disallow anything but textual experimentation. This introspection is what is feared from a 'culturalist agenda' read as the metaphoric displacement and eventual substitution of textual politics for 'actual' political struggle (Berman 1989). Certainly the question has to be posed of the suggestive coincidence between the rise of the new petit bourgeoisie and the cultural turn in social enquiry (Berman 1989; Thrift 1991).

An alternative engagement is found in the work of 'urban culturalists' (Morris 1988a, b), such as Hebdige (1992) or Chambers (1986), whose travels seem to be modelled on the detective who retrieves the sanguine *noir* stories from the city in a sort of 'populist realism', born, not as a retreat from politics, but as a 'a left populism attempting to salvage a sense of life from the catastrophe of Thatcherism' in Britain (Morris 1988b:15). However, as Morris goes on to incisively point out, once outside that context its critical force withers and the endless discovery of sub-cultures resisting through rituals seems like one master-disk running off thousands of articles on pleasure with minor variations. The sense of ethnographic realism also obscures how 'the people' also become textually delegated allegorical emblems of the social critic's own activity (Morris 1988b:17). We return again to asking questions of the seduction of an apparent research encounter with an authentic popular voice.

Indeed in the face of right-wing hegemony over more than a decade it does seem pertinent to pose the problem that popular culture seems to be always resisting yet popular politics seems to be acquiescing if not actively reactionary (Berman 1989:65). We cannot go looking for wisdom from some 'authentic' informant (Diaz 1989:169), rather there are shadings of local and global stories, local and global travels; analyses must be based on multiple tastes rather than the revalorisation of the popular and its celebration over the high brow (Morris 1988a). Thus, in travelling I do not want to produce an anti-Tourist seeking authentic (ie unproblematic) voices of resistance but neither do I want to celebrate the Tourist since extolling one side of the binary does not escape from that trap. It is not sufficient to pose pleasure as resistance, as Fiske (1989) seems to, although for subordinate

groups it may be an avoidance of the dry pedagogy of legitimated history. Escaping from intended positions is not so easy for the action still appears within a Map that marks the separation of pleasure and learning, entertainment and politics - a Map oriented by the Right's politics (Wallace 1981:88).

Dispersed Objects and Nomadic Subjects.

Imagining Communities, Seeking Audiences

It is left to assemble some form of critical practice that does not seek to escape the dilemmas outlined above, a praxis that takes up critically the points raised so far but does not preclude a range of practices that may well form the 'audience', the practitioners of Heritage. Of course, it is not possible in a finite amount of space and research time to fully describe the range of practices and places that go to shape a sense of historicity in contemporary Britain. Despite trying to be open it is necessary to select some. However, the problem remains of not replicating the literary habit of initiating our enquiry with a certain form of object and then cordoning off the users (Radway 1988). Or at least, if that move cannot be avoided, creating such audiences and forms so as to illuminate rather than hide the range of practices in a field would seem desirable. Thus this study tries to find a range uses and users, a multiplicity of audiences. This seems to be a 'minimum strategy' for researching Heritage. Yet it remains open to the criticism that all it has done is to create lots of smaller groups of users without changing the analytic procedure.

Conceptually, it seems that if the idea of aggregated audiences formed of similarly endowed hearers is discarded we risk falling into the banality of simply suggesting - 'it is all more complex than that' (Morris 1988b). So beyond the minimal strategy, a more audacious, but necessary, programme is to look at the articulations between users, between types of use and the formation of new uses (Radway 1988:370). The focus on articulation implies studying the practices of use, the silent productivities outlined earlier. The strategy is to subvert fixities, through articulations, as lines of flight which displace the bounded territories of a dominant centre's categories. The lines of flight are lines of actions, significations and Bergsonian flows of information. In contrast to roots we have routes with multiple intersections, passages and connections which are made while under way and communities formed in terms of conjunctures.

This mobile geography of trajectories lays no claim to occupy space. Thus, it has no privileged location to be defined and so speaks to a contingent form of identity in mobility:

'Journeys necessitate the ability both to form attachments and to break them. The traveller, in having to learn how to make contingent, transient, terminable relationships - which are not necessarily superficial - ... [experiences t]he vulnerability of the solitary traveller, and the resulting fear makes the traveller porous, needy, and alert to the possibilities of association.

Nonterritorialized human relations are grounded in the conditions of motion, in chance encounters, in common dangers and common alienations from place, in common strangership. Mobility constructs sociabilities that may dissolve upon arrival or be territorialized and structured in topography. Travelling societies are peculiar, not easily identifiable associations; they don't coincide with our image of a rooted, centred bounded society.'

Leed (1991:234).

So Journeys seem to allow a different sense of interpretive community - one that hopefully tries to avoid the exclusions and manufactured homogeneity that tends to go with that term. Equally they allow an analysis that is open to the full range of articulations through all the historical and social positions laid out in chapter 3 and 4 (cf. Brunsdon 1981:32). Yet avoiding the determinate sense of ineluctable positionalities - through the sense of multiple and variable, though inevitable, links to other lines of force and trajectories be they in terms of gender, class, age or ethnicity.

Replication: Seeking Reality or the Real?

"But just as we might garner courage to reinvent a new world and live new fictions - what a sociology that would be! - so a devouring force comes at us from another direction, seducing us by playing on our yearning for a true real. Would that it would, would that it could, come clean this true real. I so badly want that wink of recognition, that complicity with the nature of nature. But the more I want it the more I realize it's not for me. Not for you either... which leaves us this silly and often desperate place wanting the impossible so badly that while we believe it is our rightful destiny and so act as accomplices of the real, we also know in our heart of hearts that the way we picture the world and talk is bound to a dense set of representational gimmicks which, to coin a phrase, have but an arbitrary relation to a slippery referent easing its way out of graspable sight."

Taussig (1993:xvii).

The project I have undertaken derived much of its initial impulse from making visible the many unacknowledged (at least in the critical literature) practices that form the sense of historicity in our everywhere mediated world. Yet at the same time an acceptance of the complicity of the analysis in creating an object of study and its audience seems to fly in the face of this attempt to outline an empirical diversity. Such I take to be the sense of dilemma eloquently expressed in Taussig's above 'report to the academy'. For in inscribing the diversity of practices there seems to be an inherent risk of turning those practices into

equally reified objects (Scott 1990) in an impossible task of trying to make princesses out all the Cinderellas by rendering them into proper objects of study (de Certeau 1984:80). Rather than looking on the ethnographies as informative about practices the only remaining strategy appears to be to look on the ethnography as itself a performative practice, a 'provider of occasions', that creates new conjunctions (Pool 1991). Academic intervention is not a contamination but part of the field I studied, since, as Radway (1988:372) notes in a different context:

'Nearly all of these activities bring together people who pursue these interests avidly and regularly with other enthusiasts, and nearly all of the practices that are involved are dependent on knowledge and information produced elsewhere by legitimated experts'.

However, in turn such an understanding of the mutual constitution of object and practices risks slipping into an uncritical tautology. Although the idea of the connections of producer, consumers and legitimate 'definers' can be pictured as a 'circuit of culture' (eg Burgess 1992) it also seems to risk perpetuating a picture of too neatly bounded phenomenon, tautologically producing each link (Radway 1988:363). Instead, the study appeals to a different sense of the empirical where '[t]he field is not conceived in positivistic terms at all. Rather, it becomes a productive myth - something closely resembling the concept of the Real in Lacanian theory .. The Real can never be known, but that does not mean we live in a world of pure untamed interpretation' (du Toit 1992). Instead the conjunctions and disjunctions of different uses provide the opportunity for the irruption of a traumatic Real in the Lacanian sense. This appears to be a way of working that allows for the intervention of the researcher as a naturalistic part of praxis, in contrast to the normal dichotomisation of the two styles of research, and allows for the way account making in response to questioning is a normal human activity (Lindlof & Grodin 1990:21).

Logics in Motion: Lieux-de-memoire

So I have to pick out some particular types of 'motion', some particular utterances and contexts, some performances of Heritage. I have sought for differing contexts and moments in which a sense of historicity is experienced and different modes of experiencing it - different mobilities provoking feelings for the past in different ways and places. Thus I am not just seeking different interpretive communities for the same event, but suggesting that different practices construct and perform different senses of the past. Each practice has as its effect the creation of a different place for the past. Each produces different *lieux-de-memoire* (Nora 1989; cf. Kugelmass 1992).

One way of looking at these different moments is to refer back to the idea of spatial stories, and look at the different senses of time - that of the objects, their configuration and emplotment by institutions and, finally, here the different times of 'reading' and telling (cf. Ricoeur 1984). In terms of a minimal strategy the different times of experiencing and performing Heritage are the different sorts of *Journeys*, the different pre-ontologies. The times I develop hereafter might loosely be seen as of four kinds. Firstly, the life-time itself where the Journey is truly existential and forms the framework for rendering the personally experienced past intelligible. Secondly, there are the spectral space-times of loss and absence created among the densely memoried landscapes of the city. Thirdly, there is the time of the day trip where familial socialisation and cultural accumulation are the organising telos. Finally, there is the time of escapism and time capsules, of time out of the present and the everyday.

Such a selection of journeys is too wildly eclectic to be anything other than a highly purposive construct - and that is exactly what it is. It is not an attempt at an empirical survey of Heritage experiences. Perhaps instead each instance should be read as a set of anecdotal episodes in modern day experiences of historicity. This is not meant to deny their validity but suggest that they are treated as allegorical constructs as much as empirical cases, whose validity derives not from their representativeness but from their functionality in particular exchanges (Morris 1988b:7). Each is set out to explore the articulations between such times and ways of knowing for 'the memorialising of events cannot simply be divided into, say, bad petty-bourgeois fabrication (myths of place, sacralization) and good popular contestation (semiotics of displacement, debunking). As an activity, memorialising is itself a complex spatial-story practice. Struggles (conflictual programmes) occur in the shuttling between stories, and between competing determinations in stories' (Morris 1988a:37).

To shuttle like this between stories seems to risk the superimposition of some shuttling mode, perhaps the tempting academic mobility of the cruising grammarian. Instead then, the practices of knowing these practices (of knowing the past) will be set to double the field - academic praxis mimicking the type of utterance. Each logic of mobility is doubled again. The choice of these logics did not then spring innocently from the world but rather arouse as I purposed to find connections, explore conjunctures and disjunctures across a range of practices. For that reason the four ways of knowing are linked as set out below:

Dwelling-in-the-Past: Sedentary logics

In stark contrast to all the readings on Tourism, mobility and flight I sought at first to look to a more traditional sense of Dwelling and rootedness. This is not a Touristic passing

through but a dwelling and belonging *in* history, an experience of the past that has less to do with hyperbole, a practice that is sedentary and unglamorous. I was drawn to it since, unlike high-tech recreations, it is largely absent from analyses of Heritage. It does not fit ideas of a post-modern past. Up and down the country there are hundreds of local history groups constantly discussing, remembering and arguing about the past. Within Bristol, for instance, there is a mosaic of oral history groups operating on shoestring budgets. But despite this they produce a steady stream of leaflets, exhibitions and books. Further, it seemed so often that this effort at oral history was posited as some authentic voice, an opposition to all the mobility and the flow of 'images' about the past. Rather than an experience making the past present, this is an experience in terms of loss. Reminiscences are punctuated by remarks pointing to a lost era, a bygone age, a past that is sealed off and inaccessible to the present. Meanwhile the appeal to Everyperson in heritage sites fits in with subaltern struggles to write themselves into history. It fits with the way oral history groups struggle to make personal narratives historically legitimate and recast received histories to accommodate them.

Envisioning the Past: Spectres in the City

Yet the previous Journey did not seem a sufficient summary when I worked on it. Somehow I needed to add a sense of time beyond the life-Journey. But that wasn't quite it either. There was a striving to make a loss present. The easiest and most graspable practice in all this was that of circulating historic photographs. I did not seek this. Photography is not something I felt well versed in. But as I worked with oral history groups it became obvious this was a conjunctural practice linking through to present-day photography of the historic. It provided a discourse framed not in terms of texts about the past but communications from the past - permanently being rewritten, and reinscribed in new communicative contexts (Derrida 1987); bridging the scope of historic and living time (cf. Ricoeur 1988). As such the images were pregnant with meaning, yet never self-present; always bringing a plenitude of meaning yet a sense of loss; calling themselves proof yet provoking enormous discussion (Derrida 1987:150).³¹ Not only that, but these pictures from the past seemed again to show the sense of changing legibility of the historic, to show admirably the vision of the present in rendering the past legible (Benjamin 1973, 1978b; Fynsk 1992). Finally, they seemed to be a logic of images that created a spectral sense of presence, some of that sympathetic magic of conjuring up other times and places (Tausig 1994, 1993).

Day-tripping and Pedestrian logics

³¹ It seemed amazing that these were often indeed postcards. The theoretical conjunction seemed too great - Derrida's (1987) Postcards of difference never arrive, and these travelling artefacts of memory bring absences.

That conjuring up and circulation of other times and places seemed to speak directly to the tripping to such times and places involved in daytripping to Heritage experiences. Likewise this appeared to involve the picturing of the historic as an intrinsic practice of the experience (Cohen, Nir & Almagor 1992; Frow 1991; Nye 1991; Urry 1990). At the same time it appeared necessary and fitting to engage with practices at the heart of visiting sites - not to do so would seem to be then a case of replicating the silences in academic accounts myself. As such it appeared vital to link in the actual pedestrian logics and mobilities in order to escape from analyses of mirror, reflection and spectator (Heinich 1988; Morris 1988d:202). To capture that I needed a sense of being immediately present as people actually wandered about sites - the camera as observer began to beckon as urgently as my memory seemed inadequate. It seemed important though to attend to the routes and what people looked at and said so a video camera seemed a step beyond other methods that attempted this. But sites are about more than that, Touristic sites are not just about observing. They are also about self display (Langman 1992), and cameras appear to play a pivotal role in all of this so far (Bourdieu 1990; Chalfen 1987; Worth 1981). Pictures were not merely images of the past but gave rise to expectations of what would be seen and then circulated afterwards - as tokens of having-been, as souvenirs (Gordon 1986; Stewart 1984). And the sacrifice of the immediacy of the experience to its future circulation seemed to offer the position of reflexivity for what Urry calls the 'post-tourist' whose reflection and recording lead to the realisation that 'he [sic] is not a time traveller when he goes somewhere historic, not a noble savage when he stays on a tropical beach; not an invisible observer when he visits a native compound. Resolutely realistic he cannot evade his condition of outsider.' (Feifer in Urry 1987:7). This attention to commemorating the act of visiting, of having been, fitted well with an accumulative economy where Journeys try to integrate such material into domestic contexts. Heritage sites then form markers that are not about didactic history. Rather they are markers of family events. Photography seemed to speak to this conjunction of personal and public pasts. Moreover it also speaks to a sense of enjoyment and the way pleasure is appropriated in the same practices that mark the site out as part of Heritage. The discourse of fun surrounding camcorders seemed then to hopefully allow the research to avoid what Allon White termed the social reproduction of seriousness (Radway 1988:370; cf. Stallybrass & White 1986) which from the spatial division of play and learning works as an exclusion locating knowledge as where play isn't.

Time travellers and pilgrimages to the past

Yet all this photography would be as naught without something to see. So I sought the strongest sense of performing the past - that of living history. I, therefore, sought those whose way of understanding the past was participatory not visual, yet whose product was indeed a spectacular and an increasingly utilised marketing strategy: 'The histories of

warfare, poverty oppression and disease have been transformed into media of shallow titillation ... During the summer of 1991, a series of mock battles is planned by the conservation organisation English Heritage. The diary of these events mentions a 'Civil War Battle Spectacular' (Walsh 1992:1-2). Living history seemed to be at the core of much of the academic ire poured out at Heritage, a commodified spectacle, yet performed by volunteers. These are volunteers who surely, if anyone does, represent an extreme fascination with the past as well as a modern desire for the individual to 'construct a stage for the display of their own heroism' (Punter 1986:254). At the other end of the scale, the attention to presenting the ordinary seemed both to gel with the alleged quest for authenticity and, at the same time, represent a juncture with social history. More conjunctures abounded, whereby if the day-trip was to 'step back in time' then it was living history that provided the people they would meet (Enscore 1993). In a final and totally persuasive conjuncture, no sooner did I moot the idea than contacts and connections began to creep out of the woodwork - suggesting both the prevalence and close relationship of this praxis with the academic one - a relationship that began to intrigue me more and more.

It is, then, the connections between these four ways of knowing the past, their specificities and similarities that the rest of this thesis will attempt to lay out - in terms of the contexts of these practices, the knowledges produced and the methods employed to study them. I can hopefully then retain a sense of the specific places and productivities of these knowledges. Meanwhile each will also throw up links to be followed, resonances to be heard, events to be viewed in the light of the other practices. I thus hope they work, in Adorno's (1993) terms, not as capital accumulated from the field, as though they could be stored up and banked, but as networks of force and conjunctures which gain their effectiveness through their interaction.

Gone but not Forgotten: community and memory.

Introduction.

This chapter is concerned with a series of permutations and implications drawn out from its title. It is a chapter that tries to speak to the role of memory in forming and sustaining local communities. It plays around the importance of forgetting as part of the selectivity of a Heritage that is resisted yet also mobilised by groups that oppose what was earlier described as 'institutionalised forgetfulness' (Bennett 1988 see chapter II), and who themselves sew their alternative story out of absences and forgettings (Sewell 1992; Shotter 1990). At the same time it also plays about the sense of danger of the past being 'lost' either through a receding horizon of memory, or by municipal amnesia coupled with the physical destruction of parts of the past leaving the communities of local history amid the ruins.

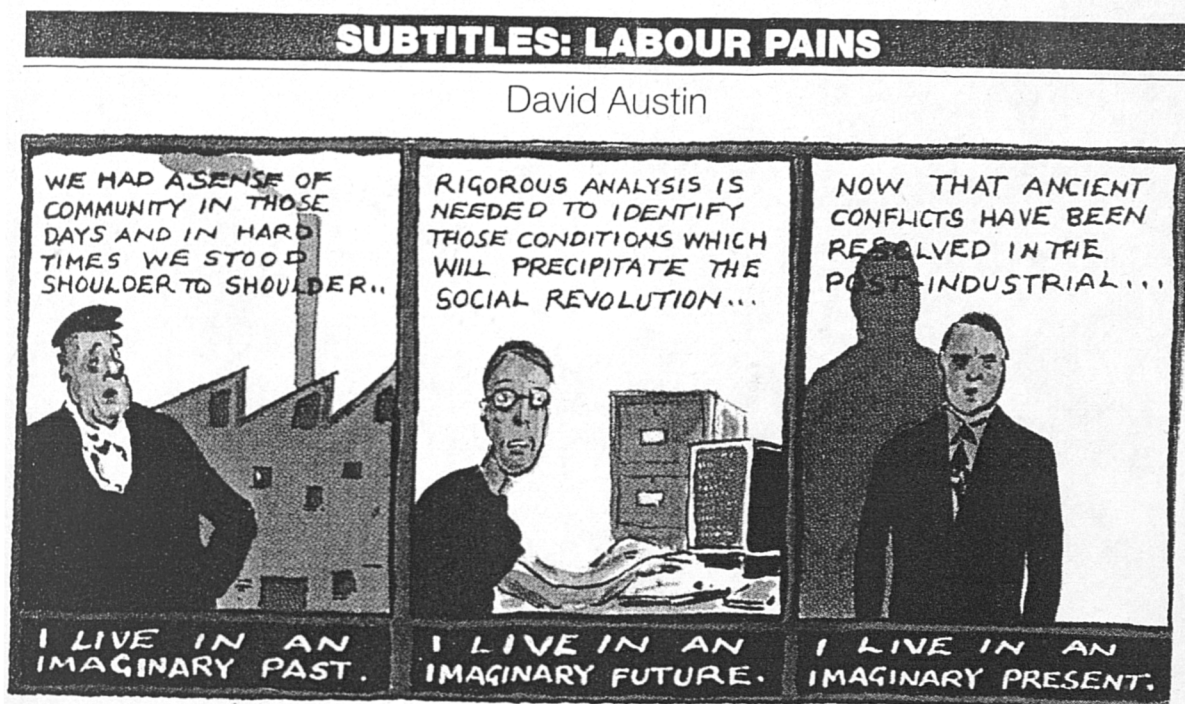
Each of these possible permutations will be played out here. They will not be separated and dissected but will rather run through this chapter as the inevitable multiple intersections and entanglements of that create local histories (figure 9). As such I shall, for the sake of clarity, try to follow strands but with the object of shifting and slipping across their intersections rather than isolating them for analysis. I will therefore start by outlining the methodology of how I approached local history. Thereafter I shall follow the initial thread by which I entered a strand of resistant interpretation and counter-hegemonic practice. From thence I will depart to study how such a resistant community is formed, and its reworking of history. This leads to a consideration of how this reworking actually also serves to mark out the status of the lost past.

Group Praxis and Shared Experiences.

This section is where I should outline the methodology employed in the research I undertook with oral history groups around Bristol. However, it would be misleading to give the impression that my approach was worked out in advance or that it was *my* approach and not a hybrid of advice from other academics and comments from the people I worked with themselves. Firstly I need to set the scene with both the local contexts of oral history and the way I came to approach these groups.

Figure 9:

Tropes of Position around Community and Memory



Seeking the Subaltern.

My motivation was an ill-defined sense that I wished to find an alternative version or source of history from the versions produced by the 'historical apparatus' (popular memory group 1982). Informed by a reading of Gramsci (1971) I was anxious to see if there were non-hegemonic or oppositional histories that would contest what was so often portrayed as a rightwing dominated heritage industry. I thus cast about and I suppose, looking back on my notes, I had a few crude binaries floating in my head that were informing what I would now call a search for an oppositional voice. Broadly, working through the literature in 1991 I had a sense of a hegemonic versus a subaltern voice, a dominant memory against a silenced, a history by and of the rulers versus a popular, a history for display to tourists versus one with meaning for locals, a rightwing and a radical tradition.

Reflecting upon this, I appreciate now that the side of the 'angels' in each of the binaries I constructed remains a side defined and determined precisely by the side of the 'devils'. It seemed to me then that although I might consider most of my categories horribly compromised they still had a popular currency. So how was I to proceed? I felt that given the increasing level of reflexivity being required in the thesis that the best way was to proceed to use the stereotypings I had developed but to use them *because* they were stereotypings. I ceased to be interested in the retrieval of the bones of an alternative history and was increasingly interested in how both dominant and alternative constructions of the past were put together. Oral history still attracted me since I felt the validity of its political premise, growing out of the 'new social history' written by scholars who sought to produce histories from below, to fill out the bare landscapes of academic interpretation that Derek Gregory once critiqued as 'empty of all but fistfuls of the powerful and prominent'. What oral history offered was a change from the standard academic historical production via 'the old and privileged approach [by sitting] in private-ish libraries at polished tables reading crumbling yellow dossiers of facts that powerful men have deemed worth recording' (Stanley 1991:61).

However, I began to shy away from the idea of long interviews where people recalled the specifics of local history. Partly this was because it would have involved *me* reconstructing how *they* went about forming alternatives (Schneider 1992). It seemed perilously close to treating people as 'sources' or informants, as though they

were pots or containers of information (facts) that a skilled researcher could retrieve.¹ I had begun to distrust the model I found in life history work where:

'The informant was to supply the data; we ethnologists were to interpret it ... all in the class clearly understood that an informant was the possessor of a vast store of data'

Oring (1987:245).

I did not see my work with oral historians as a discovery procedure that would in some way find some pre-existing facts that had been distorted by the historic apparatus. A complaint echoed about oral histories insensitive to the way they were produced so that 'Too many of us saw the interviewee as just another source of evidence to be extracted. We turned on the tape recorder and encouraged an outpouring of the past' (Bornat 1989:17; Wachtel 1986:208; cf. MacDougall 1994). I disliked the implication that this hidden and forgotten history required the agency of me to recover it; it shared what seemed an empiricist epistemology where the historian/researcher can only admit to an active role in the fastidious collecting of details thus denying the dialogic situation of research and the co-presence of the 'informant' which seemed to lead to reproducing empiricist notions of facticity, objectivity and technique in the account (Allen 1984; Alonso 1988; Murphy 1986; cf. de Hart 1993; Fabian 1982). As far as I could see the strength of amenity group politics, and this side of 'heritage' interest, was that it was forcing academics to listen to the agendas of other groups. I felt the, perhaps inevitable, bind:

"on the one hand it is the 'historian', who specialises in the production of explanations and interpretations and who constitutes himself [sic] as the most active, thinking part of the process. On the other hand there is his 'source' who happens in this case to be a living human being who is positioned in the process to yield up information . Of course, the problem may be solved rhetorically or at the level of personal relations: the historian may assert that he has 'sat at the feet of the working-class witnesses' and has learnt all he knows in that improbable and uncomfortable posture. It is, however, *he* that produces the final account, *he* that provides the dominant interpretation, *he* that judges what is true and not true, reliable or inauthentic."

Popular Memory Group (1982:220).

Broadly the epistemology remained that historians went out and gathered oral histories from informants, as voices of an authentic past, in order to compile them later within the academic arena. The advantage was that a subordinate group might insert its own view of itself rather than a dominant group's view of it in history -

¹ For instance, in a brilliant article there are moments when Jo Stanley says 'we wanted real lives to be uncovered, re-presented in accessible ways' (1991:61). Joan Scott (1991) makes a similar point about this rhetoric of visibility making the brute fact of difference apparent rather than challenging how difference and hierarchies are constituted. It serves to fix the identities of those studied reproducing difference.

though this leaves aside here the vexed questions of whether all that is actually accomplished is the writing of the subordinate in the terms of the history of the dominant (cf. Swindells 1989). The most satisfactory answer began to emerge in the understanding that 'this way of dealing with history is about empowerment - so that people discover their lives, not just those of the famous are of value, and also begin to understand the social pressures that shaped these lives' (Stanley 1991:61; Popular Memory Group 1982:228). I was still worried that using life history interviews would position people as informants rather than makers of history and historiography. I knew that there was a large amount of community work being done in terms of local history so I began to wonder whether this was not a site of alternative histories being produced. It was this route that I decided to pursue.

Chattering Classes? Groupwork and Historiography.

As I began to focus on the ways these alternatives were produced I was increasingly persuaded by Burgess's work (1988, 1992, 1994) on the way people put together and formed their opinions and her contention that the best forum for discerning these processes was through group interviews where people could play out the various doubts and fears they had, where they could present contestable interpretations rather than be a source of facts. It promised some respect for the contingency and precarious nature of people's beliefs and for their multiple and contradictory nature. As Hedges says about group interviews:

'There are very few golden rules, and certainly no magic formula, for cutting through to Truth - if indeed there *is* any single monolithic truth, which is not typically the case. Human beings are complex, ambivalent, inconsistent creatures; not even the brightest and best organised of us lives in a sharp-edged world where we have consciously and consistently sorted out our attitudes and beliefs on all conceivable subjects. It is a mistake to assume that there is a pristine Platonic reality under the muddle of our public utterances to which really sharp research tools can unerringly cut through. Underneath the mess of language lies a mess of thought and a tangle of behaviour. If our research tools cannot recognise ambivalence and consistency as real and important they will not help us to a very profound understanding of human thought and behaviour.'

Hedges (1985:85).

The method appeared to replicate and restage the processes whereby people began to consider what was historic. What I was interested in was this *process* rather than some end product. What groupwork seemed to be able to do was to encourage an emerging discussion that would enable members to discuss the roots of their

opinions and perhaps, through reflection and debate, lead on to further realizations about these (Morgan 1988:27-8; Swenson, Griswold & Kleiber 1992).²

At this point the connection of already existing groups trying to produce what I loosely thought of as subaltern histories and the potentials of groupwork became clear. The sort of oral history I am dealing with is produced by groups of local residents themselves rather than a visiting academic. I was accepting that the single speaker monologue 'life history as we know it from published monographs is for the most part an artefact of the ethnographic encounter. Indigenous modes of life review rarely take the form of a comprehensive monologue; more often they are interactive, collaborative, and an ongoing process in social life that intensifies with advancing age.' (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1989:139; cf. Lawrence & Mace 1987, Oring 1987). Within Bristol there is a forum for such life review in the mosaic of probably around 100 local history societies of varying sizes, purposes and inclinations³ and within these there some dozen or so that belong to the Avon Oral history Network, concentrated largely in the white, working class central areas of the city - specifically Bedminster⁴, Barton Hill⁵ and Hotwells⁶ where I also lived for over a year. But lest it appear that I am arguing that previous work used 'contaminated' sources while these are truly authentic, 'indigenous' sources I must complicate the scene a little. Virtually all the groups I had any contact with were founded around or organised by a middle class community workers, one of whom, for instance, was a disaffected history graduate from Bristol University. They were contacted via the

2 I have described the process of group interviewing in detail elsewhere (Cook & Crang 1995). Other than Burgess the key sources I used were Greenbaum 1988, Krueger 1988, Stewart & Shamdasani 1990, and Templeton 1987.

3 The Avon Local History Association was founded in 1973 and has some 50 affiliated organisations. Local history organisations range from Bristol Industrial Archaeology Society (founded 1967) which is semi professional and has close ties with archaeologists (Buchanan 1987), the Black Hand Gang are volunteers who do restorations for the industrial museum, while other groups are more conventional parish history groups such as Backwell parish map project (founded 1988) who ensure that their area's history is 'recorded and is available for use in the protection of the Parish when housing or other developments are proposed. ('Yesterday's and Tomorrow's Bristol' Souvenir programme Oct 1991)

4. There are several groups in Bedminster, ranging from the Malago run by a local history teacher to the two oral history groups I dealt with one of which was started by the Workers Educational Association, and focuses on ex-residents, and the other as part of a community education programme. These last two groups met once a week and produced several books and pamphlets.

5. Barton Hill History Group has a membership of about 100 and was started in 1983. Its declared aim is to establish a permanent museum of local history 'illustrating how working people lived in this area from 1835 to the present day' ('Yesterday's and Tomorrow's Bristol' Souvenir programme Oct 1991). I worked with the most active sub-group that met once a week with a community worker (paid for 2 hours per week). Barton Hill lies at the top of the old docks system and was a prime target of 'slum clearance in the fifties.

6 The Hotwells group was billed as Hotwells and Clifton as distinct from the Clifton and Hotwells Improvement Society. It is fairly vital that this sociable group meeting once a month to recount oral memories is distinguished from CHIS. Hotwells has since the nineteenth century been the working class area. Only a few hundred feet from the centre of what is now termed 'Clifton Village' by its residents it also lies below it (both physically and in terms of social distinction) in the base of the Avon Gorge at the mouth of the Docks.

Avon Oral History Network, normally starting with an approached to a group 'leader' such as the above worker. Some were linked back, or had started from initiatives by the Workers Educational Association, others were connected to past or present community worker initiatives funded by the council, or allied to Adult/Community education programmes⁷.

As a result of these divergent origins the groups had divergent aims, projects and political bents. Again attitudes within the group towards various functions would differ especially between the community worker and members but also among the latter across areas, classes, political beliefs and age (with group members ranging from 55 to 93). In fact there was normally a fair mix of all these objectives and priorities in each group - with different members stressing different aims. What bound the group members together was their interest and commitment to 'their' small area of the city (Barton Hill would be say 1/2 a mile square, Hotwells a 1/3 of a mile by 3/4).⁸

Most members grew up in inner city industrial areas between the wars, and this was a formative experience for many. Virtually all had come from the 'ordinary folk'. They had been dockers, sailors, factory workers, shop workers, publicans and rail workers and other occupations too numerous to mention. They were all white, self-defined 'ordinary folk' or 'working class' who, given their age, spoke with frequency about the Depression of the Thirties - a period that for me was politically and intellectually charged.⁹ It will become clear that one of the unresolved elements of the groups' philosophies is how much this is a 'period effect', ie that the events then were so dramatic, an age effect, that these were the formative years of members or a rhetorical and historical trope that encodes and stages an interpretation of history.

"Sometimes conditions conspire to make a generational cohort acutely self-conscious and then they become active participants in their own history and provide their own sharp, insistent definitions of themselves and explanations for their destiny, past and future.

7. We might also notice how the idea of community publishing grew in the 70s providing a forum for putting out the work of these groups. A movement paralleled by Bornat (1989) to the University settlement movement of the last century in providing facilities and voice for the inner-cities.

8 I worked with four of these groups arranging successive group discussions about what were the key places in their area, it's changes, it's preservation and how they saw their role in telling it's history. I generally went to about six meetings in all with each group, four of which were taped, but I also went for walks round town they organised, videos or displays they set up, trips to the museum and sat in on one for about 18 months to get a more general feel of the way groups went. Numbers varied from 6 to 22 people, with ratios of men and women varying as well. Recorded sessions involved from 6 to 12 members of each group.

9 It is important to raise now the salience of this period in the minds of the groups. In their historical materials none deals with events after the second world war as historical and this period is scarcely mentioned save in comparison with what went before (eg Farr, Bower & Parsons 1986; Miner's Memories 1986; Vear 1981).

They are then knowing actors in a historical drama they script rather than subjects in somebody else's study."

Myerhoff (1982:100).

I want to structure this chapter to show these process of becoming authors of history. This chapter proceeds from an account of concerns about what history is not displayed by the historical apparatus (commercial and academic). Then it deals with the way the alternative portrayal of local history is constructed. From here I will attempt to show the way spaces are crucially bound up in the way members portrayed their lives. Finally, I shall try to look at how the way this passage of time is constructed fits more generally into arguments about the role of the past in contemporary society. This comes back to using group dynamics to see how hegemonic knowledges are constructed and contested in the making of local identities so hegemony is not "an external relation between pre-constituted social agents, but the very process of the discursive constitution of those agents" (Laclau & Mouffe in Brow 1990:4). I thus move from an allegedly emic start to etic conclusion despite the injunction of the popular memory group (1982) ringing in my ears that talk about deep structure or the repressed is too often a stalking horse for middle class intervention in how the working class tell their history.

Counter-hegemony and Critique.

Hidden Histories and Lost Voices.

As I strove to demonstrate in chapter two the dominant memory functions both as a mode of organising history and also as a dimension of who is portrayed as figuring in history. Not just a dominant memory as an imaginary institution but an institutionalised memory of the dominant. What Porter terms, in museums, a history of big men and their machines (Porter 1988). To counter-act this is the purpose behind several initiatives in Bristol, perhaps most prominently that of the "Bristol BroadSides" co-operative who published *'Bristol's Other History'* in 1983, *Bristol as WE Remember it* (1987) and *'Placards and Pin Money: another look at Bristol's other history'* in 1986 in the introduction to which the editor (Ian Bild) writes:-

'People think of Bristol as a sleepy city. Nothing much happens here. The St.Paul's 'riots' of the 1980s are seen as an unusual occurrence in what has been a generally placid history. Bristol people are imagined to be quiet unassuming folk. On the contrary, Bristol has a lively past. Its people have rioted, fought and struggled to win better lives for themselves and have often been on the receiving end of violence from the

powers that be for their troubles. The lives of 'ordinary' people have long been ignored and forgotten in the printed histories.'
Bristol BroadSides (1986 preface)

Indeed oral history is adept at exploring these areas and topics, and revealing fascinating and disturbing accounts of the past lives of the non-hegemonic classes. For instance, after always hearing about the health provision and public works of the Wills tobacco magnates the following passage struck me:

Grp2 516-550, 562-573

Dot: Quite true cos{laughter} when I started of Mary, Mary XX as I still call her cos we were brought up together, ur we was at what we used to call the stripping machine. Which was really where the stems were removed

Jane, Grace: That's right.

Dot: And uh

Grace: All by hand

Jane : Yes

Dot: You had to do by hand 80 pounds of tobacco a day which was a hell of a lot of tobacco mind you

Grace: Oh it was,

Jane: Yes, yes

Dot: and its 80 pound a day

Grace: all with stems in we used to practice at home with cabbages

Dot: But of course it was a job you see before the war. Wills, to go

[..]

Fred: But then you had to bandage your fingers up they used to be raw didn't they

Jane: we used to get in ...

Dot: I think it was 340 pound a week in tobacco Mary was n't it that we used to get in? In weight of tobacco that we had to do.

May: What happened if you didn't do your quota

Dot: Oh then you'd be out

Grace: You were just let go [yes,

The previous section outlined some of my ambivalences to this idea of recovering the hidden past since while being fully aware of the distortions of accounts in the public sphere. In Bourdieu's (1991a) schema, the game was still played in terms of accuracy to an alleged objective history, the local was still fleshing out the grander historical schema. For instance, in the magazine *Remember Be'minster* (vol 5 1990 p12), an account about war work began with the following self-deprecation 'this is a little story about myself'. Academics still possessed the legitimate modes of expression - and allowing them a strategy of condescension reliant on the knowledge that they could produce the legitimate account as well if they chose.

Speaking and Recognition.

The idea of a reminiscence movement (Bornat 1989) with groups of participants defining their own agendas appeared to get round this problem for me and to a certain extent I think it did. This does come close to what Murphy (1986:161)

suggests is simply defining the act of speaking itself as a political act.¹⁰ Certainly one of the other strands leading into the popularisation of oral history groups is reminiscence work where while dealing with this emphasises the validation of personal experience (Bornat 1989).¹¹ It is worth at this point then stating the visibility of myself as an implicit and knowing other in the following section, one whose presence may perhaps be best summed up by the word 'witness'. I choose this term since it does suggest the importance attached to a discourse of visibility in terms of both subordinate groups and the age of the participants. Life history represents a chance to become visible and self-conscious therefore appropriate to a stage in life cycle that has been called a phase of life review (Murphy 1986). Left with a feeling that the past is incommunicable since their contemporaries are passing many elderly people can empathise with Stephen Spender's comment that he feels like a space traveller sometimes since he can't communicate because all his contemporaries have been left behind (Bornat 1989).¹² Myerhoff (1982:103) suggests how her oral history project gave members a chance to perform their stories of the past and thus a chance to exist, make their traditions and selves visible.

'Attention was the scarce good in the community. Everyone competed for it with astonishing fierceness. The sight of a camera or tape recorder, the mere possibility that someone would sit down and listen to them aroused the member's appetite to have themselves documented. ... If possible the attention should come from outsiders who were more socially prestigious and therefore more capable of certifying their existence.'

Myerhoff (1982:106).

Indeed she recounts the incident where one of her students working at a centre thanked an older woman, having been moved by her strength in her story - the older woman declined with words 'No it is I who should thank you. Every night before I fall asleep here on my narrow bed, I go over my life. I memorize it, in case anyone should ask.' (Myerhoff 1982:112). The idea of witnessing is important, but as an active agent not just passive receiver of oral history. This allows us to turn to 'informants' and reconceptualise their motivation for engaging with the historical apparatus in a more active sense than as containers of memory to be tapped. 'They

10 However, given the low profile moderator role I adopted, I also felt in danger of combining 'guilty invisibility on the part of the intellectuals with a romanticisation of popular consciousness as intrinsically radical [to form] a heady mix, however implausible' (Murphy 1986:159).

11. Bornat (1989) also notes that one of the reasons for not calling this reminiscence therapy or drawing on therapeutic group theory is that the word therapy is alternately debased (bibliotherapy is reading) and a code for professionalisation and control. So far I have played up the political roots of oral history but Bornat points out usefully how it has also coalesced around a reminiscence movement.

12 Barbara Myerhoff (1982), in work with a US centre for elderly Jewish immigrants, found that since there were no younger people who had kept alive prewar central European Jewish culture many knew they were the last generation and that the traditions died with them.

are not only witnesses to what once was, they are also individuals with a profound need to be witnessed.' (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1989:183; Lawrence & Mace 1987:4-5; Pile 1992:142). As noted before this may be highlighted in terms of an epochal and/or generational positioning:

Grp3

Fred: [we were born]..Just at the end or the beginning of the new world, because everything then up until nineteen twenties practically only went by the speed of a horse. On the roads. There was trains there was no aeroplanes as such. But there was trains, but on the road..

Jean: There only the horse and cart.

Fred: The horse went 8 miles an hour and from the beginning of time that's it. But from the twenties onwards when the motorbikes and motorcars started coming the new life started and um fifty years look at it now.

The scale of transformation then leads to another feeling that comes out particularly strongly when members were thinking about how to get people to understand history. It was felt by several members in several groups that the changes in their local area were so immense that it was virtually impossible to adequately communicate what it had been like. ¹³ This was reflected in repeated phrases highlighting the difficulty of communicating a drastic, even if not a unique, shift in the patterns of life:-

Grp2 1221-1224

Ray: You can talk about years ago, but you can but you can hardly reflect on the days years ago in home it's a bit difficult really.

Grp2 863-864

Jim: Yes. Yes. But you can't compare then and now. I went to the school

Grp2 800

We can't imagine how it was now.

Grp2 472-477

May: Yes it is very difficult to imagine now isn't it? When you look at that area..

Jake: It's a bomb site now

May: .. That is was like that

Flo: You can't imagine it.

Grp1 1671-1673

George: They [people today] only accept half of it. A lot of it they don't believe they think we are exaggerating.

13. Above Fred is positioning his generation as a privileged one in that up to his time life is depicting as unchanging (always slow transport) and now as totally altered. Fred bridges the gap of then and now. I have to add that I think Fred is missing out points where the cities were only built in the previous century, or in terms of his scale most of Bedminster was built in the last 60 years before him.

Grp4 805-11, 860-873

Harold: Well um I suppose you could say that in a way. It's difficult to explain it because when you think of how people were living when the war started, and how they were living in the say the er the 1950s it was like a another world. Just bare boards [back then], and that's the way they are living now it's like a revolution. Between the prewar and post war. [coughs]

Grp4 865-895

Harold: People of your [Mike or Darrel¹⁴] age can't really appreciate what what we saw years ago.

Grp4 995-1002

Ernie: It it's incredible well he go down on Lawrence Hill and see that as we knew it years ago and see it now you you just just can't visualise it you really can't.

These brief snippets litter my records from oral history meetings, not as any fully laid out argument but as continual mentions that set the tone for the discussions. In fact relatively early in the process of analysing the transcripts from the groups I began to code all these references as being about the incommunicability of past experiences.¹⁵ It is this I wish to follow up here where we have perhaps already begun to see in the work of Myerhoff the importance of recalling and public recognition of memories to the self-validation of group members. I want to turn to connect this with the political idea of writing the hidden histories and lost voices of the past to suggest we connect this with this more personal struggle to communicate experiences and gain acceptance for these experiences.

Producing Popular Knowledge & Official History.

What I propose to do is to give a flavour of the overall discussions and then focus on one particular example, that of coal mining in Bedminster, in some more detail. From this example I shall move to elaborate some of the ways oral history groups act and see themselves or others as 'correcting' and/or retelling the past of their areas. As we went through many examples of institutions dealing with different parts of Bristol's past it was clear that the same anger or surprise at absent topics came up again and again.

14. At the time Mike was 23 and Darrel was 31.

15 I am not going to describe the process of coding further. The methods used were based on Agar (1980, 1986), Jones(1985b), McCracken (1988), Strauss (1987), and Taylor & Cameron (1987). For this section of the thesis, the material was processed using a software package (*The Ethnograph*) that performs the basic clerical operations (Seidel & Clark 1984). For a variety of reasons, though highly apposite here, the concepts it utilises were unsuitable for later sections (cf. Richards & Richards (1994, 1991), Seidel (1991), Tesch (1991, 1990)). Later work was done using the programme *Hypersoft* (Dey 1993).

Groups were often unwilling to be directly critical of 'official histories'¹⁶. In virtually every case the initiation of direct criticism was started by myself or a community worker. In fact we will see below a flat denial that an area is ignored. As can be seen in the second insert it is May (a community worker) who starts questioning this and it is group members finding excuses for the place later on in the third excerpt.

Grp4 -605

Mike: I mean do you think the history of Barton Hill as we've been talking about it is well known or is it just forgotten and slips out?

Flo: No I don't think so. Do you Ern?

Grace: Not forgotten.

Clearly my political angle was being rebuffed largely, I suspect, as a result of Grace and Flo spending so much of their time immersed in local history groups. For them the assertion that their area was not the subject of historiographical activity must have sounded absurd.¹⁷ However from the same group I received the following account of an exchange some years before with Reece Winstone (whose work is the subject of the next chapter) after he had given a slide show of photographs of Bristol.

GRP4 -1223

Ernie: And I said err I got several of his books there and I said I could I've never seen anything much of Barton Hill. And he said "well to be honest," he said "I don't think I've got many photographs of Barton Hill." I mean some the important places but this this wasn't an important place it was a backwater here that nobody bothered to photograph it.

Compared to my somewhat simplistic framing of the issue groups had a complex understanding of both the production and consumption of histories - that is the practices of memorialisation. Some supported the museums and blamed their audience for a lack of interest, whereas others suggests that what is called on by the museum system is a very active, academic form of consumption. This highlighted something else other groups had found researching other topics (and which we shall see again in later examples). You had to know what you wanted and go and ask for it and have it brought out - precisely a gatekeeping function inscribing legitimate

16. This was the term I used in the groups as short-hand for publicly presented and funded histories sanctioned as legitimate portraits of the past. To start with I should say that I felt very strongly that there was a master narrative or dominant memory of Bristol.

17. I was, after all, talking to the *keen* splinter group (10 members) that met more regularly (weekly) and produced more concrete output than the main Barton Hill group (50 members and monthly). I should add my question was prompted by never having come across Barton Hill in a history or even a map before being introduced to this group's work through the Avon Oral History Network.

knowledges on the physical structure of the building (Markus 1993) and reinforcing the division of legitimate producers of history from popular historians.

GRP4

[So are their records of this area in the records office?]

Harold: They surface every now and then you know but they are just sort of stored away somewhere.

Grace: Well the thing is you can't get in there unless you've got a group with you, you've got a devil's job to get in that main room. There's a main room there and it's a bit behind doors..

Ernie: yeah but I think

Grace:.. you got to have permission you've got to have somebody taking you around and there's all these dusty books they bring out

Again we can pick out the ideas that records are buried and unavailable except to those in the know. The language of exclusion is remarkable. Records 'surface' as if of their own volition (certainly not according to the wishes or desires of ordinary folk). Even then you need affiliation to some recognised group to give legitimacy to your request, to get behind the doors, to gain permission to send someone off into the unknown recesses, and to return with the material requested. As if this was not intimidating enough the material comes as 'dusty books' - the whole term rounding off the fatigue, frustration and estrangement from the source of legitimate knowledge.

However, I do not want to give the impression of groups of elderly oral historians storming the ramparts of academy. Despite their alienation from legitimate histories I would return to the earlier theme of witnessing to explain their relation to academy - or at least how I felt they were relating to me in the groups as a representative of academy¹⁸. Groups saw their brand of history as 'very personal' and thus somewhat lesser in import and were thus pleased to have it sanctioned by a consecrated figure (Bourdieu 1991a)¹⁹. In the terms of this work members might be bored by 'dusty' facts, and might occasionally suggest that they knew better but still, by and large, sought legitimation for their actions. But what they said shows that they consider the museums *are* leaving gaps. They often wanted official historians to *use* them more as a resource, as full of information - just what I set out not to do. In the excerpts below notice how the group sees itself doing the legwork of uncovering material that would otherwise disappear, which is then taken and

18. Of course saying I was a representative of the academy both simplifies and secures my identity - allowing me to say it was my role that caused these things rather than, say, my stupidity or ineptitude. However, I do believe that whatever role is adopted we can pick up elements of transference between members and the imputed ideas of the moderator.

19. Even if it is ironic that that figure would consider himself a 'consecrated heretic' (Bourdieu 1988:105).

stored by official institutions (cf. Lane 1993). And that is about the most active word used for official institutions which were portrayed as passive recipients.

GRP4 -1281

Grace: Well they want people to come forward like that they didn't want the ..

Ernie: I think this is what happens really that they hope actually that you've got somebody that err..

Grace: get it organised..

GRP4 2420, 2435

Ernie: Absolutely yes. Well it's only by little groups like us you see that are taking the time and trouble you know to come in have a chat and then probably go out round different places, [..] you see. And then we can like Darrel's done many times is taken it on tape. You see so it's only by by that so then we're able to er I mean with the tapes to they're put in the museum or ...

GRP4 -1209

Darrel: [We had a] guided tour round it [the library]. And I was asking her what photographs she's got of Barton Hill and she was saying that they have to rely just on people coming in and donating photographs when they die or donating copies of photographs they've maybe got.

This leads to the logical conclusion that areas with oral history group are the lucky ones and that many other areas may be totally absent from accounts of Bristol's history. I was struck again by the metaphor of a mosaic of organisations developing histories of their areas. A dynamic decentralised production yet at the same time a haphazard and incomplete coverage. Cash-limited public institutions are left in a reactive rather than proactive role²⁰.

Darrel: Do you think do you think the council ought to try and sponsor, I don't know, local people to keep records of their area to try and keep some connection with the way the area used to be. Because a lot of areas don't have groups like this and have totally lost their local history.

[Members point out that there is a council employee who goes to local history meetings. Darrel counters that that is in his spare time]

Ern: we are fortunate like in having the chappie . And he's been able to save quite a few and get quite a few photographs that nobody didn't know of that they were they were..

Darrel: But I mean but he I mean if he weren't if he were just doing his job and wasn't interested in Barton Hill history nobody would ever get the

Harold: just got access.

Darrel: We're lucky in that respect

20. At the time I was doing this research there were huge arguments over proposals by Avon council to abolish its archaeological field unit; a unit that had in any case been limited to virtually only doing 'rescue archaeology' on development sites.

Here we see again the idea of luck and chance in coverage, accompanied by passive public institutions. The groups saw themselves as producers of history and the museum as storage (cf. Taborsky 1983). This may well be a role that ascribes activity to the popular historian as public institutions atrophied in the 80s.²¹

Reminiscence in landscapes of erasure.

The lack of input from public institutions led to gaps in topics covered, gaps that prompted groups to take action to cover them themselves. For example, a group in East Bristol was appalled at the lack of commemoration of the Bristol coal mining industry. I want to examine this example in detail for a multitude of reasons, some of which will become clear as I go through it but four others need to be stated up front. Not least of these is the fact that it is the most coherent and explicit example, since the group actually produced books on the issue. Secondly, it is about the group doing oral history not just amongst themselves, but going out to other people to record their memories - turning themselves into researchers as well as sources. Thirdly, I had no idea there were any coal mines in Bedminster or close to Bristol. It therefore truly opened up a hidden history to me, as a westcountry boy who had always thought of coal mines as belonging to other parts of the country. Finally, the political resonance of attempts to commemorate a forgotten mining heritage grew throughout the thesis as most of the mining industry in the country was shut down and Bristol (Avonmouth) became a major coal importing port.

To begin with, then, I need to introduce the way the group I shall label GRP2 worked. It (and another in Bedminster) was organised by someone I shall call May, a middleaged, female community worker who lived in a village outside of Bristol. It is important to begin with her since although the group was fairly determined to follow its own path it may be useful to situate her relationship to the group since she does most of the prompting and questioning in these sections. Faced with my queries about whether there were different stories about the area and whether the local museum system covered them, May had her own axes to grind. So in her probing it may be possible to detect May pushing her (and really my) line about the omissions from local history. This is worth noting in terms of the dynamics of the group, dynamics that existed prior to the recorded sessions. Below I give the comments of this group as regards the way the coal mining legacy of the area was

21. The groups I met were constantly filling out forms to try to get grants - normally in the order of £200 -£500 from various bodies. The council recognising this had just reorganised its awards system to allow a simplified procedure for small grant applications instead of being geared to requests in the thousands from a few major projects.

memorialised (or rather how it was not). Beginning this discussion was a question about why the group had decided to put in the (not inconsiderable) effort to produce a book '*Miner's Memories*' and why they had chosen to do it in the form that they had.

GRP2C 160-230

May: How did it come that you decided to do it [Miner's memories] more or less as an oral history rather than as a straightforward historical account?

Ruby: Because there is nothing that you can find out. When we decided that we would like to do something. We didn't say we will write a book, we decided we would find out more about the mines and we found that that was practically impossible. There was no records kept. We went to the [city] record office didn't we.?

George: That's right.

Ruby: ..and all round all different places didn't we? And there was no record kept.

George: We ended up by going down to Radstock in the end. One afternoon. And err it was one January day and the snow err was very deep and it was one of those days. Bob and Jake I think, we went down to Radstock and this is when the records of the old pits was still kept there. It was such an out of the way place that you had to go into the police station and enquire where it was too. And it was a funny sort of place. We went in one time and tapped on the man up there and we went through 3 doors before we actually got in the office. But the information we got there was great really 'cos when the they Nationalised the pits in 1947, all the old mines that used to be around here, the coal board was actually in charge of all this information. Including the underground mine workings. So I'm glad we went down there because a lot of it now has been destroyed. And err

May: How much awareness was there in Bedminster though that it had been a coalmining area, before you wrote your book?

George: Well I think as far as we were concerned we knew the mines had existed but, we never realised that they covered such a vast area. And I think the people who bought houses here in Bristol South have made them stop and made them think. Because a lot of these coal mine workings are very close to the surface. And that's why we've had subsidence in roads different places why there's an awful lot of cracks in buildings

GRP2C 288-360

May: Well if we widen it [the discussion] a bit now. Given that the coal industry was so important to Bristol in the past, how do you think if you want , I mean you were saying you had difficulty finding out from sort of official sources how do you think general public. What sort of information do you think is available to the general public? Is there anywhere they can go to find out about Bristol's coalmining history?

Harry: Well yes they find well you found out a lot of information not only at the record office but at the library..

May: Sorry Harry what I meant was that you were doing it because you wanted to do a sort of academic study it didn't you? But the general, anybody moving into the area and they were vaguely aware that there might be, somebody mentions coalmines to them. Can you go anywhere very easily and find out?

Harry: Surely anyone looking to buy a house in the area would expect a solicitor to advise them on the hazards that might be there in the district where they're going to live.

May: Alright. We'll take schoolchildren then that have been told to do a project on Bristol industries.

Harry: ..

May: Do you think there is much there on Bristol coalmines.

Harry: I don't know how much but there would be something.

May: What very much?

Ruby: No there's very very little. If you like to go back in the old papers you'll find day after day records of the accidents and deaths. But you don't do that's hard work there's nothing easily obtainable only the books that have been written and most of those have been written fairly recently.

May: So do you think then it ought to be better presented?

George: Yes I think it could be better presented really. [...]

Ruby: There's nothing there's nothing in any of the museums that I've ever found that even mentions them at all.

GRP2C 394.414

May: But if you go down Bristol 's got an Industrial museum, but if you go down there what is there about coalmining.?

Harry: Nothing.

Chorus: Nothing.

Harry: And they wouldn't even have any 'Miners' Memories' for sale..

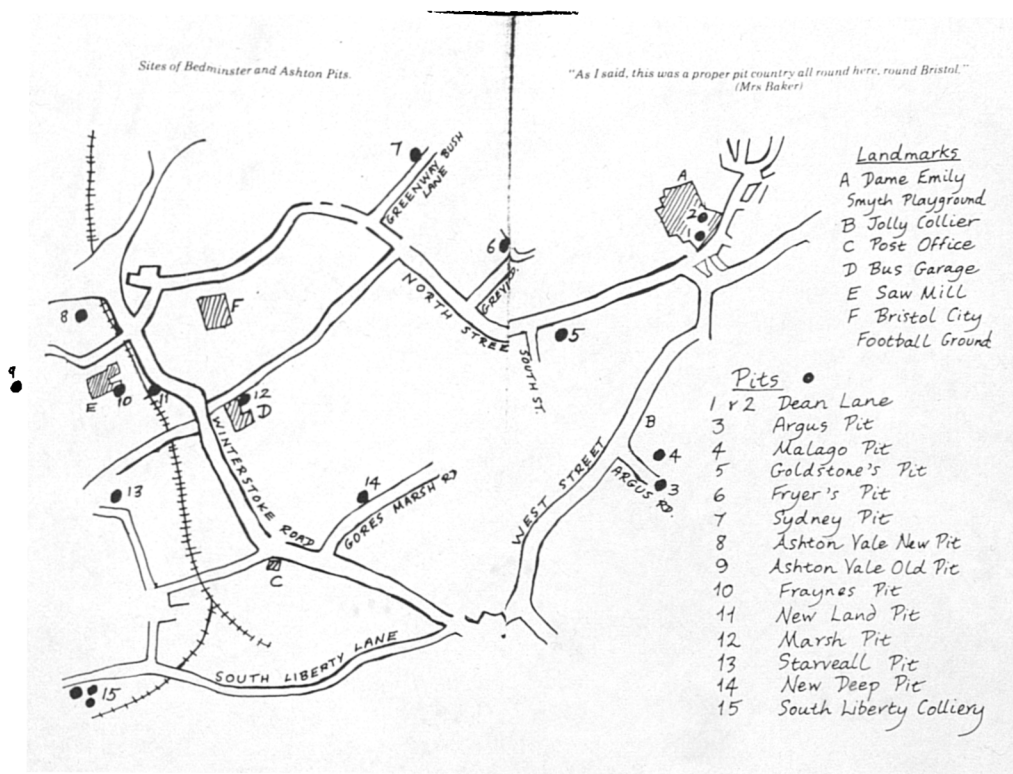
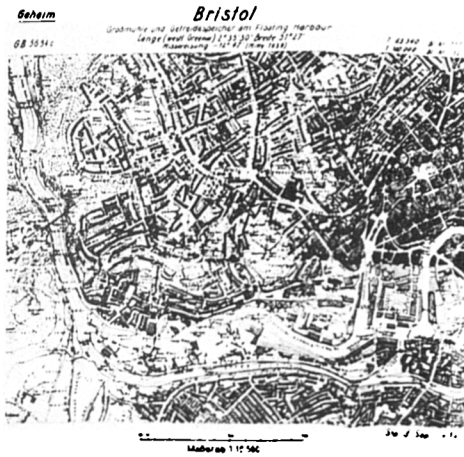
Ruby: No.

These three fairly lengthy excerpts begin to outline some key issues. In the first, members explain that they produced the book due to the lack of material portrayed in official histories. They recount their own research work in digging out material from various archives for their book, suggesting that the amount of effort involved is prohibitive for those with a casual interest. The trip to Radstock was to the site of the last local coalmine which shut in the late 1960s and was located south and west of Bath. The group's difficulties clearly show that the place was an archive rather than being concerned with portraying local history. Ruby is quite clear that it was this experience that led them to decide to produce a book to remedy the situation where their history was being forgotten. We can also see from the map the number and extent of coal mines in south Bristol a bare half mile from the city centre (figure 10).

In the second excerpt the consequences of this forgetting are raised with a certain amount of *schadenfreude* by members of the group, as many people moving in to the area have found subsidence in their homes due to the old mine workings. May turns to whether school children are told about the mines - invoking the official education establishment as well as public history with reference to school and

Figure 10:

Map of Pitheads in South Bristol.



The main map is taken from Miner's Memories (CLASS 1986). The top of the map is the new cut of the river Avon and the docks are a few hundred feet beyond that. Inset is a map of the central city, with Bedminster on the southern edge of it. Of some note for the next chapter is that this was one of the maps used by the Luftwaffe for their air-raids on Bristol.

terming their work 'academic'. Ruby is clear, that the effort she had to put in to research for the book is beyond that which could or should be expected from every member of the public. Then the reflection is that the situation is improving, to the extent that there are now books on the mines but all written recently - as histories, not as contemporary accounts - which I would ask the reader to think about in terms of the ideas of a movement of reminiscence and history from below gathering pace in the 1980s (Bornat 1987) and amenity politics taking off in the 70s. Finally, in the third excerpt, we see the frustration continuing with the inadequate portrayal of mining in the industrial museum and with its refusal to stock their book - perhaps a sign of some friction between the amateur locals and the professional historical apparatus.

Another strong sense coming through all of this is that they saw themselves as watching the end of the last living memory of the mines, and specifically the miners. This structure of a sort of salvage anthropology of a disappearing history recurs again and again and will be dealt with in greater detail in later sections and in the next chapter.

GRP2C 101-150, 230-251

George: Well I think one of the main reasons it interested us as all so much was that our ancestors worked in the pits.

Ruby: It was the miners' strike wasn't it?

George: It was the miners' strike.

Ruby: .. that started it really, around the time of the miners' strike..

George: It really really err got things..

Ruby: We used to come in every week and talk about it.

George: That's right. And err we actual visit to err Big Pit down in Wales we decided to write a book about the err mines of the Bristol South area. And err the whole project took roughly about err 18 months we done the lot of interviewing plus we had some personal effects as regard the old mines and actual miners themselves you know. [...]

Ruby: yeah. But I think round this area the old families the old Bedminster families knew about the mines. It was the new people that moved in that had no idea that they were moving to a mining area. And as George said there was a lot of information at Radstock about the mines but there was no information about the people who worked in them. And that's why we think decided to find the old men and get there memories before it disappeared for ever. Because they were the last generation and they were rapidly going and those were memories gone for ever, and that's why rather than taking facts from Radstock we we got the people's memories.

May: Which made it a much more successful book, I think so.

Ruby: Yeah.

May: Much more than dry facts.

George: I think if you look at the back of the book it's a tribute to the memories of those people because most of us had ancestors actually working in the pits you know.

The book is strongly cast then in terms of a passing era but also in terms of validating the memories of former workers - a tribute to the hardship they endured. But there were some doubts about whether they could really expect the historic apparatus to memorialise the pits, cast by Harry in terms of doubts as to the significance of the mines - doubts robustly answered by other members of the group.

GRP2C 665-686

May: To come back to what Harry was saying could you not see that something like in Bristol? Or was mining not important enough here?

Ruby: Yes it was very important but you go back farther than what Harry is talking about. You go back to the middle of the last century practically every family in Bedminster had people the men were working in the mines. There wasn't much else, there wasn't any Wills [tobacco factory].

Tim: I had a grandfather that worked in the mines.

Here is a point at which it is worth referring again to the timing of the rise of the heritage industry or the preservation lobby over industrial heritage (Buchanan 1989) at a date too late to preserve the mines - so that one reason why Bristol lacked a 'Big Pit' museum was not the unimportance of the industry but the lack of any remains that could now be used. Further the invocation of family connections can be linked to more general strands for given that 250 000 worked in the mines in 1945 and 1 million at the turn of the century a vast number of the population can claim personal links to a mining heritage. I want to look back to earlier chapters on Heritage playing on the edge of memory, appealing just to the zone where things appear natural and familiar yet at the same time are most open to romanticisation. I spent half an hour listening to the first group I worked with before it became clear that the mines they spoke about with such interest and authority were not directly remembered by them:

GRP1A 298-

May: How much do you actually remember of the coalmines?

Sid: Well, no nothing much {...} our parents had worked there our fathers had worked down there. And you, you

May: But were the buildings still there that you'd remember?

Sid: No there's a few miners cottages still down there in Marsham St.

XY: Ashton Rd.

Ray: the Brickyard

Sid: and you've got the um there was a hole still left of the um mines of years ago. That's down the end of um Silbear Rd out into the fields there and its still there the hole. Protected.. [...]

Jim: Oh there was quite a few in around Bristol weren't there? Coalmines

May: Dean Lane was already a park when you were?

Omnes: Yes. Yes

Joe: That was where the mine shaft was and they made it into a park.

Jim: The last mine was at Tid ponds

XY: South liberty
 Joe: I can remember the slag heaps indown there but I can't remember the workings.
 Sid: Oh yes it was not terribly long ago it was shut.
 Joe: I can remember the slag heaps
 Sid: the last place to be shut
 Joe: but I can't actually remember it working
 [..]
 May: I think we're getting diverted a bit. It was just Sid said coalmines and I didn't think there were any in your generation
 Jim: nothing visible
 May:... that he mentioned them
 Jim: Nothing except pit ponds in our time
 Mike: perhaps if we catch
 Grace: Our houses were built for people that were working in the coal mines

Again, then, all that was left a landscape bearing mute traces of past activities. It is a landscape of activities that are now totally hidden, erased from the urban landscape except where they resurface as now un-explained subsidence. From this example, perhaps we can begin to see how to protagonists much is about recovering histories. I hope the reader picked up the way that this is cast in a process where even as memories are recovered and revalorised they are still contrasted with the dry 'fact' of the academic establishment. Ruby justified writing the book 'Miner's Memories' with 'bad grammar and all, just as they told it', and responded to a question about how she felt about doing a history of ordinary people for themselves. It was she concluded better than an academic history since 'you know your own'. I was left constantly amazed at how much of the academic argument over the virtues of oral history was being reprised by group members. It is certainly true that they preferred dealing with concrete material but they could turn around and produce answers that bore the clear hallmarks of various abstract debates I had been wading through in the library.

So I want to qualify the idea that they appealed directly to 'legitimate culture' or indeed wanted their work to become a part of it. The groups tended to talk with respect about legitimate institutions but noted their distance from their immediate concerns. Thus many groups confessed to only rarely visiting museums while another, when given my proposed list of discussion topics, where it said 'what do you think about how museums portray the past' wrote 'not a lot'. In commenting on the content of these representations members usually asked whether it helped preserve some idea of the way of life of 'the people' of their area.

GRP1 -1594

Sid: that it does tell the way of life of the people and we haven't anything [..] You needn't necessarily keep buildings but there is nothing to show the way of

life. [...] just show what it was like. But there's no way of knowing what Bedminster people lived; looked like and lived like. Anywhere.

GRP2 -232

Ruby: [there were facts about the] mines but there was no information about the people who worked in them.

This is indicative of the way the groups accepted the legitimacy of the institutions of the historic apparatus and concentrated their criticisms on the content.

Repeatedly, they expressed a desire for materials that portrayed the ordinary people, that validated their lives, in which they could recognise themselves. They wanted their communities acknowledged and memorialised and it is to how they portrayed their communities that I turn in the next section.

Constructing communities of the past in the present

I wish to begin this section by outlining what I suppose could be called a 'hermeneutic' approach to the past. From here we shall hopefully move into how the past relates to contemporary society as seen by various oral history groups in Bristol, or rather we shall move into my re-telling of how the past is seen by these groups.

A Hermeneutic Understanding of the Past.

There has been a growth of academic interest in the idea of communities of identity, particularly their role in nationalism(s) and the construction/destruction of the nation state. Briefly the arguments suggest that the creation or manufacture of a sense of belonging by a shared community is vital in the creation and maintenance of nationalisms, and several stress the role of history in cementing this bond between people and providing a "common" origin (Bauman 1991).

Particularly relevant to my account is the focus on the way the past is used to anchor, to provide an apparent shared background and identity (Bauman 1992). I want to take some of these debates regarding the role of history and identity and play them out at a local level in terms of the inner urban communities from which the oral history groups I worked with came.

To bring their understanding of community into focus as a spatial and temporal dynamic I shall use Paul Ricoeur's model of identity (derived from the Kantian definition of an object); identity is dependent on the two dimensions, where the

spatial stresses differentiation from others while the temporal stresses self-identity or continuity over time (Bauman 1991). I wish to use and problematise this idea so as to suggest the ways temporal understandings mesh with the spatial in a variety of combinations. ²²

To see how the past is invoked and produced, I want to suggest the relatively uncontroversial proposition that understandings, interpretations, theories of the past are important in understanding contemporary events. Let me start at the level of a simple everyday appeal, that, as Barbara deConcini (1990:69) puts it 'our current understandings are organised out of the way we understand the past'. In this vision the past serves as a foundation against which we can measure where we are now - indeed the idea of a 'now' only makes sense in contradistinction to the 'then' of the past or future. To use spatial metaphors to describe time, and in so doing suggest how space is inseparable from time, we cannot know where we are, or are going to, without some conception of where we are coming from. The past is something against which we measure our current progress. ²³

However, the terms I have used, begin to betray a more radical idea of what interpreting the past means. What I have done so far is cast the past as a 'foundation', as something that is both knowable and known to actors in the present. But this idea cannot be sustained for very long since none of us can be entirely sure of what the past means. We have to continually interpret and reinterpret it's meaning as events unfold around us. Let me try to illustrate this contention by turning to theories of narration. These suggest that finding the significance of events depends on where we think we are now and where we think we are going (Cronon 1993; Fabian 1991; Ricoeur 1981, 1984, 1985, 1988). The point I wish to draw out is that as the narrating subject moves forwards in time, towards the end (or what appears to be the end) of the 'story', the interpretation of the past changes in order to make sense of ever-changing circumstances.

To put this more rigorously, the past is not a foundation for action but rather it forms the *appearance* of a foundation. We act to make sense of current events *as if*

22. The main bulk of this section will be apparently trying to deal with the temporal dimension of this local imagined community but this I hope is a slightly misleading impression since it will permit the spatial to be read as active and embroiled in change rather than an inert stage on which a temporal community is constructed and history plays itself out.

23. Though I am quite aware that this reading of time and space, is wide open to Bergson's critique (1991) that it serves to quantify the multiplicity of time (and I would argue space). Likewise DeConcini is more sophisticated than I present at the moment. I want to move beyond this position as the section progresses but it will serve as a useful starting point to discussion.

they were seen from the end of a narrative, from the envisaged conclusion in the future. That is to say that we interpret our present and future via our knowledge and understanding of the past, but we can only shape our understandings of the past in terms of where we think we are heading (Carr 1986). We have a hermeneutic circle of sorts, or perhaps more accurately a narrative aporia (cf. Ricoeur 1984, 1986, 1988). And if the social world has no prescribed ending then the process of revision and reinterpretation would appear to be infinite. Certainly with oral history and reminiscence this can then be cast in terms of the 'life review' mentioned earlier, where members are keenly aware of the passing of their generation and themselves and seek to order their lives. One could then look to the creation of a way of understanding time, or to be explicit a way of being-in-time as also a way of being-towards-death (Dreyfus 1991).

In this way I want to move away from the idea of a fixed past, as something unalterable, as a foundation, and suggest instead that the past only exists, or is only available to society, is only intelligible as an act of interpretation not an object of interpretation (Handler & Linnekin 1984). But I want to run this hermeneutic apprehension of the past, as uncertain and unstable, against oral history which - as I outlined in the previous section - is based on the idea of recall of facts and the bringing to light of hidden histories. Essentially I am counterposing what many informants in oral history groups see as a recounting of events with a conception of oral history as an event of recounting - the former where events are exterior and Other to the account, the latter where they are made intelligible and available for political use through it.²⁴ And I hope thereby to cast some light on the way history is instituted as external to the reteller, as opposed to my suggestion that the narrator constructs themselves through their telling while reciprocally reconstructing events (Bruner 1987:15).

Imagined Communities of the Past.

One topic which recurred again and again in the groups was that of a sense of community that was to be found in the past but which was somehow lost or destroyed generally during or around the period of the second world war. This community was generally described as spatially bounded or at least very localised, buttressed by a range of institutions and social infrastructures and thus relatively

24. In a related note Barbara Myerhoff noted that for her Jewish émigrés a story told aloud was more than a text it was an event (Myerhoff 1982:116). The idea of narration also stresses how this is a past performed to an audience in a certain context (Bauman 1989). The issue this also raises is how to record a vocal and sometimes visual performance without reducing it to the dry bones of a script, as I have, or complicating the text so much as to render it unintelligible (Fine 1984, Tedlock 1984).

self-contained and independent from other areas of the city. It is on this sense of spatial identity that I will elaborate now to explore how the past is interpreted. If we first look to how much the local togetherness of a community was stressed there are examples littered among the sessions.

Grp2a [1046-1052]

Ruby: Lots of people did work as local, I think they liked to..

Roger: Yes, oh I think they did.

Ruby: ..they liked to work as near their homes as they could I think..

Flo: Yer, that's true.

Ruby: ..in those days. Saved money.

Grp2a [1267-1271]

Jake: And most of the people, actually as I say, it was a matter of coming out of your front door and walking across the road into work.

Grp1a [285-288]

Sid: So it was all on our doorstep and most Bedminster people had to rely on that for their livelihood.

Grp1c [2063-2071]

Bert: yes but you see they was very very knitted. Be'minster was very knitted and if you was very tight people..

Jim: And it was primarily a labouring district wasn't it?

Bert/ + +: Yer, yeah.

Jim: The elite and the educated weren't here.

Grp4a [1200-1201]

June: Oh it was a thriving community years ago.

Grp4a [1206-1209]

June: Thriving community years ago wasn't it? In your day wasn't it a thriving community, in all the little corner shops?

At this point it is worth stressing a few of the points above.²⁵ Scattered throughout are allusions as above to a 'sense of belonging' as one group member phrased it, to a knowable social world to a spatial area that was tightly knit because it was self-contained and uniformly working class in contrast to other areas. Now one important element of that is rooted in the sense of jobs and social life being in the same locality. A great deal of attention was given to describing community structures that provided a sense of belonging and are also where a sense of a past community is strongly evident. Indeed, when it was put to one group in this way they immediately queried what 'group structures' might mean but then went on to ask if it meant the role of shops, streetlife and then churches, clubs and pubs in

²⁵ In case these excerpts make it sound otherwise, I should stress that I found very few descriptions of an ideal community except, as we shall see later, in contradistinction to an dystopian vision of the current absence of a sense of community.

binding the community together.²⁶ For the moment, let us focus on one community institution the shop:

Grp2a [393-399]

Tim: And the corner shop was your guardian because if anybody didn't come to that that shop they'd so go round Mrs. [pause] and see she's alright, to the paper boy or whatever. 'Oh she's poorly, right then go and get a doctor'.

Grp2a [410-413]

Ruby: A proper gossip shop.

Jake: it's a gossip shop yes - it is.

Flo: A lot of those corner shops were.

Grp4a 1459-1474]

Eric: I don't know whether you know I mean, in these days, you see, where you haven't got the shops, you see, I mean even the shops and the pub - it was a community! - because most of the people, a lot of the people went to the same shops week after week. So that by going week after week I mean they got to know people so that it was a community spirit there as well - which you haven't got today. I mean same as the pubs, I mean you got a couple now, but you ain't got the kind of spirit you had in those days.

In these often hard-up families, such shops provided not only news but finance to add to social cohesion - with a large part of household purchases going on 'tick' to be paid at the end of the week. We also begin to come across references to pubs and members would assert that there were different sorts of people: those that went to the pubs, those that went to church and those that went to local clubs (some run by the churches some independent, some almost functioning as mutual aid societies (with such strange names as the Order of the Buffaloes) as a sort of poor man's masons). And I do mean Man - since we can also begin to point out that this is a male geography of affiliations with women in groups consistently reporting these events second hand and being debarred from many clubs and excluded from pubs.²⁷ Other members added that their area was known for 'pubs and churches', and that they needed so many of the latter due to the number of the former. This group also recounted how their research for publishing histories had led them to work out that in a mile and a half of high street there were some 32 pubs (see later).

Grp2 1675-1687

May: What about local pubs? Because somebody said, what were you saying
Tim, Bedminster was pubs, cinemas, and churches.

Harry: Oh yes

²⁶ In another significant comment, when asked about the role of these social institutions one member said he was born in a village (again small and bounded community overtones), not in Bristol, but that when he got to the city he found the sources of information, gossip and activities were just the same as in his old village - focusing on shops and churches.

²⁷ It is worth noting that one of the dynamics of groupwork, that had to be countered, was a tendency for male members to speak to the collective whole and female members to split off into one on one discussions. However, it may be true that the process of building shared recollections as opposed to monologues is a more typically feminine speech pattern (cf. Anderson & Jack 1991; Geiger 1990, 1986; Minister 1991).

Flo: Oh it was renowned for that. Pubs and churches Bedminster. You had more pubs and churches than anywhere..

May: Why?

Flo: It was such a working class area. That's all the men had, [*emphasis added*]

Mutualities of the Oppressed.

Meanwhile the streets were seen as another community structure that produced a space of sharing and mutual support. In Lefebvre's terminology (1991), they produced a representational space where the people created their own collectivities and identities, though perhaps more economic or orthodox Marxisms would point out this also appears as the space where the informal reproduction of labour subsidised capital:

Grp1a [1270-1284 1311-1320]

Joe: But some times you'd put children up, you know. Mother would go into hospital and somebody in the street would look after them. And in the bed, you'd have them down the bottom of the bed - toe to tail. All in one bed, and it wasn't a double bed. No separate beds. Or on the floor, none of that all in one bed. And I slept with somebody's feet up.. top to tail {Yes} because the mother had gone into hospital at the time and my mother was looking after them.

...

Bert: But in that street there was always somebody, you go to that house for treat money. If someone had a baby, if somebody died there'd always be a woman who'd come and wash them and lie them out. Never go, in the street, you all worked together far as I can remember.

'Every neighbour would help out [to organise a street party], from the young mothers to the grandmothers. Philip street chapel lent out their tables and forms. At the end of the party neighbours would bring out their gramophone and records, and have a sing song and dance until darkness. The grown ups were drinking beer fetched in jugs from the pubs nearby. There were six of them in those days Looking at the photograph with all the happiness there, little did we realise that four years later six of them would be killed a few yards away when a bomb hit the Swan Tavern just opposite the party site where 16 were killed including Mr. Condon the landlord and most of his family only his son Jim came out alive.

But life went on with the fighting spirit of the close knit community .. come whatever a great spread was on the tables on the big day, thanks to all the neighbours joining in and that was how it was with the good and bad times, the close community spirit was always there.'

Frank Marks
(1989 *Remember Be'minster* vol 3 p.2).²⁸

'I was born during the Great War, in Bedminster in 1915. Yes, there was a feeling of belonging to a very caring district. We all helped one another - no one stood alone.' (1991 *Remember Be'minster* vol 7 p4)

But it should be noted that this is a child's eye view of the street. That these were what have been termed 'mutualities of the oppressed' should be lost on no one. And before I go further I ought to make it clear that though they may be romanticised they were also remembered as hard and poor - the lack of money and the need to borrow to make life bearable or the ability to and necessity of calling on others in order to be able to cope with major events are apparent. The good and bad times are inseparably woven as part of the teller's experiences²⁹, as part of who they are. They will recount how communities were held together by such institutions as the pawn shop and the way their families relied on such credit. The wrapped togetherness of this idea of mutual aid and poverty is neatly summarised in the nickname for one mutual aid society whose initials R.A.B. were alleged to stand for Ragged Arsed Buggers. Woven with this sense of community was the sense of the moral values upheld by swear boxes and anti-drinking attitudes³⁰. However, such morality or respectability should not be seen as autonomous either but as part of the tight-knit nature of a community dominated by one-employer. So many of the values seen as part of that community were enforced at the same time by the employment preferences of that company. The result is that memories of paternalist provisions are infused with the possibility of becoming excluded from such employment, since the major employers had for many years demanded a character reference from the Sunday School or chapel, so belonging to these became a virtual prerequisite for steady and well-paid employment (cf. Franklin 1989).

Many members commented that their good records from chapels enabled them to get jobs. The point is to be made then that chapels and Sunday school references also served to maintain a hierarchy, where those with supportive references got the best jobs. As such there were additional outside controls and sanctions on behaviour - and painful economic implications for misbehaviour. This is a far cry

28. This magazine was produced quarterly by an oral history group.

29. Bedminster memories describes itself as a group of ex-residents who aim 'to record their memories for the next generation and to let them know that some of those hard times were happy ones'. "Yesterday's and Tomorrow's Bristol" Souvenir programme Oct 1991.

30. Again this must be tempered with Crush & Miles's (1993) comment that many of the southern African ex-migrants they interviewed who had achieved respectability were unwilling to portray any part of their prior life as unrespectable. In the light of this I should mention that only one society was tea-total and all the others met in pubs - again a male environment. Women participated only on annually arranged holidays.

from the image of a self-regulating, sharing, communal group that dominates the first part of this section.

Grp1 546-560

Dot: and if you never had um

Jim: Sunday school

Dot: um Sunday school character well it wasn't no use even applying for it. And you used to have to have Sunday school character and what we used to call then our school characters, so many excellents. {...} and that was the highest award you could be allocated then in our day. If you never had four well it was no good then applying there. You'd never believe it would you that that would be the .. acceptance

Grp4 [1499-1512]

Eric: I think a lot of these people that employed people they erm they were church people themselves {yeah} you see. So they used to feel that they would like you see their employers er employees rather to be in the same sphere as what they were. God fearing, and honest I don't know whether that was true but in many cases you see with so many children going to Sunday school, of whatever denomination you see that a reference was second to your [getting a job].

So we have here perhaps something that complicates ideas of how the community has changed. While old securities have gone so too have some of the old outside forces that controlled the districts. The reason for such efforts to be virtuous in inner city areas may have been less altruism than economic reality. Certainly, in a close-knit community it was dangerous to become an 'outsider' since this could lead to rapid exclusion. Above we see how dependent employment was not just on reference but also on being a part of the same community as the boss. Equally below we see how family connections and contacts could be vital. This surely gave a greater leverage over out-of-work-time behaviour since the foremen would hear about it much quicker. The communities were hardly meritocracies.

Grp1 839-855

Jim: And dad managed to get an appointment with the boss, Captain Stratton, and uh I had an interview on the Wednesday. No, the Tuesday. And, of course, he says "You're working. You've got a job" he says. "There's hundreds of boys that haven't got a job. Why do you want to work here?", he says "cos your father's here." "No" I says "cos its a good job" "Right then start tomorrow morning half past seven your father will show you where to go". In there everybody knew everybody. The bosses knew everybody.

The constraints on the community are thus embedded in what appear to be accounts of virtues internal to the community - such as mutual aid, 'self-discipline' and so on. For instance, when asked why the communal figured so much more strongly than say the domestic in their accounts, responses were almost competitive in terms of their account of poverty.

Grp1a [1193-1210]

Ray: You can't talk about a home nowadays..
 Grace: Lino on the floor
 Ray: ..compared to years ago, I mean years ago..
 Jim: Every house was your home.
 Ray: ..in our house anyway it was bare boards, or if not, if we were lucky it was lino. ..
 Mary: Lino.
 Ray: Pea soup every Sunday without doubt, if we never got anything if we got nothing else we got pea soup.
 Jim: Overcoats on the bed.
 Ray: Overcoats! Every coat! On the bed. Every thing else was on the bed, you're quite right. But the whole point in the home then..
 Bert: Table cloth was newspaper.

I am sure I don't need to mention the Monty Python sketch to which this sounds eerily similar. But what it should suggest is the extent to which this may be following a trope, that the structure of events recounted bears more relation to the discursive mode - that of poor but proud - and the situation of recounting than to the retold events. But in this extract we can again see a dialectic of almost fierce competition in the celebration of a poverty which is not hidden but stressed in the accounts, and also a stress on commonality in the way so many members support the tale and add embellishments. Perhaps we can begin to take this further by exploring the way we can see already the stress on the public and communal life rather than the private, where in this excerpt Ray is stressing the difference of now and then in terms of material affluence. But Jim jumps in with another distinction - that "every house was your home" a distinction between a communal and privatised domestic existence thus blurring the material and the moral dimensions of the account.

Grp3 886-890

Daisy: yer. And their doors were open and you could go in and out and just call along the passage "I've come to borrow something" and they'd help you out but now..

This subtle blending of moral and material should alert us to the stark dichotomisation of the home and the public. The speakers set these up as an opposition in the present as opposed to the way that the domestic life and economy was also part of the 'street' as we saw above (Franklin 1989). We are watching highly charged ideological terms being moved around with connotations of gender roles and proper places for various activities changing.

The End of Community and Privatisation of Daily Life.

Communal Values.

This is slightly more ethereal territory than the discussion of how many pubs or clubs there were or the dense social lattice they formed in communities by the 1930s. Franklin (1989) has shown how urban life in Bristol evolved and types of community changed - using both archives and oral history sources. He suggests that the particular public community remembered was largely an artefact of the life-cycle of workers in industries set up in the area at the turn of the century and that certainly this densely social world was not true of the nineteenth-century industrial suburbs; serving as a useful reminder that many of the institutions talked about by groups as if they were natural parts of life were actually transient and dynamic creations of relatively brief duration. But what I want to do is to look at how these oral history groups interpret and work through a both the conflation of moral and material and the dichotomisation of public and private worlds, how they see an end to public community and the privatisation of everyday life and social isolation. This comes through below, where we see the argument about keeping up appearances; they show that one cares about what the neighbours think. One also cares about what might be thought of the community. So even in days of dire poverty there was an effort to maintain standards, to show that they could be kept up. And this public showing involved a close structuring of communal life. It mattered what people thought, showing both the powers of social sanctions on those that did not conform (ie everyone had to keep up the district's appearance) and that people cared about the district as a district, not just as a collection of individuals. In the excerpts below it is clear that a sense of appearance is suggested as something that was once present, when people took responsibility for the appearance of areas *outside* their private homes. This matter of tidiness figures as more than just 'keeping up appearances'. It is symptomatic of people's attitudes on other issues.

Grp4 880-883

Harold: [It may have been a] slum. A lot of people they kept themselves up together and they were proud of their the cleanliness of their homes. But er

Grp2 579-586

Ruby: Erm but in those days the streets were clean the fronts were swept every morning and washed down. Now you never you hardly ever see a woman out there with the sweeping brush.

Roger: What about the brass step polish every week?

Grp2 1394-1401

[Mike: How do we start putting a sense of community back?]

Ruby: If we start by cleaning the outside of our houses and or gutters and the shops did that like they used to do, when do you see um shop keepers out sweeping their fronts now. You don't. No use to clean them sweep them and school them [?].

Here we see the theme coming through that there has been a decline from 'the old days'. And we can see the way it wraps around women's domestic and communal roles. It also involves the recitation of some characteristic stories about cleaning the front-step (perhaps one social notch down from keeping the aspidistra flying). Such stories do have a wide currency, wide enough for photographs to appeal to them (Figure 11). This photo sets the scene brilliantly; we have the recitation of a common trope of 'poor but proud' (and respectable) along with the added evidential force of a photograph; and the caption tells us this is an old woman cleaning her step despite the imminent demolition of her street. I suggest this woman is thus narrativised as being part of a passing era, just as her street is passing³¹. Which leads me to the way this decline in public spirit meshes with another dichotomy in events as recounted between those referring to lived experiences and those referring to abstract forces, or abstract spaces in Lefebvre's terminology (1991), or outsiders.

Abstract Space and the Destruction of Mutuality.

These 'abstract' forces/spaces are the powers of state, capital and more nebulous social changes. I call them abstract despite their immediate impacts on people since I think the term accords with the sense in which they were recounted as operating outside the 'knowable communities' of the oral historians.³² Let us begin by noting how several groups felt the communities were "blasted apart" or "gutted", had their 'spines broken', to use their terms, by the relocation, rehousing, decanting to use the dry administrative terms, of hundreds of "slum dwellers".

Grp1b [682-692]

Sid: I think that's the biggest change of the lot, was the breaking of the community. 'Cos everybody used to know everybody else and you all round the area, practically anyway.

Grp4b [1076-1084]

Harold: The er friendliness the spirit. When they shifted all the houses out they err they destroyed the spirit of Barton Hill. They haven't got the same spirit in the flats although some of the people came back there and they're still living in the flats they don't like it. [They have carpeted the] floor and that's not too bad, but um it destroyed something something that they couldn't put back with flats.

³¹ It was connections and threads like this that led me to decide to devote a separate section to the analysis of the photographic memory of Bristol.

³² The phrase 'knowable communities' is Raymond Williams' for the space time framework of pre-industrial England. I think it is ironically appropriate to use it given the 'urban' village the groups recount. This perhaps leads into two related points, firstly how such communities and studies based around ideas of such are incapable of grasping the intermingling, spatially distanced world (Marcus 1994) and, relatedly, given the industrial nature of the city and work in tobacco and cotton, for instance, how much this 'knowable' community was based on a refusal to know, on absences and amnesias.

Figure 11.

"In those days the streets were clean"



The figure is from Reece Winstone 'Bristol as it was 1939-37'. The caption notes the woman pictured (it does not say by whom) is due to be rehoused and the house demolished. Emphasising that rehousing schemes were gathering speed in the pre-war period. The sense of homeliness here might also be contrasted with films promoting rehousing (see Gold & Ward 1993). It can also be contrasted with most other pictures in the Winstone collection since it is one of the very few to focus on an identifiable central figure.

Grp3 610-612

Flo: Changed it completely.

Jean: Oh it has.

Daisy: It sort of broke the spine.

Grp3b [632-649, 660-675]

Daisy: Yer yer but going back to these little streets on that in area where they had to make way for the flyover and that they pushed these people over to Ashton and down to Shirehampton a lot of people went. They built houses down Shirehampton didn't they? And it split the community up.

Jean: It did yes.

Daisy: Which was..

Jean: that was the start of it, wasn't it?

Joe: ..But you're going to have new people or community, but you know it's not as if the thing was destroyed. It's been recreated. And this hasn't changed around here so you still got a..

Daisy: Not I think it has been destroyed, a lot of the community spirit that would have been going on at the time down there.

Joe: But don't you think that the move then..

Fred: When you move the cinema out, and the churches out and the shops out you destroy the heart.

Notice how "they" did this to the area: a destruction is visited on the area by an irrational outside force from beyond the community. And this went with the relocation of communities to the outskirts or rather their fragmentation to the outskirts, a process both of movement of industries to less central locations and the movement of workers and former workers to outskirt estates. Certainly this accords with the material found by Lalive d'Epinau (1987:94-6) and Radley (1990) how working class groups mentally colonised the local area, because it was the only area over which they had control. Below we see a pointed awareness of the relative weakness of their position when dominant sectors of society decided to intervene.

Grp3 393-404

Bill: Yes. Well yes it's like Bristol Development Corporation once they decide they're going to do something all the protest in the world won't stop them will it will they? And say the development corporation moves into Hotwells in 20 years time, and anyone guess the consequence they'll do it again won't they? It's just history int'it, going on like

Daisy: And they give a big handout..

Bill: yer

Daisy: to the councillors I suppose that have got the say.

But this also forms a synecdochal relation to outside forces where they take the blame for less tangible social trends such as home-ownership and the falling number of people in each dwelling (cf. Pile 1990, in press). For these now elderly people it may be that some elements of *temporal* changes *within* communities are being

translated into *external (ie spatial)* changes to communities - something that many members debated with reference to younger newcomers to their area. But the palpable extent of these changes cannot be doubted³³:-

Grp2a [251-257]

Flo: Then on top of that once they moved up to Hartcliffe the girls didn't come down to pick up their pension or their cigarette allowance any more and you missed your friends you always worked with in Will's see?

Grp3c [314-339] also 362 378

[Mike: Was it this relocation that destroyed the community then?]

Daisy: ..proved that, you know, when just after the war when the council shoved all the communities out to the outskirts..

Bill: yes.

Daisy: .. and built all these high rise flats.

Bill: flats yes.

Daisy: ... But that took the guts out of the city by sending these little..

Bill: You only get communities when it starts from childhood doesn't it? If you suddenly take a village and move it away and then move middle aged people in to that village then you wouldn't have a community there would you? It's gone.

Jack: Well it's gone then. Yer.

Grp1c [1237-1239]

Jim: Well that was all wiped out when they built the flats wasn't it? Barton Hill really?

'Industrial slums replaced the old Georgian and regency Courts and alleys. Nothing could replace the people!' St.Phillips and The Dings where the population was cut by 90% "*Yesterday's and Tomorrow's Bristol*" Souvenir programme Oct 1991.³⁴

Note the contrasts of 'them' as outsiders to the comparisons with community and village, and the suggestion of (super-)organic metaphors in terms of 'spirit' and 'gutting'. Members were quite clear about their disempowerment vis a vis the

33 Although I do feel I should add some dissent over the state of some, and only some, of the housing destroyed by some, and only some, of the members [*Grp1 1188-1255*] Jim: 'You see some of those people out there were living in such slum, at Barton Hill mind there was a lot of slum housing and they were glad to get out of it.' [from a group in Bedminster] [*Grp1 2032-2034*] Bert: 'The houses in Bedminster was so bad so they had to get shot of them. That's why they built Knowle' [*Grp1 1267-168, 1276-1280*] Joe: 'They was the cheapest form of building what was {No. Yes}' [...] Alf: 'It was the cheapest dormitory buildings for the local industry. How my mother brought up 8 children in the little house we had I do not know.' [*Grp1 1509-1513*] Alf: 'They were full of hovels but they were picturesque. Unlike this modern corporate... Victorian industrial housing.' [*Grp4 952-956*] Harold: 'All down round. The ones that the factory had built, they were over a hundred years old and it was time they came down as a whole. But there were good ones'

34. In a leaflet on Hartcliffe estate (one of the outer urban estates of tower blocks to which inner city residents were 'decanted', entitled 'Lest we forget' there was what I take to be an ironic inclusion of a plan document of Garden City 2002 AD. I take it to be ironic since the headings on the first 2 pages are; Victim support, racial harassment, drugs prevention, dog warden news. Hartcliffe was also the site of riots in the summer of 1992. "*Yesterday's and Tomorrow's Bristol*" Souvenir programme Oct 1991

agents of change and by and large, to use Hirschman's old idea, had chosen exit rather than voice as a response³⁵.

Rootless Modernity.

But now the landscape they saw was bleak and isolating. Here we see the counterposing of the vision of a city of urban villagers with a dystopian vision of the present urban society in the following excerpts, as a rhetoric of isolation and social atomisation is deployed, often in direct contrast to a language of community. Emphasising the public-private splitting, members constantly pointed to the way that newcomers to areas were involved in work that is now distanced from the home and their area, so people had fewer attachments to the locale³⁶. Formerly, people had to care about their area since they lived entirely within it. Now people worked elsewhere and that elsewhere dominated. They did not need their district so much, and if they were unhappy with something then they could move. A modern, rootless world resulted where there was never time for trust to build up in a neighbourhood.

Daisy: I mean 20 years ago I knew my neighbours were, but now I they come and go so quickly its its. There's a couple getting more steadier now with a baby one side of me, there's three students the other side so they'll be gone..

Harold: But they I mean they don't want to know you know. We We've got I know the trouble is that they're out at work at day all day very often and you don't see them. In the evening you don't see them if you don't go out but err they're out at work all day and that makes a difference when you you're not at work. But um I don't know perhaps I'm a miserable old grumbler.

Flo: [laughter]

Darrel: No it doesn't sound like that at all it sounds as if you're people generally are far less friendly. They might say hello in the street but they won't be bothered to come in and chat to you

And when people were at home their activities were hardly communal. Consistently, groups brought up the idea that they hardly saw neighbours now even if they were there, even if they tried. The sort of community activities that had held districts together before were now absent, replaced by the solitary TV watching:-

35. Although it is difficult to know whether this spatial relocation did not intensify the feelings they had for their previous area.

36. We have to put this in context where at least two of the four areas were undergoing 'gentrification' and urban renovation in the form of both house improvements and new 'village' developments which were often inward looking and physically cut off from the rest of the area. These were the source areas for participants in chapter IX.

Daisy: [I don't know if anyone here is a] television fan but I blame television for taking a lot off our peoples activities I think cos you get behind you get sitting down and you're there for the night. then aren't you.

Retrospective Harmonies.

I feel we must be careful here. I have so far given a straight version of accounts from groups. But this is a retrospective accounting as Harold notes when he reflects on his own positionality in all this. I suggest this version of the past stems in part from a very negative impression of the present. For the isolation (dare I say that this is ever so close to sociological 'anomie') of individuals in their own private worlds has very real consequences. Below we see how the past is associated precisely as the absence of a present negative force - the past is a past without so much 'aggro', and thus a past of open doors. So the present is a suspiciously exact mirror image of the past open door neighbourliness:

Mike: I mean Fred brought it up earlier the people have changed. I mean is that, how have they changed? um

Ruby: Oh they're not as friendly {no no no} stay behind their front doors more now.

Jean: That's right yes.

Fred: We've all got so aggressive haven't we? every one of us for one we were never like this before we didn't have that aggro. We

Nor is it the same people who have changed but an influx of outsiders, both as residents and in positions of authority, that has created a landscape where middle class outsiders, who 'went more by the book', imposed artificial rules that stifled the life of the community:

Grp1b [743-773]

Chris: [We] had our own ways of controlling your situation, all the petty thieving um as I said you could leave your door open, you would leave your windows open, nobody shut even doors or windows and Mrs. so-and-so would go in and see Mrs. so-and-so's house and um John was ill he never had a doctor, invariably you dealt with it amongst yourselves. Once the ministries came in and everybody had to have registration and a form of well dictatorship really, because it was all 'thou shalt not'. Thou shalt not do that and as you [Fred] said about greyhound racing, that became illegal, even cards was erm in the parks played round - men did that as a form of occupation in the thirties - playing for money. It all became illegal. There was more rules and regulations came in.

Sid: And they enforced the regulations that was already there.³⁷

Not only did the outside controls invade the space of self-organisation the working class felt was theirs, but they also tampered with the means of sustenance and

37. This works at revealing what Sofia (1992) has called the hegemonic irrationalities of society - precisely the necessity of imposing one criteria of value and defining all others as irrational is the revelation of the emotional investment and thus irrationality of the hegemonic criteria.

support within it, controlling medicine and destroying the gambling that had supported people in the depression. This spatial construction of us and them intersects with the temporal sense of loss that permeates these accounts. The modern world is seen as grim, with fears of violence rather than ideas of social integration dominating accounts, as this world of 'rules and regulations' fails to provide the same security as the order it replaced.

Grp4 2077-2088

Harold: I mean if I were in trouble I wouldn't know who to go to in our street now.

Darrel: Where as whereas 30 years ago in the 1950s..

Harold: It'd have been several I could have gone to.

Flo: You could have gone up here for a start. At the University Settlement this ain't like it used to be.

Harold: No that's true.

Flo: It's not like it used to be. You in trouble you always had *somebody up* here to listen to you.

Harold: *All they are interested in up here is making money now.*

We discover that the dense matrix of social networks has gone and not been replaced; even the official institutions that continue are now somehow in-human and uncaring³⁸. Some members were unwilling to go so far in talking of straight decline. They preferred a more complex version of events where material affluence ran opposite to and dialectically with a decline in values:

Grp4 1057-1069

Darrel: [when we talked over doing this project for Mike I asked his question:] did things get better or worse for people and in what way. You said that materially things got a lot better for people..

Harold: They did yes.

Darrel:.. you said that people had houses with carpets and you said that you had inside toilets.

Harold: ..improvements..

Flo:..

Darrel: ..but you said that you thought that the standard of life of people actually er has fallen. ³⁹

In the next segment of conversation this attitude to the present becomes clearer but it is also important to look at how these views are structured around the current position and the life course of the speakers (Allen 1984; Miles & Crush 1993). Specifically we have to pay attention to the way the current fears and outlook of

38. It will become apparent later how it is significant that they mention the university settlement - an outside institution - as part of the local networks of support. Perhaps this tempers Chris's stress on self regulation or as I shall suggest later, tempers the idea of 'self'.

39. Others were clear it was just a moral decline.(*Grp2 1401-1405*) Flo: "That's what I just said. Like I said it's lack of discipline. I think it's still a lack of discipline, the old.." Brian: "It's not so much the money.." But see Fred and Harold's differing and more elaborated version of all this later.

speakers provide the context through which many of their attitudes toward the past become charged with meaning:

Grp1a [1212-1255]

Ray: lets say for instance, I don't know why I'm picking out, let's say I insulted Bert, someone older than myself. My father would give me such a tanning and I'd never want to insult an elderly person again. And that's the difference.

Jack: You had to respect older persons

Ray: You can talk about years ago, but you can but you can hardly reflect on the days years ago in home it's a bit difficult really

Jim: From time to time

Ray: I mean nowadays they don't agree with whacking do they? {No} At school you always had the cane. Never done me no harm! And I don't think it done no one else no harm.

Sid: I was talking to Tom Coles the other day, his father was a chimney sweep. And when he was sixteen, his father said "don't go in the billiard hall". Anyway he decided he'd go in, four pence an hour on the top floor. So he went in there and his father come in and said "Out of here! Out!". And he said, "I'll be finished in a minute dad". He said "No!", he said "Out Now!". He was sixteen year old mind. And he said, "Dad," he said "Don't show me up like that", he said, "what do you want to do that for". "Look" he said, "you'll you'll be backing, you'll be betting your pocket money that you'll win games that's what they're doing in there. And you'll lose it" he said "and then " he said "you'll start stealing to make up your money. You keep out of there." And that's what a father was like in those days.

Jack: Well on the bottom floor they used to play for money didn't they? At Ross and Parkers.

Sid: Oh yes but they used to play in all, they used to play for money right the way through it was just

Note here how we see the opening passages moving around insults to the elderly, which many members now are, by youths, which is the age they were in the period before the war they reflect back upon most often. But more than this there is a fear of violence to the elderly that colours any reading of isolation. By noting this present influence and the rhetorical construction of the past I do not mean to cast doubt on the experience of the people talking. The effects of all this are real on members lives, and I certainly don't want to seem to doubt that. The past is seen as active bustling community because the present is experienced as the opposite.

Grp3 977-985

Bill: ..yep but tis the day today you can walk around at night and there's nothing and now at night it must be dead out here.

Eric: Well I think it's dead virtually everywhere people are you know..

Sid: You wouldn't walk round today.

Eric: What is changed see is so totally different today..

June: ..and all that eh? Violence

Grp4 1395-1396

Flo: Oh well I wouldn't walk on the street at night now.

Grp4 201-225

- Ernie: [It] is a shame really but I think it's in many cases that because of the environment of today people you know the elderly people anyway, that they're afraid to come out. To talk about it [the past of the area].
- Darrel: There there is certainly some truth in that. I mean the woman I've just phoned up Miss Gillit, um she's 63 years old I mean I wouldn't consider that particularly elderly, but she won't come out and I I I I
- Grace: Don't look at me Darrel.
- Darrel: ..unless somebody accompanies. Well you again you came a few weeks ago you were scared to come here because of what had happened to you in the street.
- Grace: Well that's only natural isn't it? But err
- Ernie: I think
- Darrel: It does put a lot of people off that.

So with a fear of current violence - a well-founded one since during the course of my research two members of oral history groups were mugged (Grace above being one) - there is some importance to members in asserting how patriarchal authority that served to maintain values in the community. But if we look at the account it is important to see that it relies for rhetorical force on a distinctive oscillation of 'nowadays' and 'then' from present fear to past events rather than a real time sequence (Bruner 1987; Portelli 1981b). The second excerpt neatly positions the current sense of old age and isolation that I suggest informs their view of the past. The excerpt on the role of the father also serves to neatly encapsulate many of the themes of decline, finding a cause in falling morals as shown in gambling (contrast that with Chris above where gambling was a way of life in the 30s was local therefore to be preserved) and the way moral authority from within the area fought this decline.

Grp3 805-832

- Fred: We've all got so aggressive haven't we? every one of us for one we were never like this before we didn't have that aggro. We we obeyed everything we were obedient people we always err looked up everybody superior to us a teacher a doctor a policeman. {yeah} We don't now.
- Ruby: They're adults
- Fred: Eh?
- Ruby: People older than you you couldn't be cheeky to them.
- Fred: Well we didn't
- Jean: we weren't like that
- Flo: well you weren't allowed to.
- Fred: You just accepted the fact that the decision was their's. It wasn't anything with status it was just life. err then, now we couldn't care er if a policeman spoke to you as a child I mean it was wonderful something ordinary er extraordinary. But now I mean we just put our fingers up at anything don't we we just don't believe in anything. We don't care any more so that's the aggro.

Certainly the above excerpt serves to highlight the contrast of remembered community shown in this chapter and the present feelings of isolation of many group members - notice how they as youngsters claim to have looked up to their

elders in contrast to how current youngsters behave. And it also highlights the feelings of moral order present in the past communities. But I want to juxtapose these rhetorics to another account of life in Bristol, from 1920 to 1940 given by Bert in an interview. This produces a starkly different account of the nature of local society⁴⁰.

Bert Tanner: .. interested in the demonstrations in the err takes place in Bristol in 1920 when we came back from the first world war and all the golden promises that, you know, which they didn't turn out. Err well it was day to day 1919 1920 was day to day battles on the street and erm many and varied are the things that happened in so far as and this is my own err experience in so far as that on the Ropewalk just off Old market Street I was batted down by a bluebottle [policeman] and whilst my brother was picking me up, by my side, he was batted down as well. You know um if there's any violence that takes place in demonstrations, it's always most generally comes from the people that's trying to calm down people's agitations on whatever they might be demonstrating for, at least that's my experience...

But his account is just as rhetorical as the previous story, for Bert's history is certainly different from most of the members of groups I talked with - most of them cannot recall the First World War, or their part in mutinies at the end of it, or being blacklisted by firms in the twenties for working for the Trades Council, then 'The Party', or riots on the streets over jobs, nor indeed do they tend to greet academics by denouncing Gorbachev as a class traitor. I put Bert's history in this caricature to try and offset what I find as the immediate believability of his account. Actually it is possible to add to this more conflictual history since Bert talks of conflict but still us (workers/local) against 'them' police who always started any violence anyway, by looking to the accounts of women fighting men to keep their jobs on the trams after the Great War. These local women who fought by throwing sand in the faces of the (local) men chasing the trams (and their jobs), highlight a gendered dimension which is missing from Bert's account of class struggle.⁴¹ Notice though that it is Darrel who has to broach the topic by using some examples that he has heard about in other local histories and stories⁴².

Grp4b [194-209, 223-245]

40. I appreciate that I am deliberately contrasting the two most extreme visions of past community relations to authority here. By showing the two extremes I hope to show both as heavily connected to individual and current positionality.

41 It might also be interesting to study, though none of the groups here mentioned it, how it was only after strikes and direct action that the Bristol Bus company allowed black drivers and conductors in the late 60s (Bristol BroadSides 1987).

42. I too had heard similar stories though never concretely about Bristol - I am left wondering how many of Darrel's examples were actually from Bristol. Whatever, the case they served as a concrete prompt for similar accounts - though if we follow this further then neither Darrel's accounts nor Harold's are first hand.

Darrel: But what I heard was that women who worked in the Dockyards or women who worked as welders or fabricators actually tended to lose their jobs after the war when the men came back. .. Now Harold do you know anything about that? Were there women who did certain jobs who weren't able to carry on in work after..

Harold: [After the first] world war, and err the women weren't prepared to come out and let them [the men] take on their jobs as conductors again. And there were fights galore down in the down in Old Market. I was only a boy but I heard about them you know..

Darrel: So you're talking about 1922 or 1923 I think? Round that time.

Harold: Yeah around then. Well after the war finished. And they used, I said to Flo, they used to have a box of sand on the back of these trams. That sand was thrown on the lines in the frosty weather when the lines were slippery and the when they they the men tried to drag these women off the trams, these women conductresses, and er they used to throw this sand in the men's eyes they proper {yeah} fight used that as ammunition all the sand that as on the trams.

Here is a powerful portrait of the conflictual side of the community that is recounted unselfconsciously yet is reported knowledge - hardly the voice of experience oral history sometimes promises. We can pursue the idea of communities as gendered and also as conflictual by following up earlier ideas about the paternalistic firms enforcing the moral norms. Below there is a brief glimpse of lengthy discussions on how dangerous and easy it was to be excluded from the mutualities of these communities:

Grp2 1054-1060

Ruby: Edward William and Biggs was another tobacco factory when you got married there you had to leave because my mother did..

Nancy: I think Wills was the same.

Ruby: ..actually she kept her marriage a secret for 2 years.

Grp4 136-168

Darrel: Before the second world war we said that as soon as you became pregnant or as soon as you married you couldn't carry on with your job. Even if you got married and had no intention of getting kids or weren't able to have kids, you still lost your job as soon as you got married.

Grace: and had yeah.

Darrel: And I heard of one woman I heard one woman school teacher, she was talking on the radio, who'd got who actually had a child but she didn't dare get married to this chap, she lived with him and when they went out together she had to pretend that he was her brother.

Grace: Yes.

Darrel: And she was confronted in the railway station by the headmistress of the school where she taught, and she had to she was with her kids holding hands with them and she had to pretend that they were her brother's children. She had to lie her head off.

Over and over we have seen that these mutualities were dominated by male values and standards - although Franklin's work on women's domestic lives does indicate how the solidarity of the street provided mutual support for women rather than privatising isolation. Another angle on this conflictual side of the community comes from the earlier mentioned pubs, in the accounts of drunken violence and the gendered nature of the communities they sustained and the way what available money was spent:

Grp4a [657-680]

Eric: Exactly the same as here. yeah. Course you had your outdoor beer license you know, just a little a well just a little hall hallway. I mean I now can visualise some of the women you know you know either going down with the jug the bottle and jug. You see because in those days I mean a woman I mean women were really frowned on in going into [pubs]..

June: Oh yes.

Eric: You you well I gonna say you didn't see women in pubs..

June: No

Eric: there again..

George: The only women in the pubs were the prostitutes.

June: That's right.

Eric: It was all men.

George: All the prostitutes..

June: And of course remember..

George: If if a woman sat all night in a pub that was how she was classed.

Eric: There was only one place that ..[allowed women into it]

Grp2a [1675-1804]

Flo: It was such a working class area. That's all the men had, Saturday night I remember been to pubs with my dad on a Saturday night fetch him home,..

Roger: I have.

May: You had to fetch him home?

Flo: Tell him our mum wanted him home to come back.

Tim: I' ve walked from London Inn..

Harry: .. street when ..

Tim: I've walked from the London as far up as Redcliffe Hill along Coronation road, up by Clay [cough] he had a message to come home. I walked that circle. Now that's a lot of walking, going in every pub to see..

Flo: Yeah and there was so many pubs, that's why there's so many churches because they thought people needed the churches because of the drunkenness going on. [Laughter]

Harry: How many pubs did we count in West street when we were doing "miners memories". {In West street} Hmmh?

Jake: We got the numbers between Redcliffe Hill ..

May: At one point

Jake:.. and London Inn was 32.

Harry: Yes.

May: Redcliffe Hill and London Inn [half a mile]. 32 pubs.

Flo: Yeah.

Ruby: Then of course there's the whole of North street.

May: And they were all well supported?

Roger: ..in Bedminster alone..

Flo: My dad well supported them anyway.

Grp2a [1883-1913]

Tim: Yeah but that's why on Saturday evening err you remember this Roger err most men if they went out pub they'd get on London Inn, they got a certain sports paper, the "Pink and Green One" and when they get there they check down what their race gained and what they done and a crowd a collection of men all getting their papers then they goes in the pub then and get their pint, cos they'se regulars and they sit then round that table or at the bar and they be doing it with their pen or their pencil marking out what they won or if they lost. And they and more classic thing in Bedminster was was or Bristol the more classic thing if your the children at home and the "mum dad's coming home". "What does he look like? Is he sad or is he happy [laughter]?" Because if the City or Rovers lost the wife had hell that night. And that much money going to the pub that .. double. The kids then say go over see Aunt Mabel or go up Aunties quick, go up Aunties for the weekend. Because when dad was upset he was upset.

Note how here we see a complex scenario where it is asserted that women were not allowed into pubs in the first excerpt - but sent out children to get alcohol. There is also an undertone of the importance of alcohol *per se* to sections of the working class in the children bringing alcohol home or fetching drunken fathers. But also in the first excerpt we can note that there *were* women and they *were* the prostitutes. Now where does that leave our notions of some community of harmony? We can also reflect on the idea of communally controlled space and realise that this may well be a masculine vision of freedom and fearlessness. Also we can contrast the fear in the last excerpt, with the idea of the father as the pillar of the community in previous excerpts on discipline⁴³ - from the same speaker - to produce a vastly different idea of the possibilities of patriarchal authority preserving a harmonious community, or at least to get an idea of the sort of community it did maintain. Likewise in the middle segment where Flo links the number of pubs to the number of churches, she says it is because they thought people needed Churches to compensate for drunkenness, which seems to suggest both that the morality of the area was already under question, at least by outsiders, and that this central institution cannot be regarded as internal to the community.⁴⁴In all these cases the homogeneity of experience of the spatial community is problematised. That is, the internal differentiation of these locales is rendered more explicit.

43. Raphael Samuel & Paul Thompson note how often the father figure seems polarised as either demon or hero in oral histories (1990).

44 Indeed the very name of many religious institutions as 'Missions' is redolent of a colonial rhetoric of Victorian middle class outposts in what was seen as heathen territory.

Alterity as Critique.

I want to suggest that these accounts produce several effects that contribute to the political nature of their discourse. Firstly, if we cast our minds back to the organic metaphors, they position community as an independent actor almost as super-organic. It is something that can be taken or destroyed, possessed or denied. This reification also then feeds into how tradition may be seen, as an independent and unreflexive body of artefacts and institutions (Handler & Linnekin 1984; Luke 1993). That is, tradition has an independent existence to our interpretations of it. We may begin to see the elements of this reification in the very process by which these events are recounted, for surely this is a practice that works to take memories, held conjointly or conjointly validated or discursively produced in group settings, memories that are inseparable parts of the lives of groups and group members, and turn them into an external discourse. The act of producing oral history is one of creating a separated object to stand for a past time rather than a present life, to create a history as a dead object rather than a living part of the community (Nora 1989). This comes through in all the references that contrast a 'then' to the much maligned 'nowadays'.

That's my father In them times

Bedminster how it was.

And that's what a father was like in those days.

weekly bill was and that's how it went on in them days.

trouble, you're going ..in the olden times we used to walk

Fred: I mean in our day they taught

Fred: Well the average wage in our day

they didn't have in our days of yesterday. Anyway.

Jean: well it was in those days yes

Bill: Anyway those were the days!

err in the old days however poor

Maybe I should draw attention here to the parallels with the idea of a heritage which, thorough all its etymological tangles and connotations serves to suggest that some entity is to be passed (down) through time. I would suggest that in these groups we begin to see the fashioning of an entity that becomes thus disembedded from the lives of the recounters and is made portable temporally if not spatially (cf. Luke 1993; Handler & Linnekin 1984). What is more the objects created as separate from their authors can now be treated as objects. That is to say, one of the reasons I used Ricoeur's neo-Kantian definition of an object is that it accords so closely with a common sensical definition of what a tradition and indeed the community that

sustains it should be like. Of course, traditions are invented and reframed and as we have seen any idea of spatially bounded entities is deeply compromised

'Having chosen to describe social facts as if they were natural objects, one is embarrassed to find that one cannot definitively bound them in space and time, although such boundedness is necessary to satisfy our understanding of what a natural object is.'

Handler & Linnekin 1984:275.

It is not surprising therefore that accounts produce a community that so remarkably does appear like a natural object - the boundaries may be fuzzy but they are still regarded as workable. Let us follow this to a second point. That is that this 'tradition' is fashioned to be set up in opposition to the contemporary nature of society. It is a past that can be an alterity to current life and thus deployed to critique contemporary trends. As such it represents the forming of an identity via a history of discontinuity and temporal differentiation. It suggests that the past is an alterity which may be appealed to as some foundation in arguments over the effects and course of modernity. But I want to shift this around by suggesting that it is just too neat to see the dichotomies of then and now. And I am sceptical of dichotomous logic anyway. What we are surely witnessing is the interaction and emplotting of the past precisely in terms of where these oral history groups see the world going in terms of their biographies (Miles & Crush 1993; Stafford 1989). They repress their own emotional investment and role in creating these accounts, subscribing precisely to the rationalist myth of western memory, whereby memory is thought out in terms of the recall of independent images representing facts instead of also and at the same time as embodied in the present and partaking of myths archetypes and values.⁴⁵ At the same time as they repress their investment in this version of the past they also repress elements of internal spatial differentiation and transpose them into emphasising a temporal discontinuity. It is in these terms that their attribution of blame and determination of significant events begins to make sense. They are creating a past community that they can then appeal to in order to critique contemporary life. They are using nostalgia as critique (Clive 1985; Chase 1989; Stafford 1989).

'Nostalgia, like the economy it runs with, is everywhere. But it is a cultural practice not a given content; its forms, meanings, and effects shift with the context - it depends on where the speaker stands in the landscape of the present.'

Stewart (1988:227)

45. The work on how memory came to be thought of as a store of mental representations is an interesting field in itself see, for instance, Gross (1985), Bergson (1991), DeConcini (1990), Deleuze (1991), Passerini (1990), Roth (1989).

In this sense we have a subordinate group fashioning a history that can be used as a counter-hegemonic device. That they are people facing the wrong end of creative destruction is not in doubt nor is the enormity of the changes imposed on their areas. Faced with contemporary powerlessness, their age and frailty, they cannot envisaged some Utopian project to build a comparative critique of the present. Instead they mobilise resources from the past.

Re-memembering the past: linking places and times

Remembering as Emplotting.

So far in this thesis I have examined several ways that the past has been used, configured and deployed in varying situations and discourses. Cropping up again and again has been the poetics of nostalgia and it is this that I want to open up here, building on Stewart's (1988) point that just because the formal structure remains constant there is no reason why the political implications must. In her argument there is a vast difference between a comfortable middle-class nostalgia based on the world as museum in which they can stroll about and a fiercely resistant nostalgia from the margins. I am sympathetic to this kind of position but find it an over-dramatisation of the situation. I think the texture of memory that these groups stitched together repays more subtle attention. Thus I take the cue about the structure of nostalgia to sift through some of the tropes used to recount the past. Again I see this as counterposing the idea somewhat naively held about retrieving hidden histories:

'oral recollection inclines towards the figurative rather than the specific, to tropes rather than facts; consequently the oral history method, as the memory of the past condensed, leads us back to language before leading forward to the meaning of the past in the present.'

Murphy (1986:164).

In fact I as I tried to bring out the casting of stories in terms of an implied narrative of then/now we should be aware of the rhetorical, poetic and political importance of this structuring of time. 'In positing a "once was" in relation to a "now" it creates a frame for meaning, a means of dramatizing aspects of an increasingly fluid and unnamed social life' (Stewart 1988:227). We can ask why certain events are focused upon so closely in terms of memory, or look to how often key events are condensed around one figure or 'culture hero' (Ingersoll & Ingersoll 1987:87; Popular memory group 1982). If we look at a story we can say that it is an organised whole. Events do not follow each other enchaind in a chronological

sequence instead they are causally embedded in each other (Cohan & Shires 1988). To follow a story we must be able to read its beginning in its end and the end in the beginning, so that it is not just a sequence of events nor a logical structure but a logical sequence (Carr 1986; DeConcini 1990:169). The teleology of the conclusion is written in how events become legible as events, how they are picked out and rendered significant⁴⁶:

'Since these constructions are intentionally designed, they are not only reflections of "what is"; they are also opportunities to write history as it should be or should have been, demonstrating a culture's notion of propriety and sense. History and accident are not permitted to be imposed willy-nilly, those badly written, haphazard, incomplete recordings of occurrences that are so unsatisfactory. Rather performances are shaped and groomed justifications, more akin to myth and religion than lists of empty external events we call history or chronicle.'

Myerhoff (1982:104).

Thus in the last section it was easy for me to pick out the way 'they' were the synecdoche of state institutions and were emplotted with agency, forming the motors of the plot. The similarity of this to straight structuralist morphologies of folk tales should alert us to the idea that their rhetorical structure is a means of gaining purchase on the environment. I bring this in since so many analysts appear to focus upon narrative construction and form without any sense of the spatial situatedness of memories. They seem to suggest accounts are perfectly worked out and seamless temporal reworkings. I already suggested that this downplays a sense of provisionality in any version but it also reifies a rationalist intentionality. One way I think this can be productively reworked is to look not just for dramatic characters but also the way places and spaces function as 'heroes' and protagonists. It invites a sense of inter-subjectivity as during the meetings places were used to establish shared narratives. I want to explore the implications of this a little further by looking at the logical extension of the idea of a self-constructing narrative that both constitutes itself and accounts for its current position, then contrasting that to the experience I had in these groups.

Authoring Lives.

I do not want to set up the idea of a narrative constitution of a self as a paper tiger which I hunt down to demonstrate some critical prowess. I must reiterate that reading through material on this is where the inspiration for much of my analysis comes from. However, I became suspicious at not only the near unanimity in

46. Of course this is not to imply that the end is apparent from the beginning, rather that from the end the beginning is necessary - what Ricoeur analyses as the paradox of contingency (1980).

accepting this idea in the literature I was reading and at the neatness of the solutions. I began to want to situate these narrative acts as, reading through Ricoeur, I kept wondering whether this was a universal human structure, as he appeared to intimate, or was it limited to specific high cultural forms, the materials he examined? I think it is worth examining the idea of autobiographical consciousness.

Murphy (1986) has argued that the emergence of autobiographical consciousness must be understood as a specific moment of representing self-identity in the light of future, that is organising lives as a trajectory (cf. Gmelch 1992). He links this to an historical moment where the changes in society become noticeable over the span of a single life and tied into a concomitant valuation of individual contributions⁴⁷. In fact Myerhoff (1982:111) virtually defines the idea of authoring a life by describing it as re-remembering, that is the 'focused unification' of the author as actor not as passive flickerings of images and feelings.

Although she does not draw the conclusion, Maynes's (1992, 1989) more systematic study of continental (mostly German and French) autobiographies of the nineteenth century suggests the construction of a valorised, auto-biographical individual is not just expressed in terms of some transcendental cultural shift, but is located around those who do not just experience change over their life-time but have the capacity to *effect* change. Indeed among the elderly in current day Switzerland we can see this tendency replicated with the construction of self as an autobiographical narrative closely associated with societal empowerment:

"A study of the people's grasp of the time-span of human life immediately reveals that one's links with history depend on one's position in society. In the ruling classes, the blueprint for life consists in maintaining a position as an historically active figure for as long as possible, in the working classes, history and social change are perceived as facts which are radically heteronomous to individuals, forces which can affect their lives to the extent of disrupting or destroying them but forces which over which they have no control."
Lalive d'Epinaay (1987:94).

All of which makes Mayne's (1989) study that much more intriguing, since she focused on narrative constructions by the disempowered - precisely in as much as they were the exceptions that proved the rule. Her conclusions were that if there was a common factor then it was a conversion or the impact of a project beyond

47. I am somewhat sceptical of the periodisation of these claims, given Augustine's confessions and other earlier autobiographies, however I think what he suggests about the organisation of subjectivity rings true.

the self mostly in terms of religion or politics.⁴⁸ In each case rather than being the story about the construction of the self through various narrative roles and characters, we are presented with the self as a role or character in a larger story (cf. Schrager 1983). The teller was very much treating themselves as a typification of the anonymous masses, as a representative in what was often intended to be an exemplary and generally ascensionist, future directed narrative. In this sense although the formal structure of the bourgeois auto-biography remains, the hero is becomes a collective individual⁴⁹.

What I want to turn to and focus on is the lead this gives into a less rationalist interpretation of memory. We begin by acknowledging the situatedness of linear trajectories, and thus also their effect as a substantive category that is something that people may desire to impose, an ordering that may be the result of desire rather than actuality. In this respect I am critiquing any assumption of 'ontological narrativity' (Sewell 1991), but unlike Somers (1992) I am suggesting that the structure of then/now indicates a popular currency of narrative structure. Somers (1992) argues that interpreting working class action in terms of a ~~the~~ meta-narrative of the project or indeed in terms of the transition from *gemeinschaft* to *gesellschaft* is an analytic imposition. I would accept it is an imposition but it is one that the people in the groups appeared to use to interpret their own lives.

So far then we have explored how the concept of life as a story allows the configuration of beginning and end, indeed in life review a poignant sense of an ending, and the creation of a meaningful whole as a life - a symptom of what Ricoeur once called humanity's 'tragic will to totalise' (1992). What groups allowed was different rhetorical structures that served to emphasise other ways of telling stories about the past. They retained a sense of mortality, of time and its flow. Yet they also played up the social and communal constitution of these rhetorics. They did this by drawing people together over shared places.

Placing Memories.

The idea of being-towards-death suggested how mortality organised these accounts in one way as when DeConcini (1990:171) suggests that 'we possess ourselves only

48. Quite often 'The Project'. (cf. Steinmetz 1992).

49. Murphy (1986) alludes to the idea that we may now witness a post-modern self expressed in a narcissistic self-effacement in autobiographies where the subject is seen to be 'locked within an alien text' instead of expressing the coherent self-trajectory of classic bourgeois. Taking up Cronon's (1993) sense of narrative emplotment, most of the tales told in the groups were distinctly declensionist - of decline not progress.

as a journey'. Equally, important was a sense of being-alongside, a sense of being part of a generation embedded in place. Throughout the groups I kept feeling that the shared character of experience was recounted through shared places⁵⁰. Tuan (1991:686) suggests that storytelling converts objects to real presences *making places* into a human category. Perhaps we could suggest it is the spatial correspondent of emplotting events. Rather than looking at bourgeois future-oriented narratives perhaps we can usefully explore the role of spaces. But by looking at spaces from the perspective of using them to create a sense of identity I hope to focus on the embeddedness of these spaces. That is, they are spaces for, given meaning by their appropriation and use, being made present rather than being vessels in which actions are performed (Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton 1981:173-5).

These latter authors (and others like Radley 1990) point to the increasing importance of physical objects and locales to memory as age increases⁵¹. Certainly I was witness to, though I did not have the requisite knowledge to participate in, protracted and sometimes heated debates over the specific locales of the areas groups discussed. One group spent some 3 separate 10 to 15 minute spells discussing the precise location and period of Cate's undertakers - a shop that had been closed for (and this was part of the argument) around 30 to 40 years.⁵²

At first I attempted to downplay these issues but I have come to think they are more significant than I wanted to admit. Thinking through the different positionalities and thus investments of the people in the groups I came to be more impressed with the analysis of Lalive d'Epinau (1987) on the concealment by the working class individual in interviews behind a group identity, especially through the use of collective references (in my work I found an all encompassing second

50. A view I had found attractive in Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton (1981) but had been uneasy about using due partly to their esoteric conceptualisation of investing 'psychic energy' and a lingering suspicion about the roots of transactional analysis. This is a point omitted in Schragger's (1983) otherwise well founded appeal to look at the intertextuality of oral accounts (cf. also Wachtel 1986).

51. A somewhat more protracted 'debate' can be followed over the role of physical locales in structuring mnemonics and maybe the basis of memory. Francis Yates (1968) highlights the spatiality of the ancient arts of memory, and Luria describes the unerring ability of a mnemonist who positioned events to remember along imaginary routes. Meanwhile, in attempting to overcome ideas of memory as a vessel containing mental images, Barbara DeConcini derides concepts of 'memory lane' which she says conjures up visions of 'a path lined with distinct mnemonic shrubbery or a corridor of the mind where hang memories hang like pictures on a wall' (1990:27). It is perhaps significant that studies of consumers have found the significance of objects as mnemonics (McCracken 1988a) and the role of modern collections as having significant parallels with the ancient arts of memory (eg Belk 1985, Stewart 1984, Katriel & Farrell 1991).

52 When I returned transcripts and summaries the thing I tended to downplay were the specific places and people associated with them, partly, I liked to tell myself, for the sake of anonymity and partly because I was interested in structures and forms and not 'minutiae' but also because I have to admit I did not know the 'minutiae'. In fact these issues were normally the only ones that provoked groups to use the rights of reply I had laboriously explained to them (cf. Borland 1991).

person plural that denied the difference of individual experience) or impersonal third person singulars that render the self as a typification of a group. In the groups I worked on I have already argued that the story of the past was constructed so as to create a sense of 'us', but I think we can now look at why this was focused as a spatial operation:

"For the men and women of the working classes, history comes from outside and imposes itself: ... the 'authorities', planners and speculators transform working-class districts; the chaos of modernity prowls around the small property owner's house. But there is still one area over which the working-class individual has some power - oneself and one's little world. Courage is the courage to 'put up with it', there is an artistry in this stoicism, this art of tricking history and events to soften their blows."

Lalivé d'Épinay (1987:96).

This tricking of history is bound up in intimate knowledges of neighbourhoods. Whereas upper class stories tend to occlude the 'minutiae' of daily life the working class recount them in enormous detail (ibid.). For instance in *Remember Be'minster* (vol 8 1991) pages are spent describing a walk through East street as it used to be.⁵³ As I sat working through transcripts and listening to conversations I became used to a familiar series of exchanges begun with a question 'who here remembers..' then the description of a place and then an event the individual remembered occurring there. Most often the rest of the group would not remember or had not been a party to the incident recounted. But the rest of the group were vital to validate the story, so there would be a 'uh huh' or supportive noise when a place was named - or a query to locate it precisely temporally and spatially - than at the end a connected story might emerge about that place. People were linking themselves into a group by spinning tales about shared places of memory (cf. Schely-Neuman 1993). In this way the stakes invested in the minutiae increase.

It may be through these minutiae that people with no territory or proper place can appropriate spaces. De Certeau (1984, 1985a) provides several powerful descriptions of such appropriation. Even as outside agencies plan and regulate the spaces of the city he conjures up ideas of mobilities that utilise space but do not create territories. From the landscape we can retrieve past irrationalities, obsolescences and irrelevances; systems of regulation can be subverted and reused for different ends.

53. One group had a project to produce a historical view of streets as they were walked down, another was recording a video of a walk around their area as precisely placed memories. In this sense I think 'memory lane' may yet have some mileage as a metaphor. See note 43.

But I want to draw some of the more poignant strands from de Certeau (1984) where a city is seen as haunted by memories - places that no longer exist forming ghostly interruptions of a modern rationality. This indeed needs to be situated with regard to the age of the people I worked with. Rowles (1978) beautifully shows the limitations of ideas of increasing spatial isolation for the elderly by allowing in the figurative and remembered spaces of their past. I have over 200 lines of one member and many other briefer comments describing children's games in the streets which used to go on in areas where many they said they cannot now let children play due to traffic. Each place is known just by its use but by its past uses what could be called the 'biography of spaces'.

It is these transformations and displacements that provide the edge and the meaning to critiques of modern society. I say displacements since the huge transformation of their areas have left these people feeling out of place - or rather these areas are not the places they once were. An action of exile where these one time inhabitants of areas have moved, or been moved, out of those areas - leaving them behind as frozen memories. This fixing of the past serves to emphasise how places are made of temporal as well as spatial co-ordinates. Such meaning must no change when the places are consigned to memory or their former inhabitants are exiled from them:

'They resist the loss of a cultural home by continuously *reinscribing* places on a place whose meaning is emptying out. By inscribing the ruined and trashed landscape with allegorical ruins that embody the history of the place, that history, painful as it is, surrounds and overwhelms, becomes a living world to act *in* rather than a world of fixed objects and contents to act *on*. They are nostalgic not as tourists taking in framed scenes from a maintained and exercised distance but as exiles in their own homeland, painfully holding on to a closeness in a world that has already deserted them.'

Stewart (1988:235).

I find this an immensely powerful suggestion bringing in Benjamin's (1973c) sense of the ruin as symbolising the modern relation to history - by both showing the passage of time and yet also remaining constant. To see the past in ruins is not necessarily a pleasant experience. Beyond seeing change and decay which still echoes with an almost bittersweet bucolic or picturesque sentiment, this vision of the past is more apocalyptic and can cope with the sense of dislocation expressed by groups. It is Benjamin's description of Paul Klee's *angelus novelus*:

'an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps

piling wreckage at his feet. The angel would like to stay, to awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that he can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.'

Benjamin (1973c:249).⁵⁴

This is not a representation of the groups. Rather it is an evocation of the despair and anger they occasionally showed⁵⁵. If this is a journey it is not a simple a to b, nor a simple departure and return, it is a wandering more like that of Lawrence Sterne (Sieburth 1987) or indeed the roamings of Proust (Lloyd 1993; Poulet 1978). Each twist and turn occurs in memory as well as on the ground to connect the places of the city. As Stewart put it of the people she worked with in Appalachia: 'People roam from ruin to ruin reading the absences that they embody' (1988:235).

It is here that I do want to return to the ordering of history as a coping strategy. These groups do not just roam from absence to absence, but re-mark and expound upon each absence. While for many developers an interest in history may well be an imperialist nostalgia (Rosaldo 1989) investing value in that which they are destroying, these groups are investing value in something taken from them. They sense the loss profoundly and position themselves as the last people who can salvage the true nature of their community. As such their work echoes with the anthropological trope of a pastoral allegory of cultural loss and textual rescue, that is a situation of cultural fragments and textual integration (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1989:128). Now the concept of cohort awareness and sensitivity to historical time can be focused on the fragments and the way they are unified in memory 'Telling stories is literally a way of re-remembering a dismembered way of life by insisting on the personalization of place, revivifying the ruins with direct social and contextual meaning.' (Bauman 1989:179).

⁵⁴ I further like Benjamin's phrasing because it combines two views of the action of memory. It allows for the idea that 'Time is erosion rather than accumulation' (Myerhoff 1982:111) yet at the same time allows for the idea that it is an accumulation (of wreckage and absences) that creates the self. This meets Bergson's (1991) objection to the idea of a fading past and subsequent critiques of memory as fading images. It is perhaps a truly dialectical image of time and memory.

⁵⁵ Perhaps we can see this despair in looking to the future when one member was asked why we now increasingly value the past Roger replied 'Could it be political to a certain extent? What the young people of today, what have they got to look forward to? The way things are going in this country. So looking back on their past, every night in the paper you see reunions of schools which you never used to get, only once in blue moon prewar. We're looking back more than forward now.' A startling reprisal of the idea of an index of decline which I outlined in chapter 2.

Such a re-membering answers thoughts about lack of control over the area, where textual and recollective control is a bittersweet compensation for the losses suffered by those who are speaking from amidst the ruins (Stewart 1988:238). And again I want to argue this forces us to focus on the constitution of oral history and a poetics where:

"Consequently, disturbances, distortions and omissions of the remembered past - the 'unreliable' elements of memory as far as empiricism is concerned - can be understood as equally revealing and symptomatic... signifying, meaningful discrepancies."

Murphy (1986:174)

But this is not enough. We still need to return to the facticity of these accounts and to look at their rhetoric of realism that is sustained because of the omissions and 'discrepancies' (cf. Portelli 1981a; Shotter 1990). The reason we must do this is to understand how this poetics of resistance can itself become a totalising exclusion.

Instituting History: from recollection to record.

Duty memory.

Rather than attempting to look on 'errors' or distortions as problems of oral history, maybe we should seek to look at them as its peculiarities (Portelli 1981a). A vision of oral history as buried facts to be retrieved seems to play dangerously near to the desire for the chronological, 'realist' accounts which have been called the mythic form of modern history (Tonkin 1990). Likewise in analysing the ideas of community expressed by the groups it seems both impertinent and dangerous to look on the community constructed in their accounts (literally a fiction, a made thing) as an empirically testable entity.

Further treating the objects of these stories as substantive realities then leads into arguments about whether it is a true representation, or how accurate it is, or whether it has been handed down intact and whole (Luke 1993). My point is rather that in order to discern the politics of that community, analysis might more usefully focus more on the conditions that foster the construction of such an imagined community in the present. That is, even though the community appeals to an idealised past it is rendered meaningful only in a specifically modern context. What these accounts reveal is less about the nature of events and more about what their significance to local inhabitants (Alonso 1988; Portelli 1981a). The practice of

these groups illustrates is the process whereby an interpretive community fashions itself by establishing a shared relation to a lost community of the past.

However, the tension of a discourse founded on experiential representation and the idea of constructed tropes poses the paradox at the heart of oral history very strongly. That is, the very contradiction of the terms oral and history, the former pointing to the activity of a speaker in the present and the latter to traces or material of the past. It is a moment when the intangible past is turned into material representations for causes and with consequences rarely commented on in the literature. To guide us through this, I will pick up mostly on the work of debating the idea of tradition, on Pierre Nora's incisive remarks, and then finally I shall try to leave some sense of how a radical process can thus leave itself open to reappropriation by the 'dominant memory'.

I want to look at the way those lost spaces affect the sense of what the duties of the cohort are, driving what Nora (1989) terms *duty memory*. The absent and lost spaces were not simply available for use, they demanded memorialisation. They were not there to be observed but their memory demanded observance. In her study some 5 years before Nora's commenced, Barbara Myerhoff summed up the duty the past placed on the present.

"The old people's sense of being memory bearers, carriers of a precious, unique cargo, heightens generational memory and intensifies cohort-consciousness, giving a mission to the group that is at once urgent and at the same time unlikely to be realized."

Myerhoff (1982:101).

This sense of mission and obligation is perhaps cast a little bit too sensationally for the groups I worked with. In this way their 'salvage history' is produced as 'Inscriptions on the threshold of disappearance' (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1989:127). Oral history constructs a speaking position that contests slick re-workings of history:

'By resurrecting time and place, and a subject in time and place, it shatters the surface of an atemporal order and a prefab cultural landscape Culture is more and more unspoken and unnamed. Painted onto the surface of things it passes us by as a blur of images and we "read" it instantaneously as if it is a photographic image already "written" and framed.'

Stewart (1988:227)

Oral history stands in stark contrast - with its emphasis on time - and the need to listen, to speak and to experience. It was a landscape visible to the sedentary or constructed out of a life time's journey reads very differently to the landscape

designed to be legible to the passing tourist. It is not the coming to light but the invisibility of oral history practices that marks its resistance, I can still smell the tea and hear the biscuits being munched in portacabins. Out of this stillness came the remarkable tales about the past, tales unrepresented elsewhere and by their invisibility surprising and disconcerting. A landscape rendered readable to those who come after, not tourists but in a generational sense:

- Joe: My niece is fascinated when we all old uns get talking about the old times. She's fascinated and she don't want us to stop. She says "Oh go on a bit longer a bit longer and tell us about how we actually lived". She's fascinated by it all.
- May Because what happened was people started to be interested in family history and family trees but then it spread wider than that didn't it? And not just to knowing who they were related to but how those people lived.
- Jack: Well you see our Jenny, that's more or less how she got in on this and she been here ever since. 899

The shock of the different way of experiencing the past as well as the different pasts told is why I do see the:-

"critical role that even "superceded" [aufgehoben] traditions can still play in modern life. In fact, the more a tradition becomes *passé*, the more it becomes something "other than" what is experienced as everyday life. In this respect traditions, particularly defeated or marginalized ones, have become what traditions never were before: forms of alterity which, if approached correctly, can help challenge quotidian existence. By juxtaposing rather than integrating the past and the present, the non-synchronous and the synchronous, it may become possible not only to see the present from an entirely new perspective but to raise questions about some of the otherwise hardly noticed clichés of contemporary life."

Gross (1993:6).

It is why I picked up on Benjamin's idea of the ruin earlier since 'In the ruin history has physically merged into the setting. And in this guise does not assume the form of the process of eternal life so much as of irresistible decay .. the events of history shrivel up and become absorbed in the setting' (Benjamin 1973c:251; 1973b). I think this speaks to the way the past haunts the present in the way these groups describe the city. The ruin is both relic (almost magical), testimony to the past and indication that things were different.⁵⁶

Ruins seem to call in the authority of time as a passage and attrition and also the cultural baggage of archaeology and excavation. But these groups are not just trying to talk of ruins but of legitimate traditions and ways of life and these, as Luke notes, 'are not buried treasures awaiting excavation like old pirate chests to be forced open

⁵⁶ However, I also want to maybe draw on the idea of follies as a rhetorical balance to the powerful metaphor of ruins. These are ruins built in the present to age the landscape to present designed origins.

and spent as valuable essences of "old ways" to fix our "new ways". Nor are traditions fragmented bits and pieces of a dead past to be cobbled together on the lab tables of Critical Theory, lifted lifelessly into the thunderstorms of popular protests, struck by lightning bolts of reanimating communal energy, then used to redeem the otherwise lost souls of modernity' (1993:17). I want to get away from the idea of tradition/past as something that may be passed down over time. We have to recognise that its significance is modern to modern people not historical. Now this does pose a problem to models of identity which suggest identity is partly self-sameness over time and, in that sense, a continuity with the past.

I am not trying to reprise the idea that traditions which are invented are somehow spurious in contrast to a real continuity and passing on of traditions - I am trying to side-step that whole argument. Some commentators have adopted a compromise position that admits of contemporary reinterpretation but suggests that the bulk of the materials from the past will be handed on - a process of amendment and accretion rather than invention. We ignore the fuzzy boundaries by looking at the substantive content passed from generation to generation. But this suggests that a real, essential tradition does exist independently of interpretations of it. Now this conception of tradition, it seems to me is the one operating in much oral history and particularly underwriting many of the groups I spoke with.

These groups use natural and organic metaphors to produce an idea of community as more than a collection of psyches but also an indivisible entity beyond the individual that is then bounded and set off against both the environment and others (cf. Handler & Linnekin 1984). Everyone possesses this organic body yet it is difficult to say what the traits are and what possession means, save that there must be those who cannot possess it who must be excluded. This I find a real political problem with the idea of tradition as alterity and resistance since I am inclined to agree with Handler & Linnekin (1984) that 'Tradition is not handed down from the past, as a thing or collection of things; it is symbolically reinvented in an ongoing present' (p.280) and it 'resembles less an artefactual assemblage than a process of thought - an ongoing interpretation of the past' (p.274). If tradition is not a collection of things to pass on then there is less point in exclusive ownership, and there are no privileged inheritors.

The acceleration of history?

We must then ask why and how oral history fits into this schema. After all what can be less tangible than memories and words? I want to look at just how the

practice and action of oral history can change the immateriality of the past. Let us return to the idea of what oral history is about. If we accept the idea that it is a movement in the present then we can look with equanimity on the idea of retrospective organisation of the past. It is only if we see it as a less tapped store house of facts that things become difficult. Oral history uses the alterity of the past to break out of 'incarceration in the doxic prison of innocence' (Brow 1990:2). We can challenge the taken for grantedness of the current world. It is a shift from a pragmatic to a discursive consciousness that results in challenging the unsaid and unspoken rules that sustain the dominance of certain groups in society (Bourdieu 1992).

However, the speaking of the past, setting it up as alterity poses the contradiction at the heart of writing - the moment that one person's experience becomes another's text. Memory implies a connectedness to the present, a sense of the past carried by an individual or group, while history posits a separation from that past - precisely as alterity:

"Memory and history far from being synonymous now appear to be in fundamental opposition. Memory is life, borne by living societies, founded in its name. It remains in permanent evolution, open to the dialectic of remembering and forgetting, unconscious of its successive deformations, vulnerable to manipulation and appropriation, susceptible to being dormant and periodically revived. History, on the other, hand, is a reconstruction, always problematic and incomplete of what is no longer. Memory is a perpetually actual phenomenon, a bond tying us to an eternal present, history is a representation of the past."

Nora (1989:8).

This seems a fundamental point with which to round off this discussion of oral history. The thing that is passed down is history and in the moment of becoming a representation of the past it becomes communicable. Or at least it appears communicable and transportable - to return to Luke's excellent critique of Gross, history (my term) becomes seen as:

'the thing-like containers, which are traditions, therefore become definite vessels that also "carry" a certain amount of spiritual value or moral meaning. This cargo of moral, cultural and spiritual prestige creates a sense of continuity, "as if one were a link in a chain stretching back in time" ([Gross] p.10). Thus Gross tends to see the value laden vessels of tradition as conveyances unloading their prestigious wares of spirituality or goods of morality at the advent of each new generation. In turn, these recipients are obliged to portage these containers and their contents through time to the next generation."

Luke (1993:12).

I think this does begin to capture not just the sense of distance memory, as Nora terms it, of the past as exterior and other, but also the causal connection to what he terms 'duty memory' where we have a sense of obligation to the past. The obligation comes with the sense of exteriority, giving the past as Thing a sense of subjectivity and autonomous existence, needing to be both cared for and capable of acting.

Seeing the past as ruins left in tatters by an external force is a view of societal transformations read directly off the *gemeinschaft* to *gesellschaft* narrative (Somers 1992, 1994) and so seeing the past in ruins and its ruination in modernity is virtually a traditional view of society. To cite Luke again (1993:12) "There is a "modernity" of tradition and a "tradition" of modernity that Gross misses in choosing to retell a variation of the old *Gemeinschaft* becoming *Gesellschaft* narrative, which digs a deep gap between the substantive unity of what apparently was and the instrumental fragmentation of what seems to be." But it is precisely this narrative that the groups around Bristol seemed to be telling me and I have to ask why. I think Luke appears to be missing a sense of the popular currency of this narrative in terms of self-understanding. It is a sense of the urgent need for preservation and precisely a sense of salvage toward historical fragments - and the sense that the historical must be fragmentary. Pierre Nora grasps this in comparing *memory* (read non-textual, oral, traditional society's) to a reflexive representational history:

'An increasingly rapid slippage of the present into the historical past that is gone for good, a general perception that anything and everything may disappear - these indicate a rupture of equilibrium. The remnants of experience still lived in the warmth of tradition, in the silence of custom, in the repetition of the ancestral, have been displaced under the pressure of a fundamentally historical sensibility. Self-consciousness emerges under the sign that which has already happened, as the fulfilment of something always already begun. We speak so much of memory because there is so little left.'

Nora 1989:7.

The historical sensibility is just the sense of that feeling of generational awareness, the sense of passage and loss that was outlined earlier. The fixation on oral sources Nora suggests is because we are becoming so self-conscious. Instead of lived traditions, ways of life, we become aware of their mutability and fragility and thus we seek external supports and structures to preserve them concretely and definably, what I earlier introduced as Nora's idea of *lieux-de-memoires*. Thus we worship not memory but its scaffolding and the outward signs of its meticulous reconstruction.

We do not store away memories but rather what would be impossible to remember, since everything becomes fair game for history. Yet they live on, still affecting audiences, still poignant, still redolent with the animation they have lost: 'moments of history torn away from the movement of history, then returned; no longer quite life, not yet death, like shells on the shore when the sea of living memory has receded'. (Nora 1989:12).

Envisioning Urban Histories: Bristol as Palimpsest, Postcards and Snapshots.

Introduction.

What I attempt to do in this chapter is use one of the commonplace ways geography envisions the urban landscape to throw into relief other forms and patterns of vision that are widely used to depict the city. This attempt has evolved as a response to my growing realisation of how important images are to the local histories in the previous chapter both as a source and a form of presentation (cf. O'Connor 1988). The main focus is the proliferation of what might be generically termed (old) photos of old Bristol; as found in exhibitions, or in local history books, or the local paper which contained a picture of 'Bygone Bristol' everyday, or the supermarket whose anonymous interior includes a wall of blown up pictures of the old city. It is this dispersed and polymorphous discourse on the city's past that I wish to draw out by highlighting some of the aesthetic forms currently organising ways of seeing the city and their relations to various knowledges of and ways of understanding the past of the city. I attempt to use such pictures as more than a source by using montages and juxtaposition of pictures and ways of seeing diacritically with the text¹.

Palimpsests: Historicity and the Passage of Time.

In order to have some starting point from which to interrogate the multiple visionings of the city's history I want to begin by sketching out a preliminary geographical vision of the urban landscape. The purpose behind outlining this vision is not to accord it some special status as either pre-eminent or *bête noir*. Rather I want to use this conception of landscape as a stage to better display and interrogate other urban visions, including the positions of their spectators and modes of organising historical understanding, in order to search for creative tensions and similarities between these ways of understanding the past. I hope this will allow some closer study of how various pasts are made legible in various ways and at various times (Fynsk 1992).

The geographic view of the fabric of an historic city I appeal to is a vision from historical geography, resonating through W G Hoskins' local histories (eg 1955), and is the vision of the landscape as a palimpsest. As I shall use it, a palimpsest refers, by a perhaps significant analogy with manuscript text, to the accretion of historical events and processes which

¹ To be explicit about the inspiration for this idea, it is, of course, Walter Benjamin whose "method created 'dialectical images' in which the old fashioned, undesirable, suddenly appeared current, or the new, desired suddenly appeared as a repetition of the same." Buck-Morss (1986:100). I hesitate to say that this was an aim of mine, rather it was a way of thinking. The phrase 'ways of seeing' is from Berger (1972).

accumulate to bear silent witness to the passage of time - producing a landscape on which history inscribes itself as a process of addition, amendment and perpetual alteration, as 'the sum total of its rewritings through time' (Williams 1993:15). Just as each era forms a landscape according to its own artefacts and uses, so each succeeding era takes that and overwrites it, and is in turn overwritten. As each era is overtaken by the next, so it is left as traces and redundancies, obsolescences and irrationalities - things that make no sense to the next era but remain as a mark, the burden of the past or an inheritance depending on your point of view. In terms of experiencing the city, it is often suggested a palimpsest suggests rootedness and, reprising the terms of humanist arguments, lends a 'time thickening' to the locality - which leads to it becoming a *place* that has significance and affective connotations over and above having merely spatial co-ordinates. The past remains in the detail of the present and can be retrieved from the everyday world, since it is the quotidian landscape that bears the marks of history as much as, if not more than, some monumental, legitimate History. The humble knowledges of local areas stand as tall in understanding history as treatises on the great and the good, and the revalorisation of everyday knowledges and experiences can lead to immensely poignant interpretations where people's worlds are seen as, what Stephen Greenblatt (1991) calls, 'wounded texts' where the marks and scars of time provide meaning to the beholders.² The historicity of the area is all around awaiting those with the inclination and will to recover it, as illustrated in the annotations around the 'Dutch house' in figure 12.

Palimpsests suggest further rich ways of knowing the city by recovering its historic depth and this, in turn, suggests some specific roles for the academy (and, it has been argued, geographers particularly) in interpreting the city. Such an accretive world seems to present ideal opportunities for an analysis based on Geertz's (1973) 'thick description' by allowing the nuances and patterns inscribed on the world to be made legible. Thus the landscape is seen as a product of a wide range of social processes that can be reconstructed through the traces they leave and the representations they inform (eg Daniels 1993; Domosh 1989). Meanwhile, others, notably Peirce Lewis, have sought to retrieve the meanings of 'ordinary landscapes' in a pedagogic project and have attempted to educate students and the wider public into reading the significance of vernacular landscape to try to restore a sense of the wonder and historical resonance of the world around them (Lewis 1987, Greenblatt 1991). This is a pedagogy that attempts to both take historical interpretation outside the confines of legitimate institutions, museums and the like, and place interpretive tools in the hands of ordinary people (Binks 1989, Matless 1993, Walsh 1992). Thus the idea of the palimpsest can be used as a diorama on which to embed the quotidian histories in the last chapter.

² Such poignant interpretations of the scars of time were worked through in the last chapter in terms of oral history groups interpreting their locales.

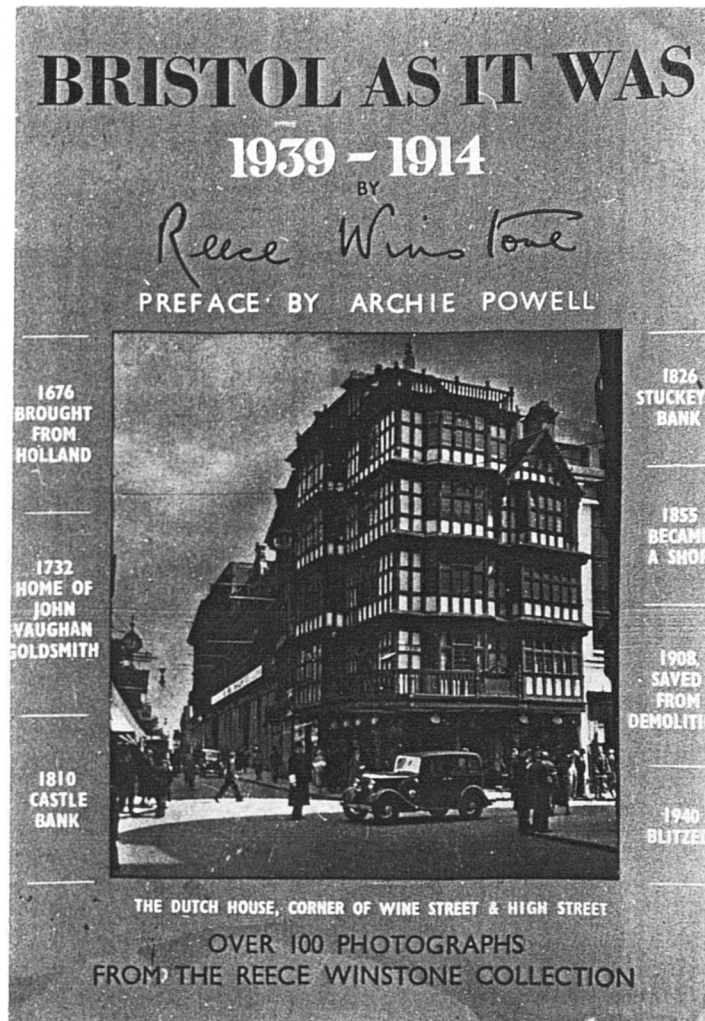
Such a worthy project is open to reversal though, when the position of interpreter becomes a vehicle for the privileging of an academic gaze claiming an exclusive or pre-eminent right to determine what is valuable or has significance (cf. Bauman 1991). To illustrate how the palimpsest can give rise to such hierarchies of interpretation we can turn to McIlwraith (1991) where the landscape is conceived as a pyramid comprising degrees of historic significance with consecrated national memorials at the apex down to the everyday at the base. His suggestion is that geographers could usefully arbitrate at what point the truly historic (worthy of preservation) stops and where a non-historic present takes over.³ The geographer assumes the position of a privileged reader of the palimpsest (cf. Gregory 1994:145). A position that seems antithetical to claims by subordinate groups to write themselves into history and the landscape.

In the light of these emancipatory and conservative potentialities, I do not propose to hold up the palimpsest as some redeeming idea that can save interpretation from privileging visualisation. On the contrary, it is to this latter theme that I will now turn, to how the historically saturated accretion that forms the daily world is transformed and staged as part of middle-brow historical interpretations. To begin with I shall look at the way documentary pictures of cities are both constructed and frame discourses about urban society, taking examples from both America and Britain, to try and illustrate some themes that may later serve to highlight the specificities and generalities of pictures of Bristol. Then, I shall turn to another ordering of the past, that employed by monumental Heritage, as being, I shall suggest, intimately bound up with ways of visualising and actively picturing the past. The main work of the chapter will then be focused around the specific determinates of the recirculation of old photographs of Bristol that help organise the city's past into a coherent form, drawing on and diverging from those implied in a palimpsests, heritage displays and the photo-documentaries. Throughout the chapter, then, the triptych of palimpsest, heritage and archive photographs will be juxtaposed to illuminate each other by allowing the circulation of the specific practices of photography. By travelling between these elements the chapter will hopefully map out the relationship of visions to the urban past in Bristol (cf. Daniels 1993:243)

³ In the last chapter I highlighted the pitfalls of this, when oral history becomes a 'source' for the academic process. In earlier chapters I suggested the incommensurability of this stance with the dynamics of groups trying to develop new senses of Heritage through new and multiplying principles of evaluation.

Figure 12:

A Pictorial Palimpsest?



The biography of this house is written around the picture. The house, of almost mythical origin, known as the Dutch House, was reputed to be imported or just built by a Dutch merchant. It's successive reuses are listed around the outside. It was gutted by incendiary bombs in the War and demolished. Its removal was almost iconic for the loss of the city centre. It has been replaced by a widened road and the current Bank of England building. Its location thus marks the end of the preserved, pedestrianised zone around Corn street.

Documents of the City and the Archive.

Documentary Projects.

It seems appropriate to counterpose the vision of the city as a palimpsest, an accumulation of traces of past actions, to a dispersed visual discourse on the city, presented as an accumulation of hundreds of thousands of archival photographs. In order to grasp this multiplicity of images, one point of entry is through analysing documentary projects in other cities which will allow us to simultaneously situate the case of Bristol amid wider trends both of urban process and photographic practices. Highlighting these processes will also serve to suggest the history and constructed nature of images forming city archives. Thus, I suggest it may be useful to think through these images of the city in the light of the photo-documentary tradition of such American photographers as Jacob Riis in the late nineteenth century or Lewis Hine in the early twentieth century and further relationships to British documentary and commercial photography of the late Victorian and interwar periods. In so doing we must be clear that our gaze on the city will follow that of these male pioneers and we replicate a particular spectator position and politics. My hope is that throughout this section we shall see how this view created and constituted visions, blindnesses, opacities and optics of the city that may now be unwittingly recycled in pictorial portraits of history (cf. Stanley 1991).

The forms of urban photography I wish to focus upon here are those entangled in the merging of documentary projects and photography. For instance, photographs were integral parts of the arguments compiled by those arguing for public health, housing regulations and social reform to be applied to the British nineteenth century metropolis, from the earliest combination of the words 'social' and 'photograph' in the pseudonymously authored *Midnight Scenes and Social Photographs* of Glasgow in 1858 where the 'photographs' were actually detailed texts rather than pictures, or in Thomas Annan's pictures of Glasgow compiled at the bequest of the 'Glasgow City Improvement Trust' in 1868, or the work of medical officer Cameron in collecting photographs to urge slum clearance in Quarry Hill, Leeds (Kemp 1990:121-4; Tagg 1988:129-143). Photography was a way of conveying the horrors of Victorian slums into the safety of middle class homes, a crucible of voyeuristic horror and philanthropic mission combining to promote ameliorative works. For example, figures such as Jacob Riis produced books such as "*How the Other Half Lives: Studies among the tenements of New York*" (1890) which was accompanied by lantern slide lectures given around the city (Stange 1989a). In all these cases it is important to notice that what is created is a discourse that seeks to mobilise opinion about urban issues but in its definition of these problems it constitutes its audience or, rather, its spectators, as very much '*this half*' - seen through these representations as

poised ambivalently between loathing and fascination with the Other held and framed in this gaze.⁴ The activity of the photographer provided a means and a reason for the cognisance and the entry to these other worlds for both photographer and viewer (Pollock 1993). Perhaps we run the risk of overstating the case, since Annan's principal task would appear to have been to produce a local history of an area scheduled for demolition, but in the process something else is also portrayed:

"In short, Annan's photographs do not give the impression of a terribly overpopulated slum; instead we are given the feeling that the people are there to animate the scenery. Yet, one cannot say that these photos document architecture for its own sake. ... Instead, Annan allows us to experience the volume of this gigantic living-machine through a succession of many similar images of deep, dark alleyways. He leaves more of the life that is crammed into these abysses to the spectator's imagination than he shows of it."

Kemp (1990:125).

This dark and claustrophobic vision coincides with a rationale for urban clearance where light and ventilation were not only laden with sanitary connotations but moral and biblical implications. Riis produced flashlit pictures out of this foreboding darkness which were redolent with a sense of danger and eventfulness aimed at shocking their audience with 'sensational disclosures of hidden social facts' (Trachtenberg 1989:170). This revelatory discourse of bringing to light seems somewhat less convincing when it is considered that early technologies meant that photographs had to be carefully posed, and subjects often paid - and, in order to make the meaning of the image readily graspable by the audience, people like Riis often ended up producing photographic representations of scenes depicted in earlier engravings (Stange 1989b:2, 13).

In a significant shift to this framing of the city, during the early years of the twentieth century, the American philanthropic magazine '*Charities and Commons*' was renamed '*the Survey*' and the pictures it carried became less impressionistic or sensationalist and more bound up in a scientific, Progressive project of categorisation. This was a project aiming to produce evidence of *systemic* disorder, for example the work of Lewis Hine created, what he termed, a visual sociology combining aesthetic appreciation and empiricism (Stange 1989b; cf. Sekula 1983:133; Trachtenberg 1989; Tagg 1988 offers a different inflection). In other words what was produced was not a shift from staged to authentic images, but from

⁴ The positioning of the viewer in a technological ensemble is something I referred to chapter VI and is something that came into photographic theory in the early 80s when "theory .. moved to consider not only the structure of the appropriation to ideology of that which is 'uttered' in photographs but also to examine the ideological implications inscribed within the *performance* of the utterance. This enquiry directs attention to the object/subject constructed within the technical apparatus itself. The signifying system of photography, like that of classical painting, at once depicts a scene and the gaze of the spectator, an object and a viewing subject." Burgin (1982:146; cf. Crary 1990, 1988).

an impressionistic to a systematic organisation of what was to be pictured into what Tagg (1990:144) terms a carceral architecture of cells, indexes and tables.⁵

Such an analysis serves to stress that the photographs now circulating as pictures of 'how it was' can by no means be assumed to be innocent documents of some past reality. They are nearly always a hybrid born of communicative intent but claiming the status of objective records, and this account will spend some time embroiled in the play between these two strands - arguing for the impossibility of separating some denotative, objective record from 'culturally inscribed' connotations of images.

"In the real world no such separation is possible. Any meaningful encounter with a photograph must necessarily occur at the level of connotation. The power of this folklore of pure denotation is considerable. It elevates the photograph to the legal status of a document and testimonial. It generates a mythic aura of neutrality around the image. ... Every photographic image is [actually] a sign, above all, of someone's investment in the sending of a message. Every photographic image is characterised by a tendentious rhetoric. At the same time, the most generalised terms of the photographic discourse constitute a denial of the rhetorical function and a validation of the 'truth value' of the myriad propositions made within the system."

Sekula (1982:87).

Photographs can never give immediate access to the realities of the past. In turn, this means rejecting the 'obstinate bit of bourgeois folklore' (ibid:86) that the meaning of the image resides within itself. Instead, the arrangement of these images as an archive, their constitution as a single or collective discourse, and the way that the organisation of these collections serves to structure the portrayal of the urban world becomes the focus of interpretation. For instance, looking to the twenties we can see Progressive scientific projects produced large archives of photos of the living spaces and worlds of workers made up of hundreds of images with baldly 'telegrammatic captions' as befitting the way the camera was used to uncover 'social facts' (Stange 1989b:48-63). Yet at the same time, these photographs were increasingly involved as publicity, as icons of poverty in general, rather than as a graphic record of people in a place and time.

The photos of old Bristol are at one step removed from these issues since they have been repeatedly recontextualised, by being taken from their original communicative context to another (and then another), and they are often displayed with minimal, if any,

⁵ A beautifully balanced commentary on the approach I am using here can be found in Schor, as she puts it "My main discomfort with this body of theory, to which I have been and remain profoundly attracted and indebted, is that in its extraordinary totalising it is ultimately both deeply satisfying and dangerously stultifying" (1992:191; cf. Saiper 1991; Snow 1989).

provenance.⁶ The lack of contextualising material provides proof of the obstinacy of the bourgeois myth of meaning being already fixed in images, so that even such meticulous institutions as museums assume photographs can be catalogued by content rather than provenance (Porter 1989; Samuel 1992). Given this state of affairs, my attention to the ways documentary photographs were constructed is meant to emphasise the idea that photos are not innocent records of the city nor self-sufficient 'documents' but rely on supporting discourses in other pictures, in the knowledge brought to them by the viewer or in texts around them (Sekula 1982:91; Burgin 1983). It is the embedding of images in wider discourses that generates meaning so I wish to focus on the way that the recontextualisation of images of Old Bristol is about the shifting relations of the photographed, the photographer and the context of display (Blyton 1987). I argue we must take seriously the effects of photographs being placed in new collections and contexts over time - in what might be termed a picture's "after-life" (in the senses of both Tagg [1982] and Buck-Morss [1989:219]). Thus in figure 13 we see an image from a photo-essay "Orwell & Irony", where an advert restages an emblematic documentary vision of the past (inset above) in accordance with a new context, as documentary verité becomes documentary cliché that can be quoted in adverts; that, in a final recontextualisation, becomes political comment with the (ironic) addition of the line from George Orwell. Such processes, where the concrete realities of documentary become emblematic of a generalised sense of history, are aided by heritage and museum displays that downplay the specific histories of the picture's production, so long as somewhere down the line the idea of verisimilitude provides a final anchor that this must once have happened (Taylor 1983:23; cf. Marder 1992).

"Bristol as it was".

In light of these arguments it is necessary to specify the current mode of circulation of photos of Old Bristol. The most organised collection is that of Reece Winstone who collected and took photos of the city to form an archive that extends from 1840 to 1970 amounting to several thousand pictures. Even at this stage the archive refracts the multiple gazes of him as journalist, as author or as individual - indeed his archive became his life project - and of those who sold or gave him pictures reflecting the diverse knowledges embedded in family pictures, or company archives or photography clubs; but in total it is the most comprehensive collection of pictures of the city. Parts of this archive were published by Reece Winstone in a series of pictorial histories of the city and illustrated lectures while upon his death it was made publicly available through the city library, and

⁶Though, as Tagg (1990:149) suggests, the very 'unsigned' appearance of photos adds to their discursive claim to being factual documents.

Figure 13:

Documentary Verité, Documentary Cliché and the after-life of Pictures.



*Wigan 1938, Bert Hardy.
BBC Hulton Picture Library.
'It's now part of the iconography
of unemployment in the '30s.*

*This still street life constructs our
collective memory of defeat and despair.'
Beatrix Cambell (1984:40).*

HARD TIMES, SOFT LOOKS.

The gentle lines of this hand-made Donegal tweed echo the romantic look of the Thirties. The suit £225, calf shoes £45, cashmere scarf £26, linen collarless shirt £37, pure wool tweed cap £28.

Whoever controls the present, controls the past. Whoever controls the past, controls the future.

"Whoever controls the present, controls the past. Whoever controls the past, controls the future". George Orwell. 1984. Caption added to advert by Chalmers 1984.

now provides the most often used source in local history books. The Reece Winstone series of books itself runs to some 34 volumes on Bristol, with 5000+ different pictures and total sales of over 150 000 by 1979, the highest in the country for a private publisher.⁷ Alongside this collection another common source of pictures are commercial photographs produced largely to be made into postcards, and now prominent in local history books such as *Clifton in Old Postcards*, *Bedminster in Old Postcards* and so on, which draw, at least, on both an original geography of what was considered a site/sight worth commercial memorialisation (figure 14; Schor 1992) and a subsequent geography where these books appeal to and divide the city into putative communities that the publishers feel will identify with an area and be interested in its past appearance (cf. Laurier 1993). Of course, in some cases this level of reconfiguration must be further complicated by more intermediate reuse. For example, there were books of mediaeval versus Victorian engravings being produced for some towns by the 1850s, while Leeds had a book of '*Old Leeds in Pictures*' by the turn of the century,⁸ and even within Bristol some of the collections now used to build up pictorial histories were originally devised to work as bases for commemorative postcards or commercial tableau (Stafford 1989; Tagg 1988; cf. Moorcroft & Campbell-Sharp 1988 figure 14). Meanwhile these pictures have in many ways become almost Derridean postcards set out in transit, but open to re-direction to new addressees, bearing the marks of discourses that have handled them and kept them in motion (Dienst 1994:130). Finally, it is worth noting how local people, often inspired by and emulative of Reece Winstone, take photos of their local environs and collect old photos to fill in what they perceive as gaps in other sources of photographs.

The Visual Discourse of a Monumental Heritage.

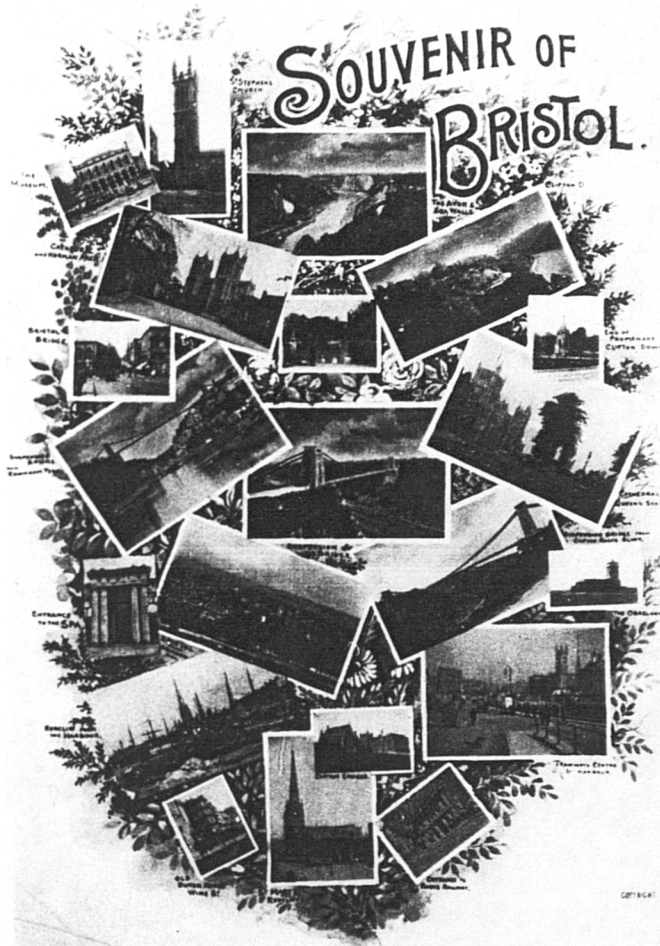
In this section, I want to provide an angle into the processes through which the urban landscape is envisioned as a monumental heritage; an angle that is not meant to be a complete analysis of ways of seeing Heritage but is meant deliberately to underscore some aspects of old pictures of cities. Having begun to mention the original geography of historic commercial pictures and postcards, in the previous section, it seems apparent that there is also a geography of contemporary postcards of historic sites/sights. The postcard and the brochure serve as especially influential arbitrators of what is appropriate sight and knowledge (Albers & James 1988:136; Urry 1990) and form part of a more formalised, visual discourse of heritage memorialisation. Such an urban vision can be interrogated in

⁷ The publication process also reveals the shifts in historic interest. He began self publishing because no commercial printer would back a project to photographically document the history of a city in the 50s and 60s.

⁸ This is perhaps the sense of the transitory in some pictures; motivated by a project to record a disappearing city there was a flurry of activity in places like Leeds and Paris producing official archives and postcards (Nesbit 1992; Schor 1992).

Figure 14:

A Souvenir of Bristol: a Tableau in Postcards.



This Picture is taken from the Fred Little Collection (Moorcroft & Campbell-Sharp 1988) and was produced in probably the late twenties (looking at the inclusion of the Wills Tower). The Postcards trace out a monumental geography. There are still connections with those buildings illuminated at night in Bristol (three views of the suspension bridge and two of St. Mary Redcliffe's). You may note for reference the obscured view of the latter from the harbour (bottom left) and the picture of the Dutch House. It may be of interest to compare the gathering of these sights together with the account by Frewen later as he drives down the Portway (along the base of the Gorge shown top centre).

terms of directed sight and sites of display, or sight directed towards sites until site/sight become inseparable. Indeed, the proliferation of photographs and markers declaring a site's significance can often be said to constitute its significance rather than the thing-in-itself (Urry 1990). So, rather than the interpretive layering of the palimpsest, this is a spatialisation of temporality; a geography of selected, marked and sacralised sights.

It is worth distinguishing such *heritage* landscapes from those that might be termed *historic* by counterposing history as temporal thickening in palimpsests against that the spatialised time in Heritage. The basis of Heritage is also a revalorisation of landscapes, often of the formerly everyday, by taking what was merely outmoded or obsolete and turning it into something that is valued as historic. The revalorisation comes about under the sign of *historic* values and also under the sign of *new* values being inscribed upon the landscape, where the connotations to local residents - whom it reminds at every turn of their histories, communities, and identities - may be deemed unhistoric and replaced by a new landscape responding to a different history. Bennett's (1988:6) complaint about the renovation of the historic heart of Sydney is pertinent here:

"[I]ts transformation into a site of historical tourism, now furnishes the locale for a sanitised and mythical past which, in its commitment to eradicating all the marks and signs of the area's settlement that cannot be harmonized with the area's glittering facade which (in its officially instituted form) the past is obliged to wear, functions as a mode of institutionalised forgetting. In brief, the Rocks supplies the site for an encounter with an idealised and fabricated past which has been substituted for, and made possible by, the erasure of those marks which bear a testimony to the real and contradictory complexity of the area's history'.

A manufactured 'shining new past' (ibid.) like this can, then, actually serve to obliterate the traces of history accumulated and celebrated in the idea of a palimpsest. In this sense, if the landscape forms the memory of an area, then, preserved heritage is too often a form of 'institutionalised forgetfulness' that while apparently increasing the loading of historic meaning into an area actually erases a vast amount of its history. It is an erasure which works to transform an area of manufacturing into one of services; an industrial landscape into a 'post-industrial' landscape; a landscape of work into one of leisure. The marking of sight/sites as a sign of history is a process whereby what was formerly the everyday and quotidian is staged and marked out as distinct and extra-ordinary. While this vision may display parts of the everyday past, they are positioned as separate, as excerpted, from the everyday life of the present and thus rendered strange, or exotic (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1991; Samuel 1992). They are also typically rendered photographic and reciprocally marked out as historic by the photographic activity in a new geography of historic sights.

To take an example from Don DeLillo's novel '*White Noise*':

"Murray asked me about a tourist attraction known as the most photographed barn in America ... We counted five signs before we reached the site. There were forty cars and a tour bus in the makeshift lot. We walked along a cowpath to the slightly elevated spot set aside for viewing and photographing. All the people had cameras; some had tripods, telephoto lenses, filter kits. A man in a booth sold postcards and slides - pictures of the barn taken from the elevated spot. We stood near a grove of trees and watched the photographers. Murray maintained a prolonged silence, occasionally scrawling some notes in a little book.

'No one sees the barn,' he said finally.. 'Once you've seen the signs about the barn, it becomes impossible to see the barn ... We're not here to capture an image, we're here to maintain one. Every photograph reinforces the aura ... They are taking pictures of taking pictures ... We can't get outside the aura. We're part of the aura.' "

Dom DeLillo *White Noise*
(Cited in Frow 1991:126, & Nye 1991)

We may perhaps note how the practice of picturing the barn becomes more important than the qualities of the object itself. Moreover, any idea of a naïve relation to history or the meaning of the landscape appears to be lost in a sort of vicious hermeneutic circle where pictures structure the anticipation of a sight that is consummated in the act of taking a snapshot (Albers & James 1988:136; Sontag 1977:164; Urry 1990). In this archetypal relation, Benjamin (1985:49) argues the personal past becomes an inventory of dead possessions and souvenirs with 'deceased experience' as the personal form of self-alienation.⁹

However, I do not want this section to sound like an elegy to a lost authenticity, since the structure of tourism seems to be bound up with a perennially 'vanishing horizon of authenticity' (Frow 1991:128), where it is always one generation ago that authenticity was possible. Such a vanishing horizon seems implicated in many accounts that posit the plenitude of an authentic way of knowing the past, with all the connotations of an authentic knower, versus an impoverished 'tourist' (cf. Frow 1991; Redfoot 1984; Culler 1981). In the quotation above it is worth noting how the characters mourning a lost unmediated contact with the object are contemplative academics and their (and my) recitation of this trope may obscure actual practices.

Let me, therefore, at this point turn to the account of a tourist entering Bristol along the Avon Gorge by car and look at how the experience was recounted.

⁹ I shall come on to how the process of photography involves the 'posthumous character of lived experience' (Cadava 1992:89), how it creates spectres of other times and places in its very process, later in this chapter and the next.

"I could not help reflecting what a beautiful picture it would make if only the cement warehouses, the iron cranes, and the brick factory chimney could be replaced by old-world sailing craft as a foreground to the amphitheatre of the town dominated by its mediaeval castle and belfry, punctuated by the campanile-like Cabot tower, and with its cathedral rising squat and massive close above the shipping."

Now this is truly a visual conception of the historic city, as a picture with a foreground; and a city entered from a major highway with the city rising above the spectator rather than being captured by the downward gaze of a panorama. We have a dynamic unfolding of a modern mobile gaze which also, in thinking of where this view might be seen from, serves to conflate, or fix, several successive views¹⁰. But it is also a commentary that speaks to the sacralised Heritage, rather than the history, of a city - in its disdain for the signs of industry as disrupting a pictorial idea of the city's history. But this is almost I hope a give-away, for industrial sights are now so heavily aestheticised that they do form part of the Heritage landscape both in their current state and as historic photos. Figure 15 shows some currently museumified cranes in the Docks (top right) while showing both how they are aestheticised in old photographs of Bristol (bottom) and how they did obstruct the vision of St.Mary Redcliffe Church in the background (centre left) - a view now cleared to allow the tower of the church, here scarcely visible, to be fully prominent. Figure 16 displays two pictures of steamships using the 'brick warehouses' while above and below are the 'old world sailing ships'; the ploy in this arrangement of pictures is that the sailing ship above is contemporary while the steamship and the bottom print are historic.

The dating of the previous figures should alert the reader to the fact that this is not the account of a contemporary visitor. Continuing the quotation reveals a history to the idea of some recent loss in authenticity due to the visualisation (all of the buildings mentioned below being currently floodlit at night) and heritagisation of the city:-

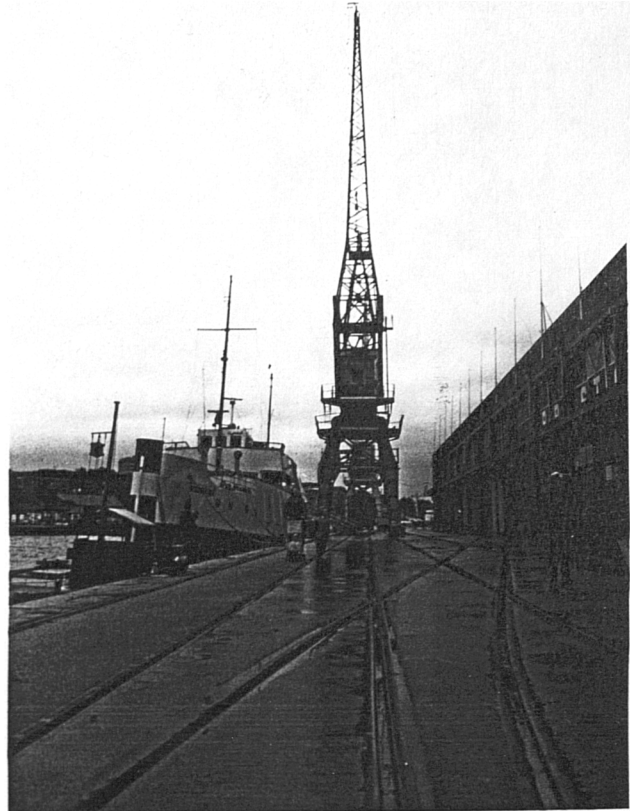
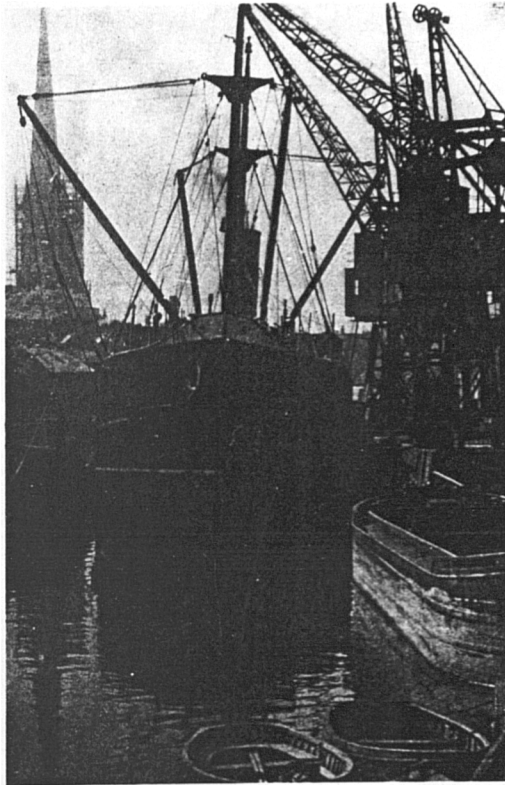
"When I got to the town I discovered that the mediaeval castle and belfry date back two years only [Will's tower], the Cabot Tower to 1897 and half of the Cathedral to 1868.. If there is no need to tear down the relics of past ages, neither should there be any necessity slavishly to follow them. Brunel's suspension bridge and the Portway are at least the products of their own particular age and not copies, however fine, of another one."

Cmdr. Oswald Frewen RN
Autocar 2 November 1928.

10. A similar discarding of the panoramic view has been noted in the work of urban photographers, for instance those influenced by Eugene Atget's work from around the turn of the century (Szarkowski & Hambourg 1985:14; Benjamin 1978b) or by the popularisation of sequences of pictures strung out upon journeys through the city (Trachtenberg 1989, 1984) and indeed a way of mapping modernity as a discourse of opening up urban vistas and spectacles (Tagg 1990).

Figure 15:

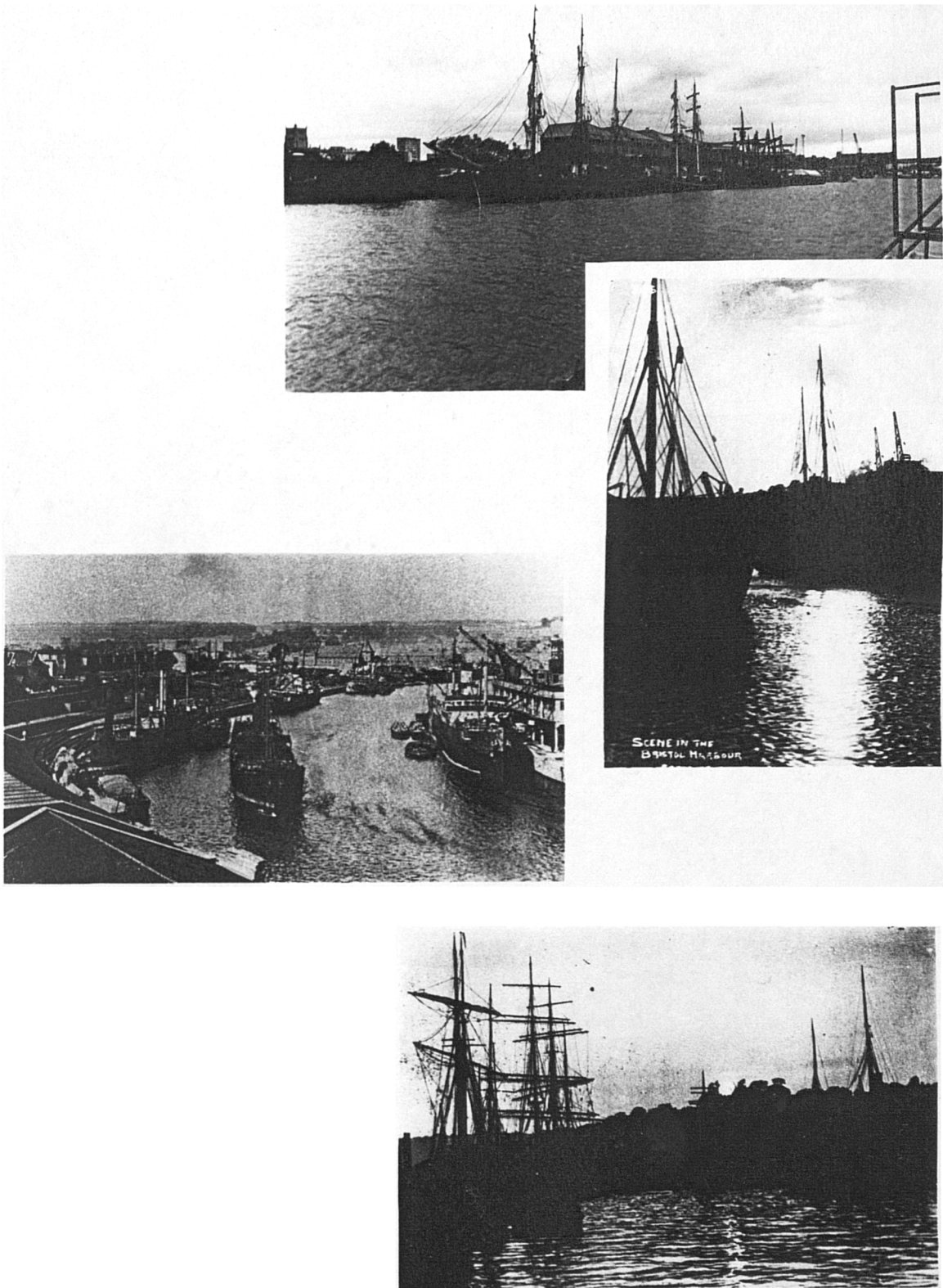
Industrial Aesthetics: Picturesque Activity.



The pictures here from Winstone (1986) plates 69 & 81 and the from the author's collection.

Figure 16:

Industrial Aesthetics: Time and Recurrence



The Pictures here are from *Bristol in Old Photographs from the Fred Little Collection* (Moorcroft & Campbell-Sharp 1988) pages 23 & 26 and the author's collection.

So from this brief compilation of texts, pictures and times we can then begin to pick out several factors that complicate the visioning of the city. Firstly, there is the way that the industrial has become aestheticised instead of forming a barrier to historic landscapes. Secondly, the fact that the creation of historic visions is by no means new¹¹ (Clive 1985, Lowenthal 1985). We are then dealing with a recurrent pattern of revisioning the city not a new phenomena. Thirdly, we can note how the site of historic memory becomes a sight of history now the docks are museumified. Thus, finally, in Bristol the revisioning of the city draws much on the way the city can be experienced as a succession of visual sights (Trachtenberg 1989:186; Sontag 1977:9) that crystallise a geography of the city structured around tours and heritage walks that string together the 'historic' places of the city through their spatial arrangement rather than thematic connections.

Bristol in Old Photos:

Discursive Contexts for Displaying Old Bristol.

There is nothing inherently significant in digging out an arcane quotation from some traveller from the twenties but there is something significant when that quotation forms part of the preface to Reece Winstone's *Bristol as it was in the '20s'* which redisplay about 150 pictures of the city. But even the accumulation of his and other pictorial histories does not (re)produce the historic city 'as it was'. At a simple level this is because the aggregate of books on Bristol's history have a geography in which some areas of the town are intensely recorded, notably the docks and city centre shops and some communities, while other areas - the suburbs, several small communities and 'slum' districts - are notably absent.¹² These latter areas remain largely invisible due to the sources and purposes of the original pictures so that despite successive recontextualisations there are limits in terms of who is shown doing what and where.

Alongside this geography of what is shown, there is also a patterning to the organisation of time in many pictorial histories (eg Winstone 1987). The structure is one of then compared to now, where the 'then' becomes a non-specific past period, with books presenting fifty to a hundred comparative shots of 'then' (not all of the same date). It is on the combination and organisation of these pictures that much of the analysis must focus. The reader is confronted with a logic of multiple images (Walker & Moulton 1989) where the bombardment of pair after pair of photographs (120 in the above example) compresses the one side into a now and the other side into a more general then. The old photographs vary

¹¹ During the 1860s two towers were added to the western end of the Cathedral, and in the 1870s the towering spire was put on St. Mary Redcliffe church in the background of figure 15.

¹² As suggested by one group member in the last chapter.

in period but they come to stand for a generalised past, since there is little explication of why one period has been chosen not another or two others. In these pairs, the old pictures do not form instants of historical process and change, like still shots in movie sequence or the temporal cross-sections on the cover of Hoskin's (1955) book. Instead they are snatched moments of time, a 'then' which is counterpointed as radically different to now, not positioned as a predecessor in the same narrative of change (Samuel 1992). For example, the pictures of the twenties appear drained of the modernity and dynamism found in contemporaneous accounts of the city (such as Benjamin 1973a, b, 1978a). They become symbols of the past, they are frozen and petrified images made to form a sense of the past so that instead of depicting a certain place and time they become emblematic of 'the past' and serve as typifications as well as concrete examples. They combine the metaphorical sense of pastness with a metonymic sense of themselves as being historic, as concurrent with what they recorded, and thus perform the double action of being evidence and evocation at one and the same time.

Using contrasts of images of the present with those of the past is not a new strategy and has been used to illustrate and carry arguments on many occasions, perhaps most famously in the nineteenth century in Pugin's *Contrasts* or Carlyle's *Past and Present* (Clive 1985). Pugin paired drawings of the sixteenth and nineteenth century to illustrate not just specific changes but also wider connections so the communicative force is carried not by either image but by the 'third term' created out of their juxtaposition (Taylor 1983:29):

"Part of the contrast Pugin wishes to show is aesthetic: the solidity and quality of mediaeval building, with its rich ornamentation, highlights the shoddy meanness of the early nineteenth century. The aesthetic contrast is merely a symptom of a moral and spiritual one."

Stafford (1989:33)

The reason for drawing on Pugin's use of contrasts is that many of the 'past and present' books have a similar theme that can also be read out of their images. The contrast between 'now and then' tends to be marked not as change or process but one where the present is the absence of what is there in the past; where the present shows the replacement of past landscapes with more empty and bleak ones. So what we have left is a rather attenuated version of the palimpsest where the present landscape is given a single past association which is the loss of a plenitude of visual meaning - where the captioning of the 'then' picture describes a richly detailed scene while the 'now' emphasises what is not there.

The dyadic structure of now and then is also appealed to when books present a local area in great detail calling on equally detailed knowledge of an area as it now is, so that meaning can be found in the old photo by going over it and noting changes by using present

everyday experience to identify or highlight elements of the image. This structure invests meaning, significance and interest in photographs that otherwise would remain mysterious, impenetrable or rather boring - it is this extra-photographic discourse that gives meaning to the picture (cf. Sekula 1983:85). The knowledge required from the observer is similar to that embodied in the palimpsest - to see the histories in the everyday world, to look for the traces of the biography of places and perhaps explains their significance for oral historians. But this history is not embodied in the landscape, instead it haunts it in the celluloid images of the old city. Appealing to the contrast with the palimpsest shows these books to portray not landscapes of accretion but of diminution. The pictures stand as a mute indictment of the present in the name of the historical record.

Certainly there can be little doubt that one of the aims of Reece Winstone, an aim infusing his books, is an attempt to preserve, on film, parts of a landscape and scenery that were being eradicated in real life; to transpose the traces of history from the urban scene to the filmed record. To read the statement in his first book, '*Bristol as it was 1939-14*', written in 1958, that the images were chosen for display because 'not one can be rephotographed today' sets the tone for the whole project parallel to that of "salvage anthropology", which was itself a significant inheritance drawn on by documentarists of the 30s (Edwards 1984; cf. Rabinowitz 1993). We can see this again where in figure 17 we have the picture of the old Robinsons building (right) from one of his books while left is the advert inside for the proposed replacement (Winstone 1962). Reece Winstone emphasised this theme in an interview in which he said he had dedicated his life to recording the city leading the then assistant editor of *the Architect* to write:

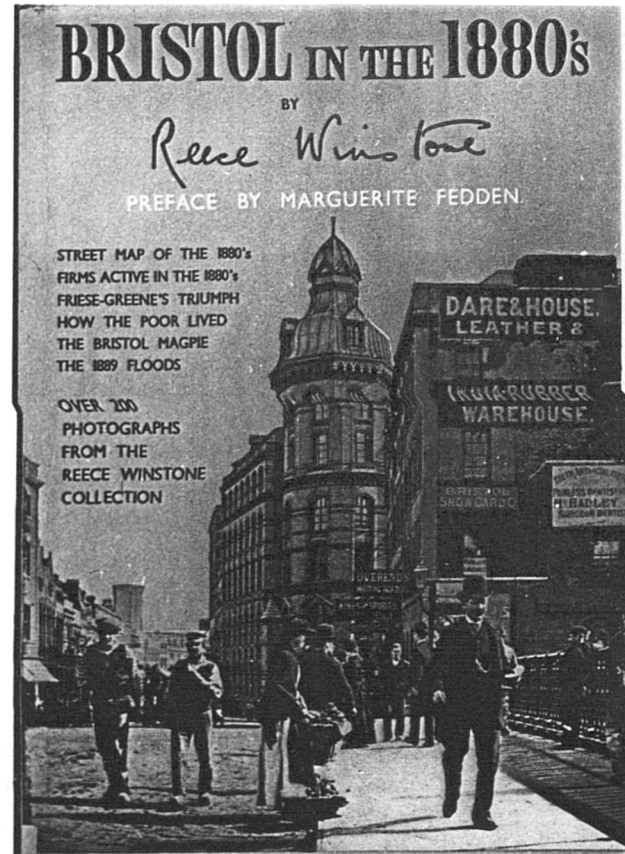
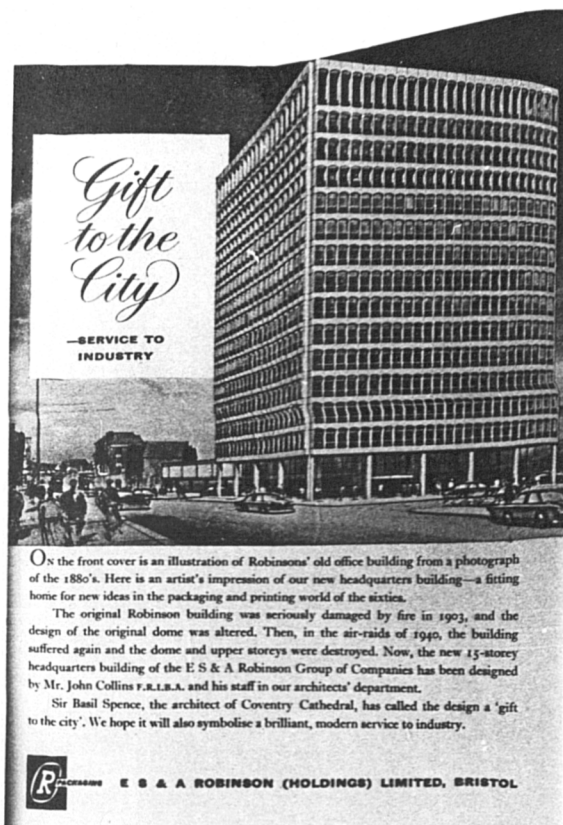
'Listening to his account of this it seemed an enormous shame that such tireless effort should be needed to keep such a worthwhile endeavour going. But it was nothing like the shame, the burning anger felt at the photographic evidence of such vandalism in removing building after building of beauty that looking through his collection reveals. All right Hitler was responsible for some; we ourselves however, in the awful name of progress, have been responsible for far more.'

Kate Wharton, reprinted in Reece Winstone *Bristol as it was 1921 - 1913*

Already the resonances are apparent about the present showing the absence of the past ('by removing building after building'), and an appeal to the documentary veracity of photographs as some neutral record, a 'guaranteed witness', what one documentarist called 'a luminous, incontrovertible transcript of life' (Stange 1989b:65). Most theorists suggest that it is the way the photographs are used that creates the idea of such a loss in a '*double movement*' where the photographs flesh out the conceptions but it is the acceptance of the

Figure 17:

Now and Then:



The pictures are from Winstone (1962) one being the cover depicting the Robinsons building of the 1880s, the other being the advert carried inside of the proposed new building - Robinson's Gift to the City. The choice of cover can hardly have been accidental.

ideological conception that permits the photographs to be read as evidence for the very process they are meant to prove (Tagg 1982:117-8, Sekula 1983:122). Certainly Reece Winstone relies on this duality:

"To the older generation of pre-1914 it will bring nostalgic memories of a relatively happy time of stability. To the present generation it will portray Bristol as a unique city of diverse architecture and environment, instead of the deadly monotony of today, when each street is similar to the next one. This is an age of illustration and how much better it is as a medium to convey a particular idea or subject than a multitude of words. Few minds can grasp the significance of a long written description but a photograph or diagram conveys the correct image almost immediately."

Reece Winstone (1976:3)

Again one can draw out of this excerpt the reference to a stable past period and a modern contemporary era of change, and the way this modern era is defined in terms of what it lacks (eg Winstone 1979:5). But we can also see how photographs are treated as an unproblematic medium appealed to again and again as evidence, that is presented as a transparent records, while actually displaying people as objects of someone else's knowledge (Tagg 1989:11, 117-8; Taylor 1984:18). The question is; what is being communicated about whom and to whom?

Genres of Pictures.

Just as the other photo-documentary traditions discussed earlier are only intelligible in wider communicative constellations so too are these pictures of Bristol. So we need to see how the collection organises the history of the city, how it structures its images, and who or what is being put on display. Yet we are immediately confronted by a lack of organisation, a seeming purposelessness, and, beyond the trends noted above of 'salvaging' a vanishing past, the lack of a coherent documentary project whose practices can be examined and unpacked since the pictures are taken from different periods by different photographers and with different original purposes. We have the history of the city presented as a vast accumulation of instances and snippets, history as a rubble, as a 'piled up *actualité*' - recorded in meticulous detail but with apparently, minimal discrimination (Nesbit 1992:104; Seabrook 1991:40; Stange 1989b; Benjamin 1973c, 1985). However, by paying attention to the current context of display we can see that these images are invested with a retrospective significance; like hundreds of glimpses they form a chessboard of the city, a poignant pause about to be broken and shattered.

The key to understanding the logic of these collections is in the narrative of destruction related earlier. The sense of loss and multiplicity of images frames the argument to show

that anything may be destroyed and thus almost everything is in need of preservation. This tendency in the re-presentation of old photographs may thus link to the practice of making current snapshots, both fostering 'the attitude of viewing the present as if it were already past, a visible record of itself' (Trachtenberg 1989:248) as all photographs are 'memento mori' (Sontag 1977:15; cf. Seabrook 1991:36-7; Walker & Moulton 1989:157).¹³ As such the logic of the collection appears as an antiquarian drive, that connects the practices of producing and consuming pictures. So Wharton could describe Winstone as:

"The kind of meticulous historian every proud city in the country should have. Perhaps we do have them, but unfortunately rarely do they come to light so the minutiae of our lives goes unrecorded. Or if it is recorded it is never collected together again to present a coherent picture of the lives and architecture of a certain age. No, it lies hidden in drawers and desks, in family albums to turn yellow and finally disintegrate and disappear."

Kate Wharton *The Architect* May 1970,
reprinted in Reece Winstone *Bristol as it was 1921 - 1913*

Firstly, we can connect the idea of how a history being erased in actuality is preserved in these archives, to provide a celluloid palimpsest. Secondly, we can note how heritage may involve the restaging of the outmoded as the historical, but so too these pictures restage the one-time everyday as now being special and exotic. Thirdly, this antiquarian impulse involves the recording of the subtle shifts and changes of urban history, indeed it involves the lovingly detailed description of (minor) events and places in contrast to the limited sites chosen for a staged history. If we begin to put together the attention to detail, the focus on the everyday, the sense of time as a process that leaves marks and scars on the urban fabric and the sense of how this history is neglected it leads us to look on these photos not so much as records than as pictures that follow the genre of the 'picturesque'.

The picturesque was an established genre of photography from its earliest years and focused on portraying detail and aestheticising decay among the products of civilisation (Kemp 1990:117; Nesbit 1992; Sontag 1977:69). Perhaps this is the only genre able to visually mediate between the sentiments found in this passage by Reece Winstone:

"the lot of the poor was hard in the extreme. Ragged boys and girls without boots or shoes could be seen everywhere. Wages were low, and sweated labour was rife. Drunkenness was widespread, and in

¹³ Perhaps in this sense of mortality there are further links to the sense of time's passage in oral history. Certainly it would seem that the photograph can be seen as a ruin in the landscape, deepening a sense of time and historicity. In a similar vein, Cadava describes it as 'a small funerary monument, the grave for the living dead. It tells their history - a history of ghosts and shadows - and it does so because it is this history.' (1992:90). What survives in the photos is what has withdrawn, desists and departs. It is this sense of poignant loss, of faces long gone staring out from old pictures, that is so important here.

many unsavoury thoroughfares policemen walked in pairs... However, much was done by the inhabitants of Clifton, Leigh Woods and Stoke Bishop [wealthy areas], and this assistance was given with real interest and sympathy. The Welfare state, which has taken the place of such work is, by comparison, often soulless and without heart."

Reece Winstone (1962:32) *Bristol as it was in the 1880s*

The picturesque genre needs the aestheticisation of poverty just as much as Heritage does (cf. Clive 1985:59; Nesbit 1992:71). It is an affective response only possible after the removal of all associations of utility and morality, reliant on the flâneur's perspective of disinterested pleasure, a detachment that finds added scope when the subject of the image is removed in time from the spectator (Kemp 1990:107).¹⁴

The aesthetic appeal of the photos is something that cannot be denied, so that in the collection of the earliest photos of the city that was published as the fifteenth volume in Reece Winstone's series of books, we can find Hugh Casson noting;

"The Bristol shown in the illustrations ... has virtually ceased to exist. This is not to say that the visitor or the citizen with eyes to see and the curiosity to investigate will not be able to recognize a few remnants here and there - be they no more than the alignment of a pavement or the casing of a doorway. But most of it has gone forever - its gables and cobblestones, its pantiles and plaster, and also to be honest - its cesspits and mildew, its squalor and murk. Nevertheless seen through the romantic and skilful eye of these contemporary photographers, what a magical and mysterious place it looks ... [The pictures] are all as picturesque and beautifully composed as a film set. Is it just the absence from these pictures of human life - and to the technical limitations of the time - that gives these streets and alleys the air of time stopped still, of waiting for something to happen?"

Sir Hugh Casson,

(in Reece Winstone (1970:3) *Bristol's earliest photographs*)

So we have the sense that there are a few recoverable traces of the historic landscape left and again a sense of poignancy, of waiting for something to happen. Of course, what the reader knows will happen is the destruction of these sites. I would extend much of what is said above about the absence of people from photographs of the nineteenth century to many of the later photographs of old Bristol, see for instance in figure 18 the similarities of

¹⁴ The pattern in this archive can be run against the patterns in mass photography where 'there is an iconography of material progress contained in the pictures themselves .. in this way the myth of poor-but-happy past co-exists with an imagery of continuous improvement and constant advance. The double movement, captured in the undeniable authority, the unimpeachable evidence of the photographs is actually deceptive and deceiving, for it blots out both the violence and sadness of the past, and the cruelties and penalties that have accompanied our version of progress, it sacrifices veracity to ideology.' Seabrook (1991:38). I suggest the sense of the violence of progress yet also its facticity is indeed embedded in these archives and in the practices of oral history in the last chapter.

(bottom left) the mid nineteenth century, the turn of the century (bottom right) and interwar period (top) pictures. There is a general lack of people and where they do figure they are part of the scene not the focus of the photograph.¹⁵ They form a ghostly presence left to the spectator's imagination. In this, even apparently 'factual' pictures share more with art than documentary traditions; what we have in these old photographs are views of the *city*, not multiple images of *urban society*. The portrayal of the dirt of the past is rendered aesthetically acceptable and the ordinary is rendered appealing due to its temporal, and/or social distance.¹⁶ Like palimpsests, though, such distancing accentuates a sense of the passage of time, acting like a ruin to deepen the sense of history (Sontag [1977]), while similarly relying on a privileged interpreter, in this case the photographer, to see the beauty in the mundane.

Relations to the Past in Pictures.

Such picturesque images of the city represent one way photographers coped with the experience of the city, providing a flag under which they could explore the city seeking the beautiful amid the ordinary (Trachtenberg 1989:183; Sontag 1977:89; Benjamin 1973b:229). In fact it was one way they could cope with the heaving modernity drained so totally from the photographs as recirculated (Benjamin 1978:298; Buck-Morss 1989:268, 1986:132).¹⁷ However, in the recirculation of these pictures it is vital to look at the knowledges brought to these pictures and the way they provoke socially and historically situated spectators. Many accounts set up the viewer as the contemplative observer of single images whereas these photographs are rarely simply objects of contemplation but are involved in a process of reconstructing the past as an understandable object and mapping out relations to it.

Studies of Euro-American viewing groups consistently show how photographs are used to prompt narratives about events depicted and about events that are then suggested by these stories and thus form the basis for chains of personal association (Reme 1993, Walker &

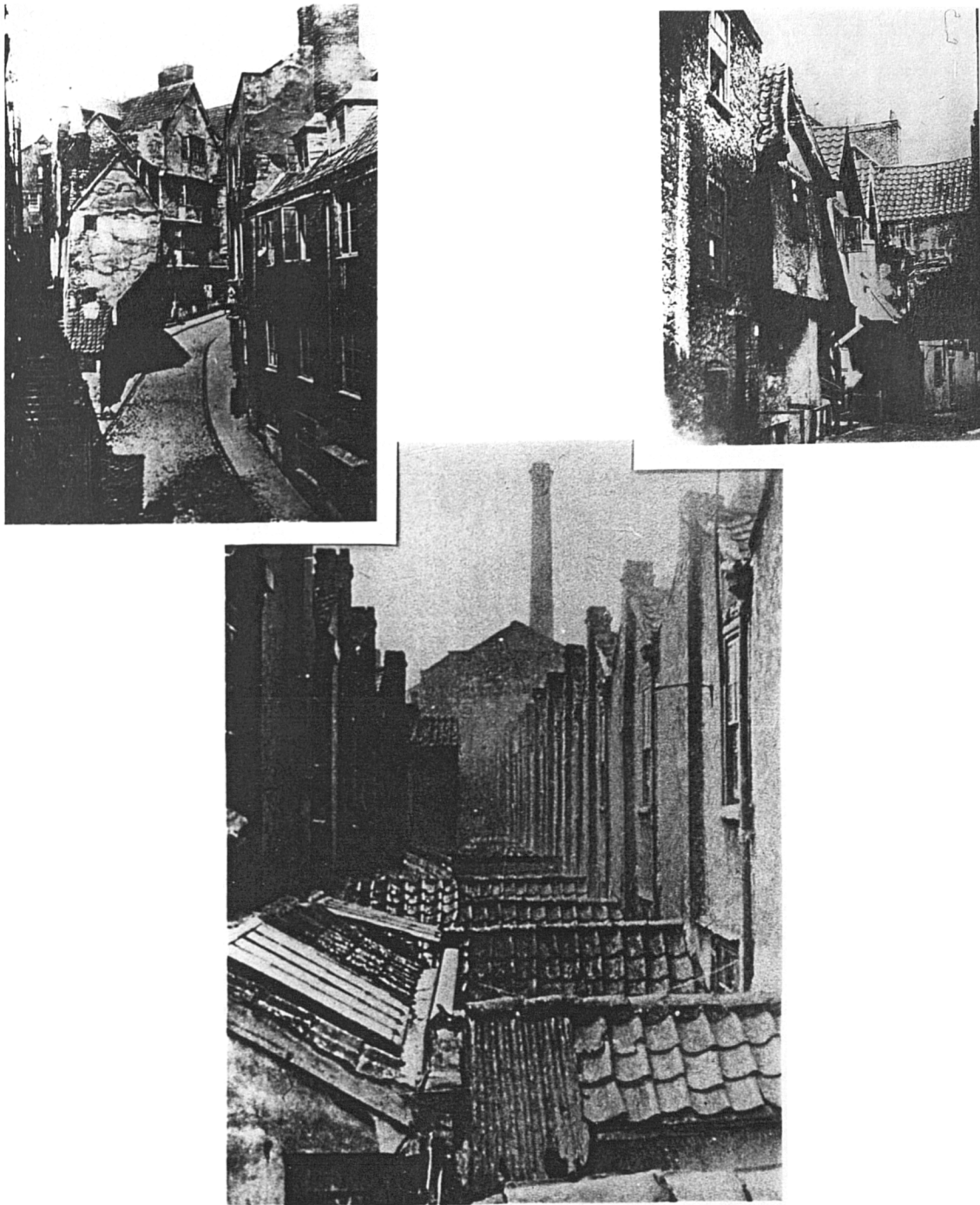
15. The creation of empty landscapes through photography allows the photographer to inscribe meanings and overwrite, indeed render invisible those of local people (cf. Cohen, Nir and Almagor 1992:227; Bowman 1993). Again highlighting the tensions between the local self-presentation and being represented, of which Reece Winstone undoubtedly felt a part. However, his civic vision as a 'citizen of Bristol' serves to occlude the vast differences between the camera club enthusiasts and the communities in the oral histories in the last chapters.

16. The distancing of dirt allows the reconciliation of the dirt of the 'old' city with current desires to see it as better than the present, so that: 'Today many people think that living in cities pollutes our lungs, crowds us so closely together that we have no space to ourselves and cripples our lives. Of course the cities of the past were incredibly more polluted than those of today, and the inhabitants were crowded into what to us seem unlivably narrow confines. As far as the urban experience is concerned, objective facts count for little when compared to our images of them; and these are largely derived from our images of them.' (Bettelheim 1991:177).

17 The conjunction of the fleeting nature of modernity, as witnessed by the changes from the photograph, the timelessness they now represent, and the repression of change within them all seem to point up the very sense of a dialectical image theory of history Benjamin was promoting (cf. Marder 1992).

Figure 18:

Decay and the Picturesque.



The pictures come from Fred Little (Moorcroft & Campbell-Sharp 1988 page 91; also in Jones 1991 plate 44) of Steep Street (now demolished) and Vear (1981) of Hotwells between the wars (an area one of the local history groups came from), and Winstone (1962) plate 20 from near the Pithay (since redeveloped twice over as factory and now leisure and offices).

Moulton 1989, Musello 1980, Lesy 1980, Becker Ohrn 1975). At a slide show from the Reece Winstone collection with a Bristol history group I was working with, each photo sparked off wave after wave of comments and discussion, and multiple conversations all at once, each adding or talking about some detail or about a memory or event associated with each aspect of the slide, then quite often about what has happened to the area shown or another 'famous' picture of the area. Each picture was carefully located and memories and comments flooded out. It was as if people were filling the slide with their recollections. Indeed if the next slide was very similar then it was as if the group was talked out or that the image had already been filled. The slides functioned perhaps less as containers of history than as containers waiting to be filled, landscapes to be written and over-written.

So these pictures functioned as physical locales which provoked memories and associations, and as they showed different areas it was as if they formed a dismembered city. They did not form Proust's quest to recover lost time, but rather a quest for lost spaces that comprise the 'dispersed memory' (Poulet 1977) of urban life, a memory that is not drawn along some linear temporal dimension but is deeply embroiled in spaces as repositories of memory. The past crops up all around, in instants and connections, where it is least expected (Ungar 1992:62), connecting times and places. The historicity of the area may be spatially discontinuous, bound up in places which render past life intelligible to the observer who remembers these areas as organic parts of their existence inseparable from their memories and sense of time. The spatiality of these memories is important, in stressing the way urban memory is not tied to monumental landscapes, nor to the depth of the palimpsest. Through these photos can be constructed an archipelago of past times (Poulet 1977:53), spaces that are intrinsically temporal yet convoluted and discontinuous (Benjamin 1973b:206). Time does not form a flow that unifies the subject, rather the subject (especially in connection with oral history) is dispersed among these time-space locales.

So this is a dispersal of multiple *loci memoriae* that differs from the layering of a palimpsest (Yates 1969). But there are similarities, as in the overall pattern of group recollections, where the connections and linkages between these spaces are united in a collectivity 'to form a single mass within which different layers can be discerned like the veining which points to difference of age and origin in rocks' (Lloyd 1993:143). This dispersal of memory still differs from palimpsests since the past is a separated realm, so the same *location* at different times is not the same *place*, the past does not intrude into the present through the texture of contemporary landscapes. History does not form a presence on the scene but an absence and a loss, or rather a ghostly presence that haunts the city - not life as it was but life as it has been forgotten (Benjamin 1973c; Cadava 1992). The traces found in the

overwritings of the palimpsest have been obliterated and the spectral spaces of film are the only vestiges left; spaces that are no longer extant but reside in memory and abut with the contemporary scene; pasts that are synchronous with the present (Buck-Morss 1986:108). A plaintive, haunting geography of memories that echoes very differently from the sanitised and sacralised scenes of heritage imagineers. So the photographs become more than a collection of dead snapshots and bring people closer to an experience of the past (contra Proust 1983 III: 897-8; Sontag 1977:164).

Conclusions

The juxtaposition of these differing practices and pictures suggests the highly complex way the city has been envisioned. It suggests also that, firstly, photographs derive meaning from the discourse around them and are not neutral documents. They are riddled with the power and practices that (re)circulate them. There is a tension writ large between, on the one hand, seeing such pictures in terms of concrete verisimilitude or, on the other, as emblematic of a generalised pastness. Both photographs and Heritage visions use this fantasy of a selective past being conjoined with concrete reality as both emblem and example. Meanwhile the 'enshrinement' of monumental heritages both organises and is sustained by the photographic practice of tourists displacing the separation of producing and consuming visions.

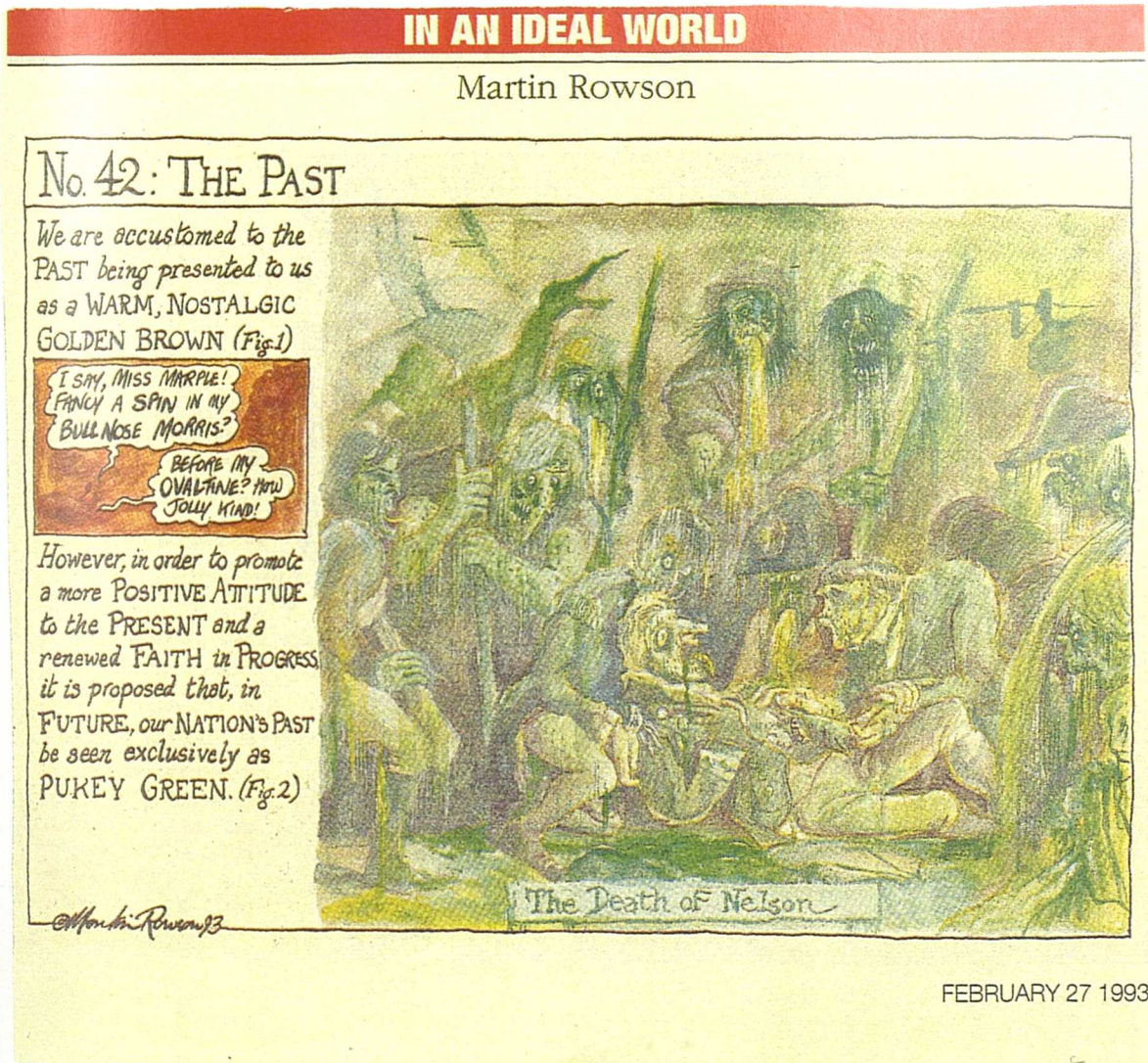
The photographic practice of both tourists and those seeking to memorialise the city 'now', by doing 'salvage photography', seems to share a unifying drive. This antiquarian drive to record anything and everything echoes what Sontag calls 'the aggressive accumulation of experience' in photographic form (1977:7; cf. Benjamin 1979:253). A practice of collection and accumulation, an aggressive consumption that produces new visions even as it consumes, leaving not a layered palimpsest but the seriated space-times of a dispersed memory linked by the action of the observer. It is a drive that links the sense of dispersed memory with a 'duty memory' (Nora 1989) where the structure of photography appears always to look to the moment when 'now' is the past. It allows a piling up of details, suggesting that the city can be understood as a piling up of segregated instances, as "a photographic kaleidoscope" that is a permanent record for future generations, as it is indeed described in one of Reece Winstone's books (Parsons in 1979:3). The antiquarian drive records everything because anything might one day prove to be invaluable. This is perhaps the specific register in which these photographs are now legible (Fynsk 1992:117). Photography as a way of seeing the urban landscape seems to have an innate sense of its own posterity and future histories, be it 'salvage photography' from

Reece Winstone or, as I shall argue in the next chapter, just the commemoration of a day out for later viewing.

The everyday and mundane memories of urban society are enabled to appear significant by being recirculated as archival pictures. However, in order to do this they must overcome the handicap of banality and dirt. In part this is achieved by using the dirt as a signifier of realism, of the back-stage truth rendered visible. The picturesque aesthetic forms one way of displaying a sense of loss despite the poverty depicted. The past is celebrated for its dirt, now that it is a safe distance behind us; just as the nineteenth century photographs aestheticised dirt that was a safe social distance away. Such a picturesque restaging of past poverty represents a more melancholy vision from that implied in heritage but is still inevitably a restaging (figure 19). Moreover, the spatially dispersed moments 'captured' on film seem to disrupt the sense of time as instants clipped together one after another presenting instead a form of spatialized time (cf. Gregory 1994:234) that illustrates the 'wounds' of time, like ruins on a landscape, suggesting both timelessness and fleeting experiences of the city.

Figure 19:

Aesthetics, Poverty and the Appeal of the Past.



Cartoon published in the Guardian 1993.

Picturing the Past: The Present Practices of Seeing Heritage.

"In societies where modern conditions of production prevail, all of life presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. Everything that was directly lived has moved away into a representation."

Debord (1983, thesis 18)

Mea Culpa.

This chapter has a history which develops from when I was convinced video was a practical solution to a practical problem of gathering material, through a series of reworkings as I became increasingly convinced of the theoretical fitness of this approach even as it became increasingly difficult to put into practice. This chapter thus forms an odd amalgam whereby I have tried to connect both the theoretical reasoning and the practical experiences; I hope to provide sufficient material to suggest why the approach taken here was appropriate while showing enough of the pitfalls to act as a warning to other students who may read this thesis to garner ideas for other projects. This chapter is thus a dual narrative, showing the theoretical development of ideas guiding the approach and at the same time problematic results. I thus try to lay out a rationale for using video, in terms of how it works with structures already embedded in excursions to historic sites. As the chapter progresses the similarities of the knowledge produced by video as research tool and produced in these excursions are highlighted. There is therefore no simple exposition of "the method" and "the findings". Instead there is an iterative process, where I suggest firstly, implications of 'picturing' for visitors, then, secondly, for research. Rather than describe some pre-given method I hope to show how I became convinced of its theoretical appropriateness. The description of methodological choices thus occurs throughout the chapter. Likewise the problematics of getting and using material thus generated has led me to intersperse 'empirical' elements throughout. The boxes of text thus contain elements from the research process that cast light (not necessarily support) the arguments in the main text.

Introduction.

The primary focus of this chapter might be described as the technology for envisioning Heritage. It focuses around the practices of sightseeing and visiting "historic sites"¹ in contemporary Britain. In keeping with the approach elsewhere I attempted to study this by using photographic practices - practices that are argued to be central to the 'tourist' as constituted through a gaze (cf.. Taylor 1994; Urry 1990). I treat sight-seeing as a practice, as

¹ The participants in this study were asked to select a "historic site" of their own choosing. The material used in this chapter comes from visits to many sites - not all visited for this study. Those chosen for this study were two castles, a roman excavation and Morwelham quay industrial heritage site. As will be seen, the participants described these sites with reference to range of other visits - to steam heritage attractions, museums (national, 'traditional' and open air) and, in one case, Covent Garden.

the activity of seeing,
rather than simply the study of the objects
or products of such a gaze and thus try to
engage with a spectacular past in as much as

*Mike: Well I deliberately left it vague as
"historic site" so you could choose what you
felt was historic and interesting."*

"[t]he spectacle is not a collection of images but a social relation among people mediated by images" (Debord 1983 thesis 4). In the last chapter, I attempted to look not only at the absences photographs can mark - the passages of time they show and the imaginative spaces they create - but also at how the practice of photography influences presentations of history. I seek to move here to a discussion of practices involved in visiting Heritage presentations and the way photography is in part a memorialisation of such excursions. I then discuss the framing effect of photographs as self-definition and self-projection through the family album and autobiographical record. However, as suggested in the last chapter, this is a record that cannot operate independently of the pre-existing envisionings of Heritage in officially instituted images. I try to develop ideas as to how these twin processes situate sites/sights as experiences for their visitors and how such visitors situate such experiences in their own lives. That is, how photographic practices render the past available for use, and at the same time are used to configure that past into personally meaningful forms by visitors.

Such a positioning and probing of the intersection of preservation and picturing cannot be maintained without also becoming aware of the mediated way I see these mediations. Engaging with the visual as a method seems to offer one way of stressing the connections of my seeing and knowing just as I stress the connections of others' seeing and knowing. However, too often visual ethnographies have replicated the detachment of the surveillance camera. So rather than deploying video to watch visitors' practices I hoped to adapt the auto-photography of workers such as Robert Ziller to get participants to picture themselves. To engage in what is a mundane form of self-presentation by turning the camera not only onto the historic landscape but also onto themselves - not to capture only what is in front of the camera but suggest expectations from behind it as well (cf.. Aitken & Wingate 1993; Chalfen 1987; Collier & Collier 1986; Cook & Crang 1994; Jacobs 1980; Turner 1991; Worth 1981; Ziller 1990, Ziller & Smith 1977). Finally, I suggest we can usefully draw upon current trends in the videographic apparatus (Berko 1993) to suggest the envisioning of these preserved pasts also suggests links through to the production of re-created pasts.

Documents of Presence.

Signs of absence.

In the last chapter I tried to give a sense of the way pictures of past landscapes become recycled into the contemporary cultural sense of the city. In the previous chapter I was mostly concerned with the recycling of old photographs. In part they created new historicisations that have depth, in the sense of an absence that hurts, leaving traces in repetitions and resistances in the present (Williams 1993). Here I want to bring out the sense of connection to the past in contemporary pictures. For a start, there is a sense of hurt to be found in contemporary recording of the historic city. A continued recording of erasures. A continued (re-)production of absences.

Moreover, I began to look to the way people used old photographs to hang stories on and, as Becker Orhn (1975) found, photo collections were used to both sustain and pass on family memories.

On the other hand, I also want to draw out the unruliness of these pictures; how they call up memories beyond their contents, as

Proustian leaps to other photos, as comparisons to be made as stories and ideas are touched off (Becker Orhn 1975:29-30). It is too easy to suggest that these connections are all purposeful and planned and thereby lose the sense of dispersal where photography escapes

Rod: "But where the M32 comes in I mean it's just destroying cities ... they keep encroaching, I mean there used to be shops, a whole community on the other side but all that's gone now. The only thing of interest is the old slipper baths over there which again I've been photographing cos I don't know how long that's going to last."

just the spaces where it occurs, it refers to other pictures and other times. Yet, in part, this is to ignore the very mundanity and promiscuity of pictures these days. Since the industrialisation of photography we now see fewer worked out collections and instead haphazard accumulations - serving as avenues for the commodification of memory rather than just its personalisation (Seabrook 1991:39). I must, therefore, situate the expansion of photography not just in terms of producing images of 'the historic' in various genres but also in shaping historical sensibilities. Perhaps the commodification of ordinary experience in the expanding realm of the photograph parallels the commodification of the past already noted, and indeed the quest to create, or save, a family history, to fix a past, as the popular echo of desires to save an imperilled, organic folklore (cf. Ash 1990; Berghe & Keyes 1984; Dundes 1985; Harris 1991).

Here I focus mostly on pictures as signs of presence, as records of activity, of both the past

Rod: "It all goes full circle err roads, a lot of railways been made into roads so but I'm totally against the way they destroy the city centres you know. I go round taking pictures of buildings before they knock them down. Fish shop in Bedminster, it was up for sale for years so I thought I'd take a picture of that before they knock it down. I got there Christmas day, a few shots of that and I notice it's gone now."

in present landscapes and the presence of their photographers. Because while it may be true that tourist snaps commodify, reify, and attempt to control the landscape (Bennett 1990) they also implicate the excess of experiences that spills beyond this. I wanted to recover practices that went on besides the stereotypical re-production of 'a Platonic ideal of the Quaint and Picturesque' (Redfoot 1984:292). If I went asking for 'impressions' I received answers as though everyone was an exhibit reviewer carefully couched in terms of what others would find or think. What I wanted was to encourage the unruliness of pictures, to take people back to the unplanned and the material practices of visiting. I hoped to use photographs to recover the presence of visitors.

Presence of visitors.

My interest in visualisation at heritage sites did not start from the above links with historic pictures. It started with a blindness and a gap in my (and, I think, other analysts') vision. What I wanted was to reduce the opacity of the practices of visitors - motivated, at least initially, by my need to see, by my need to know. I felt a disjunction between where I was coming from, in analysing the aesthetics and ideology of historic presentations, and the actual existing practices of visitors. In fact for all the overdeterminations, connections and slippages exposed through the treatment of Heritage as a text I kept feeling that if anything this seemed to be creating a curiously legible world (cf. de Certeau 1985a, 1984, 1986; Mellor 1991).

In some ways my desire to look at and study the use of such sites led me to 'reception theories' in media studies, in other ways it has led to a certain wary sympathy with the phenomenological approach to film experiences, where I can take account of the embodied nature of practices, rather than a solely semiological one (Jay 1993; Nelson 1989; Sobchak 1990b). This opacity faces all studies of that dispersed practice known as consumption and leaves a methodological problem of elusiveness in studying not just the putative practice but its physical and unthought aberrations (Lindlof & Grodin 1990). I wanted to recover something of the popular, in Walter Benjamin's phrase, the immediate reality of experience as the orchid in the desert of technology (Wollen 1991:52). But such a romantic recovery is impossible - indeed since de Certeau's work led me into this argument perhaps I can follow it here - there can only be the conception of 'immediate reality' in response to the idea of a mediated and spectacularised order.² Likewise, I felt that emplotting the popular as transgression implied it was totally a response to the 'law' that was to be transgressed, herding everything into two struggling camps that are irreducibly opposed and locked in mortal contest. Which seems to miss the idea of a dispersed practice, and practices that do

² "Finding" these invisible practices also positions the analyst as speaking for a reconstructed popular that is extinguished even as it is frozen to be studied, endlessly re-inscribing the violence of desire for knowledge (Schirato 1993:287).

Do Vandals Use Heritage too?

Rog: It isn't the tourists leaving all that stuff, its kids coming in here at night isn't it? For a drink or whatever.

not resist so much as ignore, bend, inadvertently (mis-)use the dominant order (cf. Frow 1991; Schirato 1993).

What I could start from were the crumbs of material that suggest these sites cannot be read as closed or whole texts. Traces of the diversity of practices could be read in the comments that museums had to cater for three sorts of publics - streakers, strollers and students (Macdonald & Alford 1989:74). Instantly, I thought of how my attempts to read various exhibits were confounded by the having to step back from them and were continually interrupted by a stream of people moving at a measured pace - strolling past me.³ Perhaps, like shopping, the arrangement of items followed not so much a didactic or storied logic so much as one designed to attract attention from distracted passers-by⁴; thus studies show the uneven distribution of visitor attention in a pattern of brief glances with much longer more sustained examination of exhibits that grab the interest of particular people (Falk & Dierking 1992:54).

Indeed, since no one can study everything, the stroller might spend more time on exhibits

near the entrance before running out of time and interest (or, in my case, parking money) and rushing through later exhibits (Falk et al 1985). Such a vision seemed to appeal to the ideas of Meaghan Morris (1988d:204) about the pedestrian as an exemplary allegorical figure - showing both the distracted state produced in a world of spectacles, yet also the profoundly aleatory process by which those signs are combined and taken up. It is with this idea that I want to frame the chapter - I have not been able to develop a rigorous, thorough or satisfactory exploration of uses of sites

Rog: "[She came along this time for you but my wife] doesn't have an historical sense at all, it's all a load of rocks to her. Actually she passes a comment 'why haven't they knocked it all down and done something useful with it?' sort of

Mike: Playing it up? I mean deliberately play that up?

Rog: No she's not into history at all. Not in the least bit interested in historic places. She doesn't mind something if it's spectacular. I mean you go somewhere like Dunster castle which real, I mean you've got people living in it, she might be interested. ..What she would be interested in is the kitchens and furnishings. Once it's knocked down she doesn't have an interest in it. Unfortunately junior is completely uninterested [unless it is a ruin]".

so I do not want to speak of empirical users, since I do not think I am able to do so. What I can try and do is develop spaces and roles that can be combined into possible figures.

³ Again I thought of wandering subjectivities in reader response theory (cf. Iser 1989; Jauss 1982; Schole 1985). The pedestrian readers in these studies were skimming parts, rushing to closures elsewhere, jumping between topics, forming connections and overlooking intended links.

⁴The relation of museum displays to shops has been a subject of discussion and professional debate (cf. Georgel 1994; Posner 1988).

Most importantly I want to draw out the social nature of both motivations and pleasures. It has been consistently suggested that people come to museums for social reasons - and that similar reasons over feared lack of social enjoyment also suggest why people do not visit (Bourdieu & Darbel 1991; Hood 1983; McManus 1987; see figure 20). Not only is it suggested socialisation drives visiting but also that contextual incidents (not formally linked to ideas of education) provide some of the most enduring memories (Falk & Dierking 1992:45; but see McManus 1993). Museum audiences are not composed of individuals but of numerous social groups that form the interactional site for both learning and enjoyment.⁵ There is no transmission of the past from head to head, from exhibit to knowledge, but a social production of interpretations.

What we may begin to see then is the range of socio-cultural positions I outlined earlier in the thesis being cross-cut with a range of interactional situations which in turn have a narrative or sequential component both in terms of understanding (as I shall argue later) and mundane terms

*Rog and 'junior' have just spent 20 minutes walking through the overgrown moat of a ruined castle. Rog: well it must make a circle from there where it goes on
 Jr.: Why?
 Rog: Well otherwise the enemies would all walk in the gap. ..I think we can cut back along the road to your mother rather than do that next bit, though*

where attention declines dramatically to reach almost nil after 30 to 45 minutes and there is a marked drop after the first 5 to 10 minutes (Falk & Dierking 1992:73 but see McManus 1993). Nor are these interactive situations some redemptive 'popular', with men consistently directing attention, and women spending more time talking about exhibits to sons and more time talking about 'social' topics to daughters (Falk & Dierking 1992:43). Of solitary wanderers men outnumber women two to one, and show both a tendency for briefer visits and more comprehensive reading behaviour, while the presence of children alters settings by increasing the time spent at exhibits and conversation levels (McManus 1987:269).

Yet all the studies referred to here seem too definite, for they all rely on surrogate measures to record 'attention' or some other 'variable'. It seems that what is needed is a methodology that respects the forms of these interactions and actually engages with them. That will produce a record that does not resemble surveillance, tracking people through a museum to produce a sort of time-geography of what was being looked at or using hidden microphones to accumulate a vast number of disembedded conversations which then have to be statistically analysed for patterns, or using cameras to "monitor visitor

⁵ Groups that have been categorised by the levels and types of interaction to show clusters that suggest significant interactional differences between groups containing children, adult peer groups, couples and solitary visitors - of which the latter form only 12.9% of visitors (McManus 1987:266, 1988, 1989)

Figure 20:

Reading a book: disinterest in the past.



While Junior set off to 'explore' the castle - and Rog set off to record to record Junior's exploits, his wife preferred to stay behind and read a book. Rog chatted to Junior about moats and gatehouses. He filmed junior climbing and walking. His wife figured in only this shot and two staged shots where he asked her directly for her opinions. He later said she wouldn't have come had it not been for my 'project'. This was normally Rog's time with Junior - since he hardly saw him during the week - perhaps reflected in the 'buddy movie' they recorded as they set off round the castle.

behaviour" (eg respectively Falk et al 1985; McManus 1987, 1988, 1989; Stoep 1989). What I wanted was a practice that gave room for people to attribute meaning, for people to look as well as be looked at. In this light I turned to the activity of photography as a possible way of getting people to record and talk about their own use of historic sites. I was thus committed to exploring the different experiences generated by different groups of people. Not only does the activity of picturing have a role in sacralising parts of the landscape as Heritage, it also seemed to provide some traces of the use of sights.

<p><i>Junior: The dad has got a big video camera as well.. Rog: and looks like they've got another rock climber in tow. [laughs]</i></p>

Practices and records: performative arts of making sense.

It is widely known that photography is a major activity during touristic trips (eg Chalfen 1987; Sontag 1977; Taylor 1994). What, though, was I to do with such material? Focusing on the way visitors made pictures I hoped to avoid the analytic positions offered by some geographical approaches to iconography (eg Cosgrove 1990; Daniels 1993). Yet, equally, much of the work on this dispersed activity seemed to retreat rapidly in the face of its scale and end up as the sort of thin description entailed in content analysis (eg Albers & James 1988; Enscoe 1993). An equally unattractive alternative was to develop classically comparative, structuralist accounts (cf. Ball & Smith 1993) since:

"If you look at a couple of hundred thousand snapshots in various regions, under various circumstances, over a long enough period of time, you begin to lose track of people's individuality and freedom of choice as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. You begin to lose track of specific faces and places, and you begin to think about genotypes. In between the howls and the whispers and the cosmic laughter, you catch yourself short and start thinking about pictures as symbols; and once you start on symbols, you get into a lot of trouble with most civilians. Because it is not long before you start reading comparative mythology. Which does about as much good as the study of chivalry did Don Quixote."

Lesy (1980:xii).

However, the concentration on the picturable still seemed a useful approach - capturing the way visual spectacle was so often deployed as the opposite of education in heritage debates (cf. McManus 1986:217). The encoding of photographs seemed to suggest that they allowed, and often demanded, the inclusion of enjoyment. I thus hoped that they might allow a working over of the 'social reproduction of seriousness' (Radway 1988:370) that I found so often preoccupied people - commentators and public (figure 21). Meanwhile the practice of taking snapshots structures events so that it is not just experience that organises expression but also the mode of expression that informs the experience because the

Figure 21:

Fun, practices and the social reproduction of seriousness.



Junior fundamentally likes ruined castles with plenty of scope for clambering over them. Throughout the video there were shots of him jumping off things, sliding down them, leaping across rocks and hiding. Meanwhile there were shots taken by Rog as he fell down as he followed junior, or as he pondered where junior might be and what he might be getting up to.

recording of the event is part of that event (Taborsky 1990:62; cf. Bourdieu 1990; Holland 1991; Turner 1980).

So what I turned to were the practices of picturing as they seemed to be part of the interactional settings mentioned earlier. For instance the male 'parent' in family groups most often controlled what was taken (Chalfen 1987:60; Musello 1980:35) but was noticeable by his absence from the product (in all the cases I looked at this held true).

Moreover, genres of 'surprise' photos revealed some of the activities that are not to do with earnest study or

Junior: Wait here while I sneak up behind her and film mum.

didactic content or with Heritage at all. Thus while much of the analysis of heritage has borrowed from film theory to assess the ideological structure of heritage as a media (eg Silverstone 1988, 1989) it seemed to miss the embodied differences. For instance, Christian Metz's work on cinema suggested it required a spectator rendered pliant by the hypertrophy of motor activity and the accentuation of perceptive activity (Jay 1993:480). Instead I felt the need to understand the '*proprioception*' of Heritage, the embodied learning, the sensual active process of engaging with an environment. More than that I felt that if I capitalised on

video as motion picture I might get people to record not only the narcissistic body on the screen but what Barthes termed the perverse body (Jay 1993:455), where awareness covers the actions of watching not only what is seen (Lindlof & Grodin 1990). Thus I turned for inspiration to Chalfen's (1987) work on not only the picture but also the processes that produced it.⁶

Such an approach pays greater attention to the phenomenological spaces created through filming rather than simply the significations of

Rod: "Got a lovely shot I took from up behind .. just before they shut this [dockyard] I didn't even know then that I was going to living here or that was closing, taken from .. of the docks over there of the last ship they were building."

films. The decision to allow people to make their own films is one I believe ethically and theoretically justified⁷ - though practically I am not sure whether the fear of technical expertise being needed did not deter potential participants. I thus set about recruiting

⁶ Chalfen (1987) speaks of dividing the product into participants, setting, topic, image form, such as slide or print, and finally a more abstract idea of 'code' by which he implies genre. However, he also suggests interrogating every picture in terms of the process of production such as the level of planning, the practices needed to take it as seen on-screen such as posing or off-screen such as where it was taken from, the selection and editing criteria, why that photo was taken or shown, and in what context it was intended to be seen. For a fuller account see Chalfen 1987, Cook & Crang 1994:78-79 or Musello 1980.

⁷ See for instance Tomas's (1992) critique on the way too much 'critical' ethnography has ascribed the position of active photographer to the researcher, despite all its verbal subtlety, and leaves a pictured Other as the object of a very traditional gaze (cf. White 1988:1193). Also for touristic pictures one of the intended audiences is also often the subject of the picture, and the picture-taker and those pictured tend to be known to each other - one of the few cases of reciprocity in photography (Cohen, Nir and Almagor 1992:213).

participants via mail-shots from areas of Bristol which were identified as being 'gentrified' or renovated (to foster further connections with other forms of heritage as exhibited by Rod above, and to select areas whose social mix reflected that of visitors to historic sites) and asking if they would be willing to film a trip to an 'historic site' of their choosing with a lightweight camcorder. In the end some six 'family' groups volunteered of whom four went on to provide both footage and interviews about their experiences.

Performances sacrificed to the future.

"When Joe Louis was asked shortly before he died whether he would like to see a film of his greatest triumph (the second fight with Max Schmelling), he tersely declined: 'I was there'."

(cited in Murphy 1993:ix).

It is all too easy to accept the seeming naturalness of how people record their performances. It is important to pause for a moment to consider the impacts of this. Here I want to highlight a way in which photography allows the projection of a self through time and space (Jacobs 1981:102). Photography is a matter of rendering the present moment and purposefully seizing it for a future audience in a probably different place, ruling out the self-present experience of a sight - the present experience is always mortgaged to a future audience:

'Once removed by the pre-fabricated expectations of the tourist role, the tourist photographer is twice removed by the temporal distancing of the photographic moment. Typically, family or friends pose in the foreground, literally and symbolically turning their backs to the setting they are supposed to be experiencing'.

Redfoot (1984:294).

There are an array of aesthetic expectations set up by already circulating pictures which set standards so the tourist moves from the 'picturesque to picturable ... from seeing somewhere .. to seeing somewhere as a picture of somewhere else.' (Hughes 1991:37; figure 22). But in terms of the experience of sites I do want to introduce

Rog: "we normally take two or three pictures but then we do that anywhere we go. We were all at Thorpe Park yesterday, that was lovely got 4 or 5 shots. ...But we don't TAKE photographs, not as you say like these guys with big cameras". Mike: "instamatic type stuff?" ...Rog: "Well kid's growing up really, yeah. Junior in front of castle one, castle two" [laughs].

the idea that we are dealing with a dispersed subject - distended in space and time - and thus each encounter is open and implicated in the others. The present moment of the visit is grasped by the impending social itinerary of the visitor. These practices thus include, at the

Figure 22:

From the Picturesque to the Picturable.



Rod: This would have been a lovely shot if only they hadn't had that signpost in front there ruining it. I mean you'd have thought someone could have done something.

Previous frames went from architectural details and shots along half lit corridors, to a panning shot to the castle gate. Then a cut to this, followed by a cut to a distant shot showing the castle overlooking a village and a bay. Rod was consistently the most cinematic and aesthetic, or at least successfully aesthetic, of the participants.

level of interaction, inside the micro-sociology of the visit, wider processes of everyday interpretation; how photography, and its orientation to future display, forms one of the ways people ordinarily ascribe significance to their actions and lives (Bovone 1989; Knorr-Cetina 1981; Luckmann 1989).

The idea of projecting a desired appearance to a future audience gives some leverage on the ideas of a mediated and performative self where 'a decentred selfhood has become a plurality of intermittent, disconnected, recognition-seeking spectacles of self-presentation.'

(Langman 1992:40). The self-performative aspect I have stressed is not entirely removed from the idea of surveillance and it is possible to argue that

Rog: Hold on there I want to film this group of visitors cos I'll be interested to see if they do the same as us. ..[They repeat Rog's itinerary exactly] Hold on Junior you stand there because I don't want it to look like I'm filming them, while I film them."

'we have confused the image of reality with our own refracted image, appearing on a seemingly endless array of video monitors. We have confused the image of our own subjectivity with the objectification of our image on the TV monitors strategically positioned throughout the postmodern terrain' (Berko 1992:74). It may well be that the world is not that bleak, but it is unwise to ignore the way changing media apparatus are changing the modes and meanings of self-presentation.⁸

Logics of seriality and tele-history.

"It seems positively unnatural to travel for pleasure without taking a camera along. Photographs will offer indisputable evidence that the trip was made, the program was carried out, that fun was had."

Sontag (1977:9).

Making pictures into stories: Family albums and video diaries.

Heritage experiences are not isolated instants but bear the imprint of other related practices. I want to draw out their 'future orientation' and suggest the importance of later exhibitions of pictures in organising heritage as part of meaningful stories for visitors. But the nexus of seeing-picturing-tourism is not some fantastic 'machinery of social signification producing in a social vacuum' (Slater 1982:261) and has to be situated in terms

⁸ Another reason for thus being careful with the use of video is that it rapidly forms a conventional form of academic surveillance where "To prove their mettle to the anthropologists, ethnographic film-makers have tended to adopt a more-scientific-than-thou attitude" (Weinberger 1994:11) and the camera is seen as an objective replacement to the 'fallible' fieldnotes and the "ideal then is the dream of invisibility, or worse, the practice of the surveillance camera." (ibid. p.12). This is certainly one reason for getting people to record their own footage, their own performances for the camera and accept its presence as integral to the situation studied. Such an approach aligns the film with the more radical ethnographic experiments of Worth & Adair (Worth 1981) or the MacDougalls who shoot just what people would have been doing with the cameras there but leaves the problem for the researcher that, rather as is typical when watching someone else's home movies, 'what they are doing is often not terribly interesting' (Weinberger 1994:19).

of its symbolic and institutional histories. Here I want to start from the dynamics of the popularisation of snapshots and the forms to which they have contributed.

From early this century the logic of the photographic industry has set a premium on the processing of film in terms of revenue. The sale of 'hardware' has been a minor factor, particularly as the market has become saturated. While one strategy adopted has been technical innovation designed to rejuvenate the market this has been targeted mostly at the small specialist markets (Slater 1982). The bulk of

Bert: " Because what you were thinking about was the camera and what you were actually... in there that was sort of the effect of taking a camera there, whereas if you take a still camera there you sort of forget about then 'oh' take that, bang off a shot and forget it."

revenue has come from encouraging the great mass of camera users to use their cameras a little more. This has meant that the great motor of the industry has been simplification - as marked by Kodak's initial breakthrough of offering a point-press-shoot camera. The logic ever since has been to produce equipment suited for expanding the production of standard types of shots rather than encouraging novel forms. This strategy has been echoed in the structure of movie and particularly video camera (later camcorder) markets.⁹ This is a smaller market so a hardware driven logic of permanent technical revolution makes more commercial sense (Slater 1982).¹⁰ Yet the rise of Japanese producers, and the now hegemonic VHS format, is founded on their early decision to produce lower technical quality products for a wider market instead of focusing on sales to commercial users (Keen 1987). This replicates the progressively lower quality formats and increasing sales that led to the 8mm home movie camera prior to video cameras (Chittock 1989).

However, this history is not entirely about the impoverishment of opportunity for within this story lies the trend to allow more user control - does anyone now remember that at first there were no rewinders in VCRs so you could not record off-air or play a hired film more than once (Keen 1987)? Likewise increases in portability have increased the situations camcorders can be used in, and, as I shall argue later, impacted on stylistic innovation. This has broadened access to making films not just viewing them - through removing the expense and difficulty of developing film - thus reinforcing my decision to look at spaces of videographic practices rather than diegetic spaces on film.¹¹ The decreasing cost, increasing

⁹ Chalfen (1987) notes how movie-buff magazines continually exhort readers to develop a more cinematic approach, but the fact they used the same exhortation for over 30 years suggests that most users still see the video as an extension of the familiar technology of the still camera (Keen 1987). Thus the complex planning of 'movies' is alien to the idea of showing spontaneity - perhaps as exemplified in the rise of 'pratfall' programmes.

¹⁰ Though it is a rapidly growing market, its size and history should not be underestimated. For instance, in the 1970s 9% of UK households had 8mm movie cameras (for West Germany the figure was 20%) (Chittock 1989:167). It's relative size can be gauged if we suggest that by the end of the 70s two thirds of UK households possessed at least one camera (93% in USA) and 80 million films were sold to 27 million people (Slater 1982).

¹¹ Those working with indigenous groups to promote their self-presentation through the media suggest this also applies then, where the emphasis is not on a distinctive product but on the way the process of production creates new networks

accessibility of hardware and the cheapness, re-usability and user-simplicity of video tape have meant video has followed the path of still photography, on the one hand, democratising aesthetic production and, on the other, colonising experiences (Tagg 1982).

All of this technical development operates with certain forms of use and display. The pictures thus produced tend to work to sacralise key events in a family story - crucial rites of passage, happy events, and so on. As Pierre Bourdieu (1990) put it "the family photograph is a ritual of the domestic cult in which the family is both the subject and the object, because it expresses the celebratory sense which the family group gives to itself, and which it reinforces by giving it expression"

(p19). The mass marketing of both movie and still cameras has suggested their necessity to produce 'public' or at least permanent records of familial togetherness.

Rog: "But there is a culture that says you go and look at these sorts of things. And my son is no exception, he likes going to that sort thing, he loves ruined castles."

This is then again a dialectic of self-recording and surveillance - where the making and displaying of records of successful familial life is part of an ideology of a comfortable middle-class existence in 'kodak culture':

"Kodak culture promotes the visual display of proper and expected behaviour, of participation in socially approved activities, according to culturally approved value schemes. People are shown in home mode imagery "doing it right", conforming to social norms, achieving status and enjoying themselves, in part as a result of a life well lived. In short, people demonstrate knowledge, capability, and competence to do things 'right'. In these ways a sense of belonging and security is developed and maintained."

Chalfen (1987:139).

Family narratives, laid out in albums (Walker & Moulton 1989), respond to wider narratives of identity, changing society and Kodak culture.¹² They show the conventional rites of passage but also, as an ideology of domestic retreat rises, more candid photos of everyday life (Hirsch 1981:32; Holland 1991:3-4; Reiakvam 1993).

Moreover, such collections often do not need to be formal narratives since most envisioned viewing situations include the maker of the album (Walker & Moulton 1989:164). This is not the same as saying the maker of the pictures, since if the picture-takers are often male then the keepers of the memories are mostly female (Holland 1991:9; Seabrook 1991:35). As such the photos might function as a mnemotechnology providing visual prompts and locations for memories. Much as any physical possession can come to iconically signify a

of understanding (Ginsburg 1993:575).

¹² The context of display is important; pictures in the front room may tend to be those best showing successful conformity (Reme 1993:19).

whole series of events with which its acquisition or possession is associated, so too can photographs not just through what they portray but as material links with the time and events in them (Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton 1981; McCracken 1990).

Thus they serve both as landmarks of what is significant to the individual and as starting points whereby, no matter how conventionalised they may be, the viewer and owner can weave further stories (Becker 1975; Hirsch 1981; Lesy 1980; Schwarz 1989) binding together temporally disparate moments into a more coherent whole.¹³

Rod: " All that area there [on an aerial photo of Bristol] I think you can see on that if you look at it in detail, like blow it up, you can see the outline of six kilns there then. 'Cos I can remember the railway, when it crossed the road, that was goods yards where the hotel is and that was all arches there and rag and bone men beneath the arches. "

This understanding of photographs as vehicles for memories offers the possibilities of using videos for 'photo-elicitation' by providing a prompt and a discussion point around which to anchor long interviews (Collier & Collier 1986). Such a method seemed to offer possibilities to get at memories of Heritage experiences. I hoped they might prompt not just specific memories but also their embedding in autobiographical structures that would make sense of them.

*Betty: I mean we'd been up to Hadrian's wall, hadn't we? And I thought this was equally as good.
Bert: equally as good
Betty: and perhaps probably better
Bert: yeah Housesteads we went to
Betty: Housesteads and then another along the wall didn't we?*

Such a strategy might work with the expectations already embedded in video diaries and autobiographical films which have already established this genre as a way of recounting and making sense of events. Meanwhile a substantial body of theory saw the interactional events recorded as produced by the way the situated self has to stand out in existence because it is dominated by a "drive to meaning", a drive to project a sense of meaning over life and colonise the future. While never complete, always being a striving rather than an accomplishment, the social positioning of this activity makes it possible to ask: "Is this the last of a long line of middle-class projects, one wonders: middle-class because this is the class that makes a project out of life, that makes experience out of interactions?" (Strathern 1992a:x).

¹³ A further note might be how the use of pictures and video material has been used to bind together *spatially* disparate groups, not simply in terms of iconography but shared experiences and talking points - even up to video conferencing among the Canadian Inuit (eg Brisebois 1991).

The socially specific structures of this project are embedded in the accumulatory economy of the voyage - or, in Stewart's (1984) terms, the *excursion*. In concrete terms let us look at the logic of the visit as part of a sequence, and photography as a form of symbolic capture. The importance of such a practice can perhaps be situated by contrasting it to the disposition of unspoken familiarity with canonical culture exhibited in

Where have all the Flowers Gone.
Sid had visited and transformed Covent Garden into a fifteen minute movie. 'It's what I tend to do in winter. I visit the places in the summer and during the winter I put them together you know'. Sid's editing suite was kept in a room devoted to the purpose. It was here he took a range of clips and made movies - which he then entered into the video club competitions. He took his clips sometimes from several tapes and put them together into stories - sometimes about the places he visited, sometimes fictional ones.

high class museum visitors (Bourdieu & Darbel 1991). Bourdieu has paralleled directly the habitus of his 'new petit bourgeoisie' with photographic practice where "[s]mall-format fanatics substitute the laborious asceticism of acquisition (expressed in the verb "to do" as in "to do Italy") for the art of abandoning oneself to contemplation, and the anxious accumulation of souvenirs and demonstrations of 'doing', for the detachment of the aestheticism achieved by direct emotion. This kind of behaviour is opposed to consecrated behaviour as effort is opposed to a natural gift or acquired knowledge to natural distinction." (Bourdieu 1990:76). I have argued that Heritage represents, at least in part, a shift to accommodate this accumulative user. Surely, linked with this, is the attempt to provide 'meaningful leisure' (Kelly 1986:280) - and thus a particular middle class construction of leisure rather than more carnivalesque versions.

Messages from Heritage: Wishing You were Here/ I was there.

One logic in visiting that leads on from the idea of accumulating experiences and converting them into symbolic capital is the necessity to prove that the visit occurred. To this extent, and leading on from the idea of future audiences, souvenirs serve to prove that a site was visited, just as relics used to prove the beneficial effects of pilgrimage (Frow 1991; Kelly 1986; Moore 1980). Seen in such a light, self-produced photographs are not merely telling stories to later selves, but sending strong signals to peers - as proofs of visiting (cf. Bourdieu 1990).

Roman Road ... Protected Monument. Ministry of Works.
hoy hic erat.

Of course, I can hardly sound too cynical over this, since the parallels with the production of fieldnotes and later interpretation seem too strong to allow a great distance to open up between my analytic praxis and that of visitors. Just as I have suggested visitors

may seek an authentic experience of a site - to feel history around them - yet this is disrupted by the way touristic experiences are not self-present but always mortgaged to the future, so too I felt the same for my academic praxis. There is a high value placed in ethnographic texts on experiencing the 'field', on 'immersion' into it, on becoming part of it. Such an ethos relies on "the field" being a single entity something that did not fit with my analysis (cf. Karpow 1992; Radway 1988). Nor does it allow for my instrumental reasons for doing this. Why I have to ask did I so need something tangible showing the use of sites?¹⁴. And does this invalidate the experience in its entirety? Surely not.

Bert: "I usually buy a book on it, I quite like this guide usually buy one of those. I can't comment on the guide book we bought because we bought it and haven't actually looked at it but err.

Betty: Usually come home then read it after you've looked at it .. cos if you are going round you can't really look at something and digest the book as well."

However, such a cynical interpretation shows all the limits of merely looking at the mimetic facility of postcards and souvenirs. In the last chapter I tried to outline how the practical effect of such ideas was not merely reflective of what was seen but propulsive of a way of seeing; the activity of making pictures served to sacralise certain elements of what might otherwise be an equivalent scene. Importantly here we have the expectation that appropriate proofs will be needed driving a sort of vicious hermeneutic circle - replicating picture postcards in personal pictures until "[t]he process by which tourists come to rely on stereotyped photographs as measures for their own visualisation also contribute to a

Sid's Covent Garden film was titled "Where have all the flowers gone". Because as he said it seemed to him the story of the area was how it had been transformed from a flower market into something else. He took footage of old buildings and dubbed over material from the 'official guide' he had purchased. He was making was a film to enter a competition.

kind of alienation which has become a prototypical hallmark of photographic "seeing" in tourism." (Albers & James 1988:136; Nye 1991). The need to prove

visits as well as to prove domestic bliss through photographs deploying a conventionalised and sanitised repertoire seems to be a quintessential example of what Lepenies criticises: "In a world where the private sphere is fashionable as a refuge, the private spaces resemble each other like the monotony of the world from which they are intended to serve as an escape in the first place" (Lepenies 1992:117). It is certainly remarkable that for an activity,

¹⁴ There are strong echoes of the tourist and indeed "the ethnographer can be conceptualized as a tourist travelling to an alien world of the native. The tourist is constantly seeking to make the strange familiar by bringing it home in the form of travel notes, photographs, postcards, and souvenirs. These travel mementoes guarantee the tourist's identity as a traveller who has encountered authentically foreign sites, attractions, and people in the purposeful movement through space known as a trip. Ethnography is thus more than simply fieldwork; it involves the interpretive project of locating the Other within a hermeneutic dialogue" (Grossberg 1992:379-80). My answer here is to pick up on the contextual ways he suggests such knowledge is certified and stage them within my own account through the pictures and quotes that inevitably whisper 'I did it', 'been there' whatever else they may say.

which in order to generate a mass market, relies on *not* needing any formal training this generates not chaotic individual expression but a high degree of similarity in pictures

But amid the bustle depicted as Covent Garden there were no shots of him or his family visiting. Which is something of a shift from his uncut footage of Morwelham Quay, an open air industrial museum in Devon, where a great deal of film focused on activity both by costumed interpreters and undertaken by the family such as riding in a cart, or the ride into the mine with shots both from in motion and focusing on dioramas and panning shots around the river.

Bert: 'the Japanese navy ..were in Naples that day and err just like the British navy they all went to Pompeii .. we got to this square and if there was one there was twenty Japanese sailors stood there and they did exactly as you [Mike] said, they moved one at a time to stand in front of the statue and someone to take their photo and move on. And I thought if I can actually be clever here I can actually get a photograph of all this happening.'

produced - "There are few activities which are so stereotyped and less abandoned to the anarchy of individual interpretation". (Bourdieu 1990:19).

However, I have also suggested that conventionalised pictures may form simply a starting point for more reflexive, personal recollection, a point which seems to stress also the tele-grammatology of these

souvenirs and pictures as connections to past events: 'Souvenirs may be defined as those artefacts which have been preserved because they represent for the individual concerned the tangible essence of a

past experience. They are objects which form the starting point for a personal narrative and which demonstrate the truth of the story' (Pearce 1989:6). That is points of departure, arrival and traces of passage, not part

Mike: Imperial War Museum?

Rod: yer. I went there three or four years ago and that was alright, but a lot better now a lot more - I suppose when I say better certainly for children than anything else. You know there are video screens showing you the tanks in operation and everything else like that err, there's a lot more to be seen. ..err my father was out in North Africa in the war the Eighth Army so I got interested in what's going on with him and asked him about the war and where he was, cos you know I always thought he was at the back but he turned out to be transport he was maintaining frontline transport."

of a collection, a totalised discourse of placement. They are messengers to selves and others of a time apart, an extra-ordinary time; metonymic parts of another time brought home (Gordon 1986).

Programmatology and constant comparative assessments of sites.

If the experience is thus structured in a seriated form then what is offered is not a heritage experience but a moment in a stream of experiences. Pessimistically, the regime of sights supports a flow of tourists which, while ostensibly about individual canonical sites, is

actually 'fundamentally nothing more than the leisure of going to see what has become banal .. The same modernisation that removed time from the voyage also removed from it the reality of space' (Debord 1967: th168; cf. Robins 1991a). It is thus a diffuse regime concerned with the provisioning of multiple fragments to maintain these perpetual flows, the analysis of which Dienst parodically calls 'programmatology' (1994:138). By using this term I wish to draw out parallels with televisual media beyond the simple enframing of sight/sites. The sheer number of places and events calling on Heritage as some form of justification are thus incapable of ever offering the possibility of experiencing that Heritage - since more of it in other times and sites is continually evoked. Rather than unifying Heritage into a whole a radical reading might turn to the Sartrean version of media as showing always the serial absence of one point from another (Dienst 1994:134). Rather than suturing a subject position into a dream of plenitude, and secure identity, it suggests activities trying to find some rest amid the mitigated positions offered (Houston 1984:184). As such it would seem the parallel is precisely to the modern consuming ego - fragmented and always purchasing in instalments - never a whole subject and never a whole experience (cf. Haug 1987; Krauss 1990; Urry 1990).

However, as I have to see Heritage is bric-a-brac alleged. The flows individual points are

Sid: "It may sound funny but I get the ideas where to go in the winter from that Anneka Rice programme. What's it called, in the helicopter.. Treasure Hunt. I just say 'that place looks good'."

tried to stress it is important not simply experienced as a assemblage, as is often transform the way experienced. I have already

suggested that the practices of photography inherently structure a temporal linkage of experiences. So too must the expectations of visitors who study after study show come with eyes prepared to see. Thus Pocock (1992:238) suggests coach-borne visitors approve of and seek an experience which will confirm their expectations of what will be seen, which in turn are constituted both by guides and by prior knowledge from other sources, even to the extent of forming a shopping list of what should be seen (Prentice 1993).¹⁵ The equivalent places form a spatial and temporal order since each visitor comes with a past and anticipates a future in terms of what they expect to see or learn and what is appropriate behaviour (Redfoot 1984:293).

More benevolently expectations can be linked to the educational effect of museums. The process of discovery learning, so heavily utilised at Heritage attractions, is greatly aided by the expectation that there is something worth learning (Falk & Dierking 1992:105).

¹⁵ Prentice's (1993) figures suggest that at least some 50% of visitors have never seen promotional leaflets, but among those that have they tend to have seen a lot and discriminate among choices. The issue of prior knowledge changes dramatically for themed or special interest tourism (cf. Pocock 1993; Squire 1991, 1994)

But one of this means sites/sights tend to be discussed in terms of not just an intertextual environment, comparing them with say 'tourist art' or famous depictions, but in a comparative sequence where each new site is interpreted in comparison with and relation to previous sites encountered, expectations raised and recollected later in terms of further sites encountered. Such discussions

form a part of the way family groups develop a shared perspective of and an understanding of sites, by discussing their shared history and experiences of them (Falk & Dierking

Betty: I think the advantage with the bath houses which was quite extensive, they didn't excavate till the seventies and they didn't open it like till the eighties .. so it had the advantage of modern visual aids whereas lots of places you go to, which have been open for um twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years can be a bit sort of ordinary. In their visual bits are not very good..

Macdonald & Silverstone 1990).¹⁶

*Bert: We thought it was absolutely staggering, I cannot understand how we didn't know
Betty: Hadn't realised
Bert: how good it was. I mean I knew there was a place near Cardiff, I mean you can hardly avoid that and King Arthur and all the rest of it. But um although one knew there was an amphitheatre there you didn't have any concept of how well it was excavated and how big it was*

1992:44). This is a process of evaluation that is surely of increased importance if the criteria for heritage sites shifts from being the preservation of artefacts to the provision of satisfying experiences to visitors (cf. Hewison 1991a;

Spatial Stories and Excursions to Heritage.

'All the knowledge gained in a passage originates in this experience - a condition that clearly alters the passengers perceptions of time as well as space. The inner durations of consciousness we know as time are, through motion, mapped upon space and integrated into our experience of it'

Leed (1991:75).

I have already tried to stress the idea of the Journey as reworking and spatialising the existing order. The idea, as suggested in chapter VI, has been used to re-theorise the role of visitors, most explicitly by Roger Silverstone (1989, 1988) where he suggests that the given order of the museum can be seen as a text, or more as a version of *la langue*, which is a static, synchronic system. To understand the activity of the visitor is to look to the displacement of fixities through the physical and intellectual motion of its reader (cf. also Gurian 1991; Baxandall 1991).

Without wishing to reprise this idea in full, de Certeau provides a useful focus on what he

16. A strong parallel here emerges with practices of collection, again inscribing new meanings on objects through the struggle to form a totality, versus the idea of the souvenir as part of a narrative (cf. Danet & Katriel 1989; Stewart 1984).

terms the aleatory arts and perambulatory rhetorics of 'pedestrian utterances' (1985a:129, 1984), to suggest that the 'act of going by itself, [is a] tactile apprehension, linking spaces, innumerable anomalies [in a] a number but a number that does not form a series [that] cannot be localised [because] instead they spatialize.' (de Certeau 1985a:127, figure 23). I want to point out that while this section of his work has often formed a populist manifesto, in his conception such arts are very much a dual action. They are based around and rework the existing order. They do not escape or transcend it. They bypass parts, and move through it. (cf. Probyn 1990).

Rod: You go round Petergate in York or the Shambles on a Sunday morning before anyone else is up on a foggy November or December you know Sunday morning and there was nobody around you couldn't see any modern buildings in the distance at all, you know it really took you back. As you're walking long sort of five hundred years ago - except for the kerb stones [laughs].

In many ways this is de Certeau's (1984) point of separating spatial tactics from place-bound strategies - to stress that there is still a difference in power between determining readings and determining the agendas and materials provided. However, it is here worth cautioning further, that within this schema we have to be aware that it provides, and relies upon, very settled and monolithic conceptions of power.¹⁷ As such the popular tends to spring up in the interstices of the dominant order - almost childlike in its innocence and spontaneity (Schirato 1993:284). If the analyst is not careful, the theory produces a double gesture of seeing a systemic social grid while relying on local acts of will to subvert it (cf. Anderson 1992). These acts of will may also be specifically and historically locatable - de Certeau's pedestrians seem a very particular, and gendered, model of urbanity (Kinser 1992).

The richness of the ideas to be found in this approach lurk precisely in the way it plays upon the doubleness of resistance and reproduction, order and evasion and so on. For instance, in picking up the figure of the pedestrian there does seem to be an idealisation of a certain urban lifestyle as popular, discarding different velocities and mobilities as part of the dominant order. Likewise the passer-by as a figure seems to play about the idea of distracted consumption even as it re-works the trope of feminised distraction (Morris 1988b:18) and I have tried to sketch out that spatial stories are not innocent of wider structures. Yet precisely because it plays over this terrain it seems to be to be an appropriate figure to use - it too passes through and among the theoretical landscape of the dominant order - never leaving but never being pinned down. For my purposes here it threw up precisely the issues of the theoretical invisibility of practices of consumption,

¹⁷ A concept of settled order apparent in looking to the fixities of the text rather than seeing it as field of displacements.

Figure 23:

"Doctor Livingstone I presume?"



A tactile apprehension of sites can be vitally important to their experience. Here the title was Rog's comment to junior as he shot this frame. Certainly I think the pair of them rather enjoyed the idea of exploring the past together. Though Rog did later cut short their trek through this outer defensive work of the castle - deciding he had seen enough and junior had been stung by enough nettles.

while also subverting the contemplative model of the academy (Morris 1988d).

So for me the idea that what might be accomplished was a re-marking of the absence of these practices, not their direct calling-up. Thus videos seemed to provide a format in which the traces of these practices might appear as disruptive elements in the dominant account. Indeed, the 'evidence' I have gleaned from them cannot be sufficient to form an analytic object, so I have tried to deploy them as such disruptive traces through this chapter. They show interesting aspects, raise questions, suggest the over uni-linear nature of my account - yet never amount to an alternative.¹⁸ They give a sense of the physicality of going to and around places; they are middle-brow forms, collecting and capturing memories and places (see figure 24), already inscribed in an economy of taste; they connect with the idea of stories; with the non-didactic organisation of visits around pleasure and fun; and with an increasingly visual conception of the past.

Sacralised and Domestic Spaces.

The presence of the past.

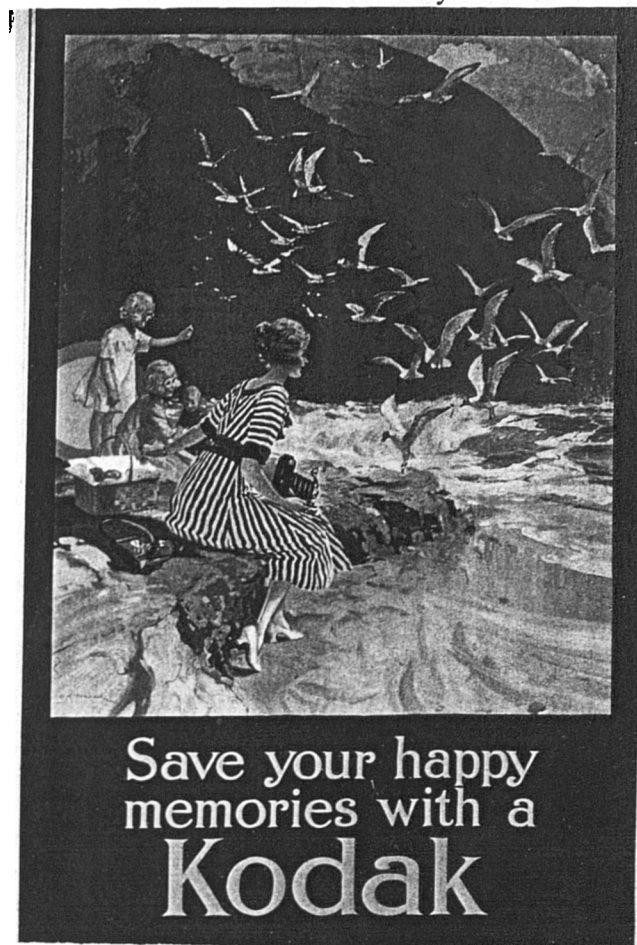
As I began to hint in the ideas of distracted consumption, I am not happy treating Heritage as a static *langue*. I want to look at the way images do not form a static signifying system, but are part of a mobile activity of images, signs and looks. This may be one way to avoid positing an autonomous popular as some salvatory force. Instead it focuses on the way the past is made accessible in the present. At this level there has to be a thinking through of the process of envisioning the past for an era when: 'The past-in-the-present is now a look not a text' (Morris 1988a:2). The figure of the pedestrian evokes for me the right conflictual process where an out-moded form of modern experience, the quintessential figure of the *flâneur*, is brought into an era when the bombardment by visual signs continues yet the speed of life seems wildly unsuited to botanising the asphalt. This figure escapes the hype of excavating the future. It seems it may hold some of the ways atavistic modes can form the basis of heterologic challenges to the dominant order - amid speeding modernity there still echo the footfalls of the pedestrian.

As Morris (1988d:195) notes at this pace different histories become visible - not only the history as presented, or the history of presentation but also the individual history of presentations. At this pace there is room to observe the marks and care,

¹⁸ I must instantly confess though to making a virtue out of necessity. I am not claiming that another researcher could not make these practices into a full analytic object. I could not, or at least I do not think my attempts were successful, and I think their spectral presence, disruptive and half-known, is now as effective as any laboured accounting. But that is a retrospective logic of my research 'journey' not its original destination.

Figure 24:

"The Nation's Storyteller"



Posy Simmonds Every picture tells a story

The pictures here indicate both how, specifically, Kodak but more generally photography has been marketed as producing a record of the self - a modern form of autobiography which inscribes the self as a series of performances. The cartoon below suggests the circumscribed form of this self expression. It is the dialectic of these two tendencies - self-expression and surveilled performance that oscillates throughout this chapter.

the traces of use that show time inscribed in places that purport to stand outside history (cf. de Certeau 1988). It seems this mundane practice anchors the account with the necessarily embodied practice of viewing.¹⁹

Bert: [The video commentary] was very good, it wasn't one of those where you began to get turned off and the other thing which is not always the case err I thought I that the commentary was good clear and sharp. Now if you go down to the maritime heritage centre and listen to the one on the docks that one has been through so many times it's all fuzzy..

The current visual plethora of historic images may well allow a form of 'temporal scavenging' (Sobchak 1990a:42) but that is not the end of the story. The flood of images may seem to undermine any stable claims to reference. Such is a possible line where:

"we now have a deeply illustrated history... But the more richly endowed we are with images, the more detached those images become from the circumstances they purport to record. The past becomes a competing voice and pictures which call upon our attention for from the history books and the magazines; but the reality they represent becomes thin, denatured and inauthentic"

(Chase & Shaw 1989:10).

Yet this delirium seems to float dangerously free of the paradoxical position of the figure of the pedestrian, and the contradictions of spatial stories, and to deny that the very power of these myriad images of historicity is embedded in the possibility of connecting to a past. Let me be clear, I do not seek to deny the radical instability caused by flow of images, nor the theoretical liberations that have been developed to challenge the tyranny of representation (cf. Trinh Minh-ha 1994). Rather theory needs to grasp the dialectical results:

Rod: Having perspex [outlines hung over a model of the ruin] showing the shape of the castle, I thought that was a novel idea [later in interview] You know it gets me thinking like when I went round that place in Scotland, that well this couldn't have been it must have been bigger, you know where did all the peasants live and the stables?

'The contradictions are rich: on the one hand the postmodern deluge of images seems to suggest that there can be no a priori point of truth of the referent to which the image refers; on the other hand, in this same deluge, it is still the moving image that has the power to move audiences to a new appreciation of previously unknown truth.'

Williams (1993:10).

In later sections I want to expand upon the ways filmic spaces connect, shape and

¹⁹ Thus claims that '[t]he past is in danger of becoming a rapidly expanding collection of images, easily retrievable but isolated from time and space, available in an eternal present by pushing the button on the remote control.' (Kaes cited in Williams 1993:10) can be registered as powerful comment without relegating everyone to merely flipping the remote control.

naturalise certain visions of the past. But within the museological field it is important to recognise how images are often both taken and presented as connections to some Real past. Thus museums use pictures without provenance, without any of the labelling so rigorously applied to other artefacts (Porter 1989), while historical documentaries routinely use footage unconnected, yet appearing in keeping, with the incidents described. This style of usage suggests not only the weak link of images of the past with particular pasts yet also their continuing effectivity in providing a link to the past.²⁰

What I want to draw attention to is the way this power of vision as document, both of personal and communal pasts, shapes the experience of Heritage. More than simply converting the world into a series of photo-opportunities that can then be derided as inauthentic, the process of seeing the past produces specific ways in which elements become legible. The "touristic attitude means escaping one's inattentive familiarity with the everyday world, an undifferentiated background against which the forms momentarily separated from everyday preoccupations stand out. From that moment on, everything becomes a source of astonishment, and the travel-guide is a constant call to admiration, a manual of armed and directed perception" (Bourdieu 1990:35).

Rod: I mean say if they were going to knock it down I would prefer them to preserve it, then obviously you wouldn't get the atmosphere again you know. Getting back you know the atmosphere in all these East German railways now is not the same because we all know that they are preserved lines and are not running a normal service. In Poland they still do run a normal service errm five years ago we couldn't take pictures so we used to drive by in a car with a telephoto lens and go 'click' and drive off a bit quick.

Such a separated and concerned attention may render Heritage visible and present. Yet, through the mundanities of walking, it also seems inextricably linked to the way such visions are brought back into the field of everyday preoccupations. '[T]he viewfinder frames a scene away from the cares of everyday life, all the while announcing commitment to that world where these pictures will bring back pleasant memories. It is a fun scene unembarassed and unconcerned by its irreality' (Redfoot 1984:305).²¹ It is this connection that the practice of video and photography seems to highlight so well. Not just the connections to past visits and future audiences but also the materiality of visiting is rendered visible. The genre of goofing around for the camera is well established. At such points the duality of mundanity and alleged connection to the past are highlighted in what

²⁰ The paradoxical force of images is once again sketched out by Michel de Certeau, in his accounts of the transformations of mysticism in the face of modernist rationality. He can claim that the shift is to modern, visible myths: 'Those to whom the legends are addressed ... are no longer obliged to believe what they cannot see (the traditional position), but rather to believe what they do see (the contemporary position).' De Certeau (1985b:153).

²¹ It seems important to note that various strategies and refusals of this sacralising vision, for instance in making 'artistic shots', or, in my case, feeling so awkward about the process that it is refused altogether, or parodying it also rely on specific valorisations from different home audiences.

Bourdieu (1990:25) terms 'deliberate barbarisms' which serve not simply to desecralise the medium but to reveal its normally undisputed power of solemnisation (see figure 21). The dualities of reality/irreality, sacred/profane are bound together where visitors do not surf a world of free floating signifiers but look for links to a real past while also remaining firmly in the fallible and tragi-comic realm of the everyday.²²

Domesticating Pasts.

I have already tried to stress the shift that many heritage sites have made in emphasising the everyday, the ordinary life of people (not necessarily but quite often the life of ordinary people), as a new way of portraying history. The suggestion of a more empathetic link to the past seems important in presentational strategies.²³

Such a strategy is not unproblematic in the way it may seek to emphasise an almost humanistic concern with a supposedly universal experience rather than the specificities of historical and geographic differences. I have already outlined the cogent critique of how some sites seem to operate by blurring the boundaries of folk memory and presentation (chapter II, eg Hewison 1991b). In the case of the mobilisation of stock images by shopping malls, Langman (1992:49) notes that '[t]hey

Rod: I was away thinking about the things it didn't tell me
Mike: uh huh
Rod: well the castle wouldn't have been like that, there would have been stables there would have been outbuildings ... things like that it didn't tell me and I think that possibly, though there was a history of it and when it was built and everything else and things like they talked about the architecture and what was there they didn't go into the err probably what they thought it would have been like and that from my point of view I thought would have been interesting.

create nostalgic memories of neighbourhood and lost community, or at least Christmas-card images of a past abundant with goods and social cohesion'; and their creation is one of the things that works to destroy any vestiges of the very types of communality they portray - "They simulate communities of memory as a means of encouraging privatization" (ibid.). Thus the loss of community suggested in oral history promotes a desire for community located in the imaginary that can be appealed to by commodified forms.

Such movements between personal experience and presented history are important processes in making the past intelligible. The dual consequences are to provide both an effective didactic technique while also allowing a more pernicious concretisation of the past as a generic 'time-gone-by'. For instance, individual sites or interpreters may well take

²² It is keeping this anchor to embodied practice that aligns this account to elements of phenomenological analysis, and refuses a wholesale acceptance of the Deleuzian interpretation of flows of images which puts 'phenomenology in reverse and makes subjectivity a wandering orphan among these images' (Dienst 1994:p148; Deleuze 1991).

²³ I have suggested we can see this strategy in local history and in the next chapter I shall foreground it in relation to the whole concept of living history.

stories from the fund of communal folklore and personalise them - either to the site, a character there or themselves (eg Katriel 1993:73). But such a situation is the characteristic noman's land of media attempting to make the unfamiliar knowable (Nichols 1994:74; Silverstone 1989:140, 1988:232). Broadly faced with new information there is a widely noted trend to either 'spectacularise' and render it exotic or to domesticate it and render it familiar.²⁴

One of the ways this can perhaps be seen working is through the interpretive work of visitors. If they work by a process of connection to other sites, so also they work by a series of links to other sources of memory and experience; for instance, the presentations of 'working people' connect to other discourses from oral history to historic photos.

The practices that animate heritage operate at the intersection of the participants' life-stories and the stories told by the displays (de Certeau 1984). Each time heritage is performed it is open to alteration. I suggested above that the stories woven appeal to

everyday experiences. *But in order to be domesticated in this way, they must be opened up to people's (class, race and gender influenced) experiences.* The way heritage appeals is to invite the actor to take the proffered readings of the past and reorder/domesticate them into a story that makes sense to the actor. To each exhibit people bring a host of metonymic others - personal resonances that are set off, memories and connections triggered by the display (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1991:389; Jordanova 1989).

Visitors' imaginations are a part of the

experience as much as anything else. Visitors appropriate the site to themselves as expressed in the routes and tempo of visits. For, if the site organises time by space, to physically wander from topic to topic as idiosyncratically as their thoughts wander (Silverstone 1988:239; cf. Sieburth 1987). Such wandering visitors are not 'dysfunctional' or resistant to Heritage in a straightforward manner. The technology of heritage can be seen

Rod: I think we tend to ruin a lot of our city centres.

Mike: Big plate windows?

Rod: Big plate windows and things like that.

Yeah I just hope that perhaps when we've got over got all these wonderful superstores or whatever around and we can get back to or revert to what we had years ago, I think it was much more attractive.

Rod: My friend, his grandfather used to be on the boats going out of here [Bristol] and he tells you all about pulling up outside the Nova Scotia [a pub nearby] you know while they were all waiting to get out [of the locks].. I think I'm the same as you, it's a question of you look back at history and then you talk about the development and why it happened.. I went through, funnily enough I went through where the unions started a few days ago, I took my parents out for a run round err

Mike: Tolpuddle?

Rod: Tolpuddle yeah. But again I mean you see how the unions developed and people to actually fight against some of the landlords

²⁴ We might see this as a typical dilemma of Western ontology more generally - reducing the Other to the Same in order to understand it (Godzich 1986; Levinas 1989; Young 1990).

as aiming to foster just these multiple links in order to provide visitors with satisfying empathetic experiences. Multiple sources, contextual information, digressions and even the actions of the 'perverse body' do not resist but move through the opportunities presented by site/sights (cf. Klinger 1991).

Such an ontological position is deeply implicated in both the choice of research methodology and the textual construction of this chapter. In the first place, video may capture some sense of the 'perverse body', of sacrileges through a sense of the embodied materiality of knowledge - the process of proprioception. Such seems to connect and spin around the way video formats have often led to the abandoning of a middle distance depiction of scenes and instead suggested a more autobiographical personal construction of truth through engagement with the world (Nichols 1994:76). Secondly, video seems to capture the problem of making the strange familiar, in the way media work at the boundary or interface of home and away, private and public times (Silverstone, Hirsch & Morley 1992:20). The video represents one way in which the foreign is brought into the home, but brought in a controlled manner. Thirdly, the process of getting videos of sites then getting the makers to comment on them and then watching and commenting again on all that seemed to provide a research process which reflects the digressional logic of Heritage experiences. Fourthly, the presentation of these as a series of interspersions in the text both represents the incompleteness of the material and also hopefully disrupts the contrived line of the text.

Videographic apparatus.

Circulation of film: aesthetics and parallels

The vision of the past is a practice of enframing of the world - a will-to-vision (Dienst 1994:123) - which undoubtedly produces a vast repertoire of images of the past. Not only does it produce such a plethora of material but it shapes the way other material is treated, the way it is made perceptible and intelligible. Thus such an idea of envisioning runs contrary to the advice of many theorists, for instance Shields (1991:14) who states that a 'clear distinction must be made between research into people's existential participation in their environment and research into the culturally mediated reception of *representations* of environments, places, or regions which are 'afloat in society' as 'ideas in currency'.' Instead my focus is on how people's ways of seeing make the past part of TV culture's curiosity shop of fragments (Dienst 1994:31; Fiske 1989). By focusing on the awkward, already commodified, already positioned, already meaning-saturated, already violent practices of envisioning in making video diaries it may be possible to escape a romanticisation of

popular imaginings as some 'representational space' operating autonomously from, threatened by and in magical resistance to the representations afloat in society (Lefebvre 1991). Instead these practices highlight the more fertile idea of the production of new imagined spaces and pasts.

One of the types of space film has often created has been an enframing of the other as exhibit or tableau vivant. Both documentary film and classical anthropology had a tendency to create the world as a space of the human zoo, they produced spaces that contained

Using the guide provided not only an authoritative commentary but one that fitted Sid's film's style. In order to keep his film moving, to give it narrative flow, no one building could be held for too long. An architectural depiction is actionless, whereas here the guide book provided sound-bites, originally captioning stills, that could now run alongside shots - with the occasional intercut or fade from historical illustration provided in the guidebook and filmed later at home. The little bits of guide fitted his need to keep the plot moving. Thus the main narrative was the replacement of a flower market by the bustle now associated with the area. Historical pieces had voice overs, contemporary action had synched sound and were mostly of juggling or panning shots showing throngs of shoppers.

"frozen images of particular stretches of life. This is not only a feature of visual records. Most anthropological analyses are done upon dead stretches of experience". (Hastrup 1992a:15, 1992b). The documentary was a map not an itinerary, others were placed in televisual spaces as rigidly as in any classical museum. Whereas the filmed space for those represented was so often still the space allowed in the Royal Geographic Society lecture where those that were formerly depicted on slides now had moving cameos (Michaels 1981:140; Rabinowitz 1993) video promotes new spaces. For a start the cheapness and reusability of video means it can be left running, events do not require such a rigid temporal bracketing and the camera can track hours of events - not just the especially significant (or those thought to be significant in advance)²⁵ - that can be later sifted and utilised. The element of planning, so antithetical to the ideology of 'snaps', is reduced and the possibilities of the new media are open to both professionals and the public.²⁶

There are further changes in filmed spaces opened up by the technical changes in video. For a start it's decreasing size and thus increasing portability has changed the sort of shot which is easiest and most accessible. With heavy film cameras, many documentarists opted for the middle distance panning shot, uncut to show its 'naturalness', while video allows

²⁵ This sort of consideration was vital to the video methodology I followed. A reusable cassette cost some £7 for 45 minutes (on average for different formats) with instant playback; had I used the 8mm cine camera the equivalent figures would be £3 per minute with no immediate check on what had been taken. The latter would have made the free-form recording of visits impossible. The limited illustration of this chapter is due to the price of extracting stills from video being £5 per shot.

²⁶ At the cross-over the BBC produces a series called 'video diaries' in which members of the public tell their stories in their own terms with virtually total editorial control. The technical possibilities of video mean that each participant produces between 200 and 1000 hours of raw footage for one half hour programme.

the close up, and mobile and inter-personal dynamics to be stressed. This serves to reinsert the filmmaker as present, whereas the long shot and distance reinforce idea that the other is somewhere untouched 'out there' (Michaels 1981:134; Pinney 1992; see figure 25) None of which is to say video provides a technical fix for problems of representation but it does change the spaces that documentaries create, documentaries that both feed in as content and comparison to the practice and products of Heritage sights and visitors.

The personal, immediate film space has become a new badge of authenticity and

Bert: So what do you think of the place... No there you go talking across the camera after all you say about HTV doing that..

documentary truth, complete with the aesthetic of 'cinema naïveté' (Chalfen 1987) valorising the 'wobblyscope' (Dovey 1992) low resolution material as presenting an unpackaged human angle, reinforcing the confessional genre of personal truths in video diaries.²⁷ Video opens new spaces, by counterpointing the trends in dominant representations, much like critical ethnography, and equally relies on that dominant canon to give it oppositional force (Marcus 1994:45; Moore 1994). Video has not transformed the grounds of struggle but does allow some new ways of grasping the world - National Geographic may still want hidden microphones and exotic natives as subjects, but increasingly these groups are getting the wherewithal to produce their own representations (cf. Aufderheide 1992; Ginsburg 1993, 1991; Thede & Ambrosi 1991; Turner 1991)

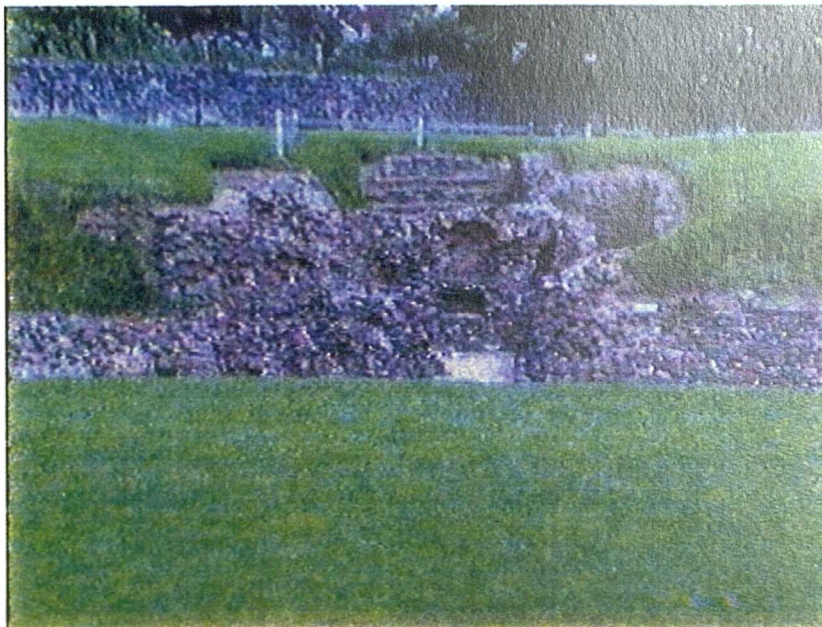
Self-representation has then become one of the possibilities and spaces opened up by the camcorder revolution. Obviously, such self-representation is not an option for historical figures before film. However, it has three interrelated implications for Heritage, firstly in the production of film material on events within living memory, secondly, on the production of histories by communities about their own history and thirdly in the more general aesthetic that frames such presentations. If I take the first implication briefly, there may be change in the 'videographic apparatus' with people representing themselves, and reproducing their own mini-panopticons²⁸ but certainly challenging the power of official panoptic gazes (Berko 1992). There may not be a direct challenge but as with oral history, groups previously without access are participating. Indeed one of the local groups I worked with had produced its own video of the history of the area, cutting from present views as they walked around the area to historic pictures.²⁹ The use of film both about history and current conditions positions 'the camera as an *active* mass tool of representation [and].. a

²⁷ Or, to take a different example, in the anti-Gulf war output of 'guerrilla video' from organisations such as Deep Dish or Paper Tiger, which mix high and poor resolution - the latter signifies it was made by real people, in real places and had not come from the bowels of the Pentagon (Lucas & Wallner 1993:184; cf. Berko 1988)

²⁸ The multitudinous surveillance again impacts on using videos in this project. Not only in self-presentation, but in the surrounding discourse. CNN has schemes training people how to produce videos as its newshounds. In the city of Bristol, and elsewhere, video vigilantes film social 'nuisances' as evidence and as a measure of social sanction.

²⁹ Interestingly even these were done on rostrum cameras to allow tracking shots as though entering into the space of the photo and walking through the area (cf. Barton Hill History Group 1987).

Figure 25:

Reinstating the Filmmaker in the Spaces of Video.

These pictures illustrate nicely the reinstatement of the filmmaker in video footage. Compare the distant long shot above with the interactional setting below. The above shot was part of a panning sequence used to establish the location of later shots. It should be clear I am not saying video means all shots are about close-up interaction merely that it does facilitate it.

vehicle for documenting one's conditions' (Slater 1982:245).

In the context of the wider impact of these changes on the way the past is framed, I suggested the long shot has been downplayed and there is an increasing emphasis on ordinary people appearing as stars - an emphasis that marries with the shifts in museological emphasis.³⁰ (See figure 26). However, this aesthetic locates truth in the immediacy of a subjective vision. The truth value becomes immediate experience instead of the studied objectivity or rhetorical structure of conventional documentary. In the same way, the Reithian ideologies underpinning public education were giving way to critiques about the assumed universality of the culture to be shown - mass media did more than make cultural treasures accessible to everyone, it transformed the way those treasures could be defined in the *musée imaginaire* (cf. Georgel 1994; Jay 1994; Roberts 1988; Ruby 1991; Silverstone 1988). Likewise museums had begun to absorb not only market-led philosophies but cohorts of professionals brought through university courses critical of any supposed mission of bringing a universal culture to the masses.

All of this feeds into the human interest vignette in museums - the role-played characters and the display techniques of telling stories through fictional(ised) or real(istic) historical figures. Surely again connecting to the parallel rise of docudramas more generally (McKerns 1980). This trend must be placed in the context of wider critiques that what is thus placed on display is a:

"fragmented interactive pot-pourri of reality and fantasy ... and where the structure of the exhibition mimics the fragmentary ephemerality of television in its generation of the minor didactic episodes which stand as the echoes and shadows of grander and more coherent narratives. Everything fast-forwarded. Everything user-friendly"

(Silverstone 1988:233).

It may be that these episodes struggle to embed objects in realistic contexts yet they also embed them in the specific context of a viewing technology drawn from our own three minute culture (cf. Pinney 1992:34).

30. The links of media and museum have been drawn out using a different approach by Roger Silverstone who also comments on how "museums, heritage sites and television documentary together create reality as a textual phenomenon in which objects or images (or sounds) of objects are textualised and contextualised in a comparable effort to claim authenticity." (1988:142).

Figure 26:

Role-Played History, Visual Fictions and the Spaces of Video.



The still here is taken from a video made by the author at the Manor (see chapter X). Notice the confluence of visitor participation, activity, and the spaces of close up visual recording. A costumed interpreter has is out of frame left, describing paper-making. The two men right are working at pulping reeds. The attention of the crowd was divided between him demonstrating the strength of reed fibre and the men in the picture. The whole area was dominated by the thumping and squelching of their press. Contrast this with figure 22.

Surveillance, performance and video.

'To be means to *communicate* .. To be means to be for the other, and through him, for oneself. Man [sic] has no internal sovereign territory; he is all and always on the boundary; looking within himself he looks *in the eyes of the other or through the eyes of the other.*'

Bakhtin (in Todorov 1984:96).

If one of the practices at Heritage sites is the re-composing of events into a domesticated narrative, then the video as a record seems an innocent enough tool. Of course, the participants knew I would be watching them. Some sceptical staff asked whether this performance element would not "bias" my findings. Of course, this misses the point that it is the way this performance works that seems embedded in Heritage at both the personal and institutional level. I made a brief mention above of the surveillance capacities of video not only in closed circuit cameras but in the hands of the public. If the general output of camcorder programmes is sifted through there is the strong sense of factual content being packaged with excitement, the mixing of voyeurism and involvement. More than that, in series following the police (*The Nick* or *Blue and 2* in the UK, *America's Most Wanted* in the US) the shift in point of view seems to be to align the camera with the forces of the state (cf.. Keighron 1993; Nelson 1989). So I want to throw a caution against suggesting the camcorder aesthetic is solely about giving people power over their own representations.³¹ If I may quote at length:

"Is this a new populist aesthetic purging the bourgeois professionalism of network television in the name of a post-modern videocracy? Or is it simply a new urban idiocy; another turn of the screw by the moguls of consumer surveillance? What isn't going to work here is a trendy, populist cultural-studies take that sees all this in terms of liberatory *empowerment*. If video is increasingly a device for stitching us into a digital *gesellschaft* [sic] (only disconnect) that the television set had been accused of dismantling, then just look at the particular way so much of the new video tech addresses us - as spies and competitors."

Goodwin (1993:26).

The mobile enframing of heritage may then come all too close to a more panoptic model of internalised surveillance; the enframing may well leave visitors as active participants in their own monitoring, performing on a mediated postmodern stage (Berko 1992). These video enframings are like being on constant standby for a call up for 15 minutes of fame³² until the idea of a linear "self is annihilated and all that is left is an ephemeral situational

31 Although it should be clear that letting participants make their own records was at least an attempt to get away from the academic having total control (cf. Worth 1981:95).

32 The eagerness to appear in anything to do with TV perhaps further mitigates the idea of informed consent to research (Macdougall 1993:33; Ruby 1991:54).

reality that emerges in interaction rituals. It is like the smile of the Cheshire cat. It exists only when observed by the Other. In the Hegelian struggle for recognition, now the plight of everyman [sic], everyman is losing the struggle" (Langman 1992:65; cf. Craib 1990; Lasch 1977).³³ The significance of this is important for Heritage, not just in the sense of visitors coming to both see and be seen but in the sense that communication and recognition by Others is surely what sacralises Heritage. It too is playing the game of seeking recognition. The section began with a quote from Mikhail Bakhtin on the necessity of the other for communication, now it may be possible to suggest that 'taking the role of the Other is now to imagine that we are being seen via camera by the larger audience of home viewers' (Langman 1992:56)

The idea of an almost narcissistic drive seems important to understand both practices at heritage sites and the motors of Heritage. It is an over simple thing to dichotomise the participatory festival and the media spectacle (eg Greenwood 1977) but it is important to perhaps think how Ainu ethnic identity is only coming to be acknowledged in Japan in terms of the tourist (Berghe & Keyes 1984; Friedman 1990), or the importance of generating usable footage by struggling groups to gain global attention for their causes (Schechter 1991; Turner 1991). In terms of how the past is presented by groups this seems to tie in with the aesthetic shifts mentioned earlier, where identities and histories need to be enframed so as to be recognised by others.³⁴ There is a danger in even progressive attempts at portraying history that communities, places and peoples are simply packaged into an effect for others. In order to be 'portable', the past is made over into a filmed aesthetic that equates memory with history, the recall of events over historic footage, and binds all this into closed linear stories (Rosenstone 1988:1174). Perhaps it thus accedes to the universalisation of the tourist gaze, rendering all histories into its form (Urry 1990:125)

Signs of resemblance.

In terms of Heritage as a transformation of the past, the above suggests that the viewer is being put in to the position of surrogate witness, viewing the past and gaining truths not

³³ In contrast to my suggestion that the performance also relies on grounding in a sense of the quotidien Langman (1992:65) continues in polemical vein that if Nietzsche announced the death of God, Goffman announced the death of the soul (or at least the terms of its sale) but the corpse doesn't know it is dead and is still on stage waiting for the applause. Such seems to be the sort of analysis Meaghan Morris derides as 'a dim pathology of the contemporary which amounts to Art is everywhere and Life is vague' (1988c:178). However, the contrast with the classical, bourgeois, autobiographical self could not be stronger (see chapter VII; Maynes 1989).

³⁴ The measure to which this is not a natural process can be seen in the Kayapo's largely successful self-objectification to take advantage of global media. Yet still that was an objectification where before they had no similar conception of a discrete thing such as Kayapo culture (Ginsburg 1989; Tuner 1991; Moore 1993).

from some grand schema but from the immediacy of experience. As such the risk is clearly that the portrayals work to produce explanations in terms of the internal psyche of characters. That is, whereas cinema verité sought to create a naturalised exterior as guarantee of truth, newer documentary aesthetics focus on the internal states of those portrayed - producing a universal timeless set of human motives and feelings instead of historical process and change (Rush 1990; Toplin 1988). There is a lighter touch to most displays than this. Mostly, the strategy provides an imaginative link with how things were used in the past, providing an aid to visualising what went on.

The use of camcorders by participants also folds back into this, for in both cases analytic attention should be paid as much to the enframing devices as any purported content. Neither exhibits nor camcorder footage provide a neutral or factual window on the world that can be opposed to activities of imagining and story-telling; "reality is more fabulous, more maddening, more strangely manipulative than fiction. To understand this is to recognize the naïveté of a development of a cinematic technology that promotes increasingly unmediated access to reality" (Trinh Minh-ha 1990:88). All of this suggests the parallel problems of video research and historic exhibition. Much in vogue in the former is the auto-biographical film, where reflexivity becomes self-reflectivity, to the extent that the focus of attention can shift from the subjects of film to the makers (Marshall 1992).

One of the thoughts motivating my attempts to portray Heritage here has been to show the artifice of its process of enframing; to show how it does not preserve or transmit but transforms and envisions.³⁵ However, I am aware of the paradox which occurs if I suggest that while Heritage constructs the past it is somehow open to me to find Heritage (cf. Ashmore 1989). Hence I have tried to litter this chapter with connections, digressions and contradictions of a 'disjunctive ethnology' that 'refuses the scientism of colonialist anthropology [and] is highly aestheticised, but the role of the film-maker is less that of the artist than that of the tourist, who is sign among signs, not a visionary initiate' (Russell 1992:134). My commentary does not stand above but alongside the evaluations of the participants - they are all equally part of the discourse. Hopefully, then, this provides one means of side-stepping the need to produce an 'authentic' totality of a field.

Yet such a strategy seems unlikely for Heritage. Indeed it is perhaps the mark of 'disjunctive ethnography' that it remains ghettoised and preaching to the converted. The form may be radical but the position of enunciation is clearly limited (Bourdieu 1991a) as with many well thought histories

³⁵ I have here taken my cue from diverse work on the techniques of the observer to use Crary's phrase eg Breitbart 1981, Bryson 1988, Crary 1990, 1988, Krauss 1990, 1988, Ronnell 1989.

"there is a rapidly shrinking general audience for the information we have to deliver and the sort of stories we have to tell. Despite the success of our new methodologies, I fear that as a profession we know less and less how to tell stories that situate us meaningfully in a value-laden world. Stories that matter to people outside our profession. Stories that matter to people inside the profession. Stories that matter at all."

(Rosenstone 1988:1175).

The conundrum Rosenstone faces is that filmic histories are more popular and significant than the finest wrought text. However, films end up sacrificing grand process and complexity to linearity and plot structure (ibid.:1180). The aesthetic used by Heritage seems to be that very holistic attempt to create a diegetic character world that disjunctive ethnography critiques. Even within radical traditions, the replacement of the outside narrator and commentator positions oral history narration or read sources as major characters rather than abstract forces (Rush 1990; Youdelman 1982), which might be seen as both empowering and de-totalising, but ends up in part 'leaving it to the audience'. But that there is an 'it', a real version, tends not to be in doubt (Trinh Minh-ha 1990).

This chapter is about a structuring absence, the impossibility of creating a full and complete knowledge of the past (cf. Nichols 1987:11). But much historical portrayal seems to be developing a sense of the opposite. While this is not worrying in itself, things that should be the touchstones of historiography - objects, letters, recollections - become the *voice* of the past (MacDougall 1994:261; Rabinowitz 1993). The recreation of the past, in film or dioramas, seems then to claim the authority of witnessing the past. The previous chapter may said to have been on signs of loss. Here the sites people chose were all signs of survival - indexical signs showing the passage of time (cf. MacDougall 1994; Warburton 1991). In the next chapter I want to follow up the trends suggested here when the process of enframing produces signs of replacement and signs of resemblance. These do not show the passage of time but rather form a staged version of the past where an iconic link is made, they resemble other images of the past, they show not what happened but the *kind* of thing that existed. However, they employ the documentary witness aesthetic, suggesting they present not icons and touchstones but the past itself.

Living History's Magic Kingdoms: Playing Sancho Panza in a Quest for Authenticity ?

Introduction.

In this chapter, I want to pick up on many of themes and conjunctions occurring in previous chapters and look at them through a particular form of Heritage interpretation - that of living history. I attempt to explore the creation of a sense of the past through living history. This is a sense that, it has been argued, is set up in terms of a fivefold experience where the past is seen as a) unlike the present; b) providing an escape to an idealised past; c) educational force; d) a visual experience of past times; e) a means for restoring a feeling of continuity with forebears (Enscore 1993; Lowenthal 1989c). It is, therefore, a constellation of senses and desires which form a backdrop against which I shall stage living history. However, rather than focus on these senses as outcomes to be examined or tested I want to explore the network of practices that produce such sensations. The account focuses on the relationship of the creative processes involved in staging the past - principally through the idea of this form of heritage as an impossible, hence quixotic, quest.

By approaching the topic in this manner I hope to go beyond standard analyses which have suggested that a focus on an eclectic mix of historical artefacts/replicas produces a surface of 'historicality' rather than an understanding of history (Walsh 1992; Fowler 1992; Hewison 1987). However the reflective language of portrayal and image used by such authors is symptomatic for, by and large, they concentrate on the past as made present in images. Preserved buildings are not seen so much as sites for interpretive practices as facades that represent an appearance of 'pastness' as a wildly eclectic mix of aesthetically attractive bits of the past, snippets and interesting little vignettes. Living history it is suggested, is a tabloid history that turns to 'shallow titillation' (Walsh 1992:1), the standards of *Citizen Kane* (if there is no history then invent some) and the clichéd human interest story. My purpose is not to deny that these are ingredients in this potent cocktail. Rather I wish to suggest other ways in which they are seen and experienced.

So within this chapter my plan is to begin by outlining the scale of living history. I shall then begin to follow connections to visual manipulation and practices thrown up

by the last chapter. These practices are used to link into the manipulation of time and space implied by living history. Such manipulations have been the source of a great deal of adverse academic commentary of which I give a flavour before also trying to ground such commentaries in terms of tastes and social status. The contradictions of these positions are explored in the next section, where my own uneasy shuttlings from field to academy provide the stage for analyses of the position of living history through my position in attempting to study it. In the light of the tense relationship of the previous sections, I then look to the production of knowledge through living history, asking if it is populist in production yet conservative in product, or conservative in form yet radical in content, suggesting both parallels and differences with the academy in how knowledges are 'enjoyed'. By focusing on knowledge as one locus of 'enjoyment' I hope to move further in the next section to look at other pleasures produced in living histories I took part in. Finally, I consider the role of critical understanding as fostered or inhibited by these pleasures.

Contexts, Locations and Forms.

There is a growing army in the service of historical infotainment who work to interpret historic sites through re-enactment and costume interpretation (Marling 1994). As some indication of the scale and diversity of the activities taken on by these foot-soldiers of historical interpretation we can point to the estimates of some 800 living history museums in North America (Leone 1987:36). Then there is the growing use of costumed interpreters among the historic sites of Britain either as permanent features of certain museums (Beamish, Quarrybank Mill, the Black Country Museum and many others) or as 'special events' at more conventional sites. Thus English Heritage (the government preservation quango), alone, can produce a 30 page booklet of such events giving an average number of 120 events per year (English Heritage 1992; 1993), events that, in 1986, employed at least 13 different re-enactment groups of varying periods (Roman to First World War) and varying sizes and styles of interpretation (Giles 1986).¹ Beyond this centrally organised realm of events are those organised locally by curators with local groups² or by other organising bodies. Thus re-

¹ Walsh suggests that in 1989 48% of 'special events' were of a military orientation (Walsh 1992:102), a survey of 1993 and 1994 English Heritage events catalogues suggests about 35% and 34% respectively were 'military'; classifying events of domestic life *and* combat as military but not counting as military just domestic life in a castle. In terms of number of participants the military would tend to involve many, many more than the others though.

² Although as of 1993, English Heritage was cutting the discretionary funds available for curators to employ local

enactors can also be seen at Tetley's Leeds based social history of the pub, at Hampton Court (run by the Royal Palaces) and in other less well known locations, such as Iford Manor in Somerset (cf. Marling 1994). Before this 'growing army' of re-enactors is made to sound like a conquering force, sweeping all before it, I have to add that it remains a 'special event' or marketing ploy aiming to offer a distinctive experience in a competition among 41 heritage centres, 464 industrial and 817 rural history museums in the UK (Urry 1990:105).

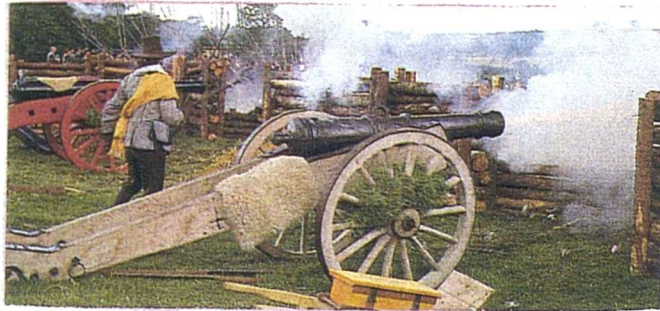
I have sought to ground this work in the relevant positionality and particular tactics of two re-enactment groups which promote themselves with the claim that they 'bring history back to life'. Such 'living histories' have been divided into living museums, experimental archaeology and recreational events (Anderson 1984, Glassberg 1986). The first category is that organised as an educational and interpretative strategy with paid employees in museums or heritage centres. The second is where historical evidence is used to research and recreate artefacts and to test theories about them deduced from remains. The third category is where volunteers take part in a recreation (in all senses) for their own enjoyment. The two groups I joined and worked with as a participant observer come into this last category, though I hope to show that elements of all three categories were embroiled in their practices of interpretation.

The two groups employed markedly different practices. The first, with which I was involved for 2 years, was one of the smaller societies recreating the British Civil War 'campaigning' over a season from April to October. In the course of this season, units organise and travel to 'musters', varying in size, frequency and theme, to restage different parts of the conflict. Some events were held in 'open fields' but the majority were promoted by English Heritage to attract visitors to their sites which had played a role in that conflict. The largest recreations had up to 1800 participants for a weekend and might occur 3 or 4 times a season while other smaller events, such as skirmishes or living histories, filled in the calendar. It might be possible to go to 6 to 8 events up and down the country in a normal season, though not everyone would. What events you attended was dependent on the unit in which you 'served' and your own commitments. Like most of the other participants I encountered, I joined a unit to which I had some connections, via a friend, which happened to be the 'Parliamentarie Trayne of Artillery' (figure 27) and began, like many others, by borrowing equipment

groups - thus forcing one local group I was involved with to move to a privately owned site.

Figure 27:

The Parliamentarie Trayne of Artillery



The two illustrations are of cannon in action. The top is taken from a re-enactment I attended and is meant to suggest to noise and smoke produced by the guns. Below is reproduced a picture of the unit I joined taken from a brochure, hopefully this suggests something of the scale of the largest gun used. The gun was renowned for setting off car alarms at a quarter of a mile.

until I/they could make or purchase it from the 'traders' that attend major events.

The second society I joined was dedicated to the recreation of Tudor domestic life, based on a Tudor manor (hereafter 'the Manor'³) in the south east of England, portraying a different period year each calendar year and offered me a less bloodthirsty form of re-enactment. Here, the recruitment was not only via contacts but also via newspaper advertisements⁴ which asked whether readers would like to "*Live as a Tudor*", appearing to catch the very spirit of 'time-travel'. Upon applying every prospective recruit underwent a process of interviewing and seminars to train them for the event, receiving notes on costume of the period. This was vetted at a further interview. The event itself lasted for a month with participants staying from one week up to the whole event, and possibly returning for shorter events on selected weekends.⁵ It was visited by members of the public on weekends and school children wearing home-made costumes on weekdays. The Tudor depiction was designed to show daily life in the heyday of the family who built the Manor and chimed with the national curricula which has the Tudor period as a topic of study.

In a further piece of context setting it has to be noted that 'living history' is not easily defined - unless one adopts the common denominator of 'historic costume' which then includes fancy dress balls (Fortier 1987). However, it is worth differentiating between what might be termed third and first person styles of interpretation. Third person styles use a costumed interpreter who explains the significance of what is happening. They can comment on what '*they*' did *then* and its connections with the present, or how it might fit into wider social trends of the period. In many ways the costume is decorative and the interpreter *tells* the audience what is going on. By contrast first person interpretation involves the participant acting in period role and *showing* them what would have been going on. The only figures I have suggest that, in the US, the

³ I have adopted the 'the Manor' as a pseudonym for the site of the event, since any trumped up name seemed to inevitably parade my feelings about the site. It is entirely possible, I suspect, to deduce the actual site - since it is fairly unique - but I have taken that risk for several reasons. Firstly, to leave the site totally unidentifiable would require leaving out many of the specificities that make it an interesting study, and a great deal of rich material that would leave the analysis very unfocused. Secondly, such a blurring would risk generalising too greatly the techniques for a field that varies a great deal - indeed discussing this with one re-enactor he pointed out that by making his group sound like another group (of whom he did not have a high opinion) I would risk readers suggesting that my interpretation did not correspond with their experiences. Thirdly, anyone who has the ability to work out the various groups and figures will probably be a member of one of the groups in any case.

⁴ The newspapers I know of were the local paper, the graduate recruitment section of *the Guardian* and the magazine '*Graduate Recruitment*'.

⁵ These had started as being only Bank Holiday weekends, but by popular demand (I could never quite work out whether it was the public, the participants', the owners' or all of the above) this had been extended to six weekends throughout the summer.

former outnumbered the latter eight to one, and in the UK the promotional literature of first person interpreted sites stresses their uniqueness. Both groups I worked with used first person styles, though for large scale 'battle' re-enactments the civil war society used a third person commentator on a speaker system. Once again my choice was not aimed at being representative but at exploring how the sense of the past as separate, and living history as a *time machine*, worked.

Reel History and Cinematic Spaces.

In the last chapter I set out to explore the cinematic recording of visitors experiencing historic sites. Here I want to begin by suggesting living history is one way in which history is rendered available not just as images but as the production of cinematic spaces. Many people have suggested that theatrical and dramaturgical metaphors are ideally suited to showing the performative nature of living history. My emphasis on dramatic practices is very much of a piece with this perspective, but I think it is perhaps worth focusing the analogy a little more closely. For the groups I studied, I think the parallel is better worked through with regard to cinematic than stage conventions. The way they sought to create a fictionalised space entirely filled with the past seemed similar to how film invites our gaze to be within the cinematic space of the action. Re-enactment echoes this - inviting the visitors to 'time travel'.

*'War is Hell .. but pretty to watch from a safe distance''*⁶

At a large scale muster the voice over announced that what could be seen was like a bloody form of chess, and the spectators set apart from the action were invited to use their commanding view to see what was denied to the participants. The viewer saw the fog of war but retained a visual mastery over the whole scene which the participants did not have - or certainly one that I lost when running around dragging a cannon. When I went to watch a rival group re-enactment the distancing, imposed by safety restrictions⁷, made me feel somewhat detached and bored (figure 28). However, a look around revealed that although many other viewers were also asking what the hell was going on, there was also a vast array of video and high-powered cameras with imposing

⁶ This was a brief aside from a Civil War re-enactor as we stood atop the brow of a hill over-looking a mocked up battle.

⁷ Although at a recent event this distance did not stop cannon somewhat unfortunately setting fire to the car park - as reported with a good deal of mirth on ITN news (26/8/94). What I would point out is that the footage of cannon and fire was already and anyway being compiled by film crews at the event.

Figure 28:

Battle Extravaganza in the Middle Distance



A picture of a re-enactment of the siege of Bristol - held safely away from the city itself. Even with a reasonable zoom lens the safety tape (across foreground) means the 'battle' becomes a distant spectacle.

lenses being trained on the event. Meanwhile a 'roving reporter' was interviewing protagonists even as the announcer gave the background to each in an almost stock news programme manner.

Instantly such a set up forms a connection to the spectacularisation of history - any re-enactment tended to provide stock footage for the local TV news (figure 29). Yet the cinematic links go deeper than any simple equation of film and spectacle. Thus for the recent filming of *Gettysburg* the producers recruited some 5000 American Civil War re-enactors to provide the mass of soldiery. This epic film conformed with Sobchak's (1990a) suggestion that an epic sense of history involves an isomorphism of scale of topic and film - the programme on 'the making of Gettysburg' (*A&E* Nov 1993) thus stressed the scale of the recreation.⁸ My point is not directly about the film but rather about how readily the re-enactors fitted into the conventions, suggesting many already saw their re-enactments in this light. What the film provided them with was a move from amateur-dramatics to Hollywood - where so often the 'battle spectacular' fell flat due to the only cavalry being five ponies, here the backing of major finance allowed the guns to fire *en masse* and the infantry to be up to full strength - the largest gathering of 'forces' on the field since the actual battle itself. It allowed re-enactors to follow the original topography, to feel they were treading where the original troops had, to imagine the past and feel the enormous scale. A parallel experience to hundreds of historical films from Britain and Hollywood since the inception of cinema (Fraser 1988, Sobchak 1990a) which show elemental tales brought home in terms of timeless human drama. Not projecting ourselves-now onto others-then but ourselves-now as we-then (Sobchak 1990:26).

Now the genre of historic epic has transmuted, as shown both in extreme terms by *Gettysburg*, with its epic scale human interest but multiple stars, but also in the steady cross-flow of civil war re-enactment footage being shown in documentaries (Fortier 1987). It is important to recognise a cinematic imagination is embedded in the idea of battle re-enactment as it has become envisioned, where the epic films such as *Waterloo*, go to inform the ideas of how a battle should look (cf. Virillio 1989). However, the feed over into documentary is significant as well, for it combines well with the re-

⁸ He notes the importance of epiphenomena, such as advertising and reviews (Klinger 1990), in helping form audience expectations in terms of the hugeness of the productions - the vast quantities of labour, money and sheer length reflecting the epic sweep of the drama.

Figure 29:
Close up Spaces in the Mediated World of Living History.



The above picture is of an Anglia TV news crew at the Manor. Living history events tend to be used as a few minutes worth of coverage on local news. I have said re-enactments tend to be covered as distant spectacles, but living history and domestic events tend to be done in close up or at least middle distance, with attention paid to individual activities. More lengthy treatments tend to compromise by using a roving reporter in amongst the action even at mock battles - as in, for example the coverage of one of the re-enactments I attended in *"All the King's Men"* November 1994 (in the Channel 4 'Youth and belonging' series).

enactors desires to be accurate and to show the lot of the "poor bloody infantry".⁹ The 'armies' have not marched several miles, slept under hedges or suffered the ravages of disease. But I have sat in on discussions about how many of us should have scabies, how well or poorly dressed we should be, and so on. In the last few years replica encampments have been set up for visitors to see, as well as the battle (figure 30), and there are quite a few smaller events where re-enactors portray the daily life of a garrison of a castle or fortified house. Re-enactors I spoke to often had less concern with the grand military plan and a greater desire to portray the gritty 'fog of war'.¹⁰ They were conceived in a documentary genre rather than epic cinema. So perhaps the genre might be *cinema vérité* or as argued in the last chapter the realism guaranteed by an amateur aesthetic - a reference which highlights the failures of execution that so mark the field.¹¹

Bounded times, static pasts.

Meanwhile, if we have one form of cinematic experience in the battle re-enactment then another different one is offered by living history sites. Here the genre is more in competition with Merchant Ivory productions and their 'imperialist nostalgia' (Rosaldo 1989). Swirling throughout is a fixation on a culture that is depicted just at the moment of its passing - in the case of *Brideshead Revisited* an almost palpable aching for a vanished culture (Daniels 1993:103). These are films that tend to show over and over again a fragile, almost inevitably fragmenting culture; a fragile domesticity of life rather than an epic struggle of heroic, empire building. What this allows is again an identification with characters in the past, rather than the world of forces and events (Rush 1990). The films thus become all too easily divorced from historic situations of global exploitation (Rosaldo 1989) with the perfect costumery and style denying the impact of anything beyond the eidetic world of character motivation (Craig 1991). Together such films serve to present the past not as a process of connections, where this 'vanished culture' was supported by the labour of others but as an isolated pocket of pastness. We are encouraged to identify with characters but the

⁹ Thus, although the pomp and spectacle may be there - for instance, at the simple level that events focused on are battles rather than equally common sieges because one averaged a day, the other 54 days (Carlton 1991) - and there are no casualties, no cries of the wounded (though event commentators do emphasise this).

¹⁰ This should not be taken entirely innocently, since a concern for the violence endured may have played into ideas of shared masculine traits for some (but only some) and sense of being a rugged type (like the soldiers portrayed) since, at every muster I attended, there were various 'casualties' - in the form of broken limbs, concussions and so forth.

¹¹ Just because cinematic conceptions influence productions does not mean they *successfully* emulate films. One of the specificities of these groups is the 'home-spun' nature of their organisations, and the hit-and-miss possibilities of re-enactments becoming comedies of errors.

Figure 30:

A Replica Civil War Encampment.



This encampment was run for almost a week before the main muster. Parties of school children came round at intervals, and were treated to a brief outline of the military situation, a lesson in gunnery, blacksmithing, munition supply (making musket balls in the picture) and some mocked up scenarios of patrolling and watch-keeping.

pleasure derived also arises from our temporal separation from the static and lost past, from our distance from the issues and situations portrayed (Craig 1991). In turn, such a double structure fits the maintenance of a fixed and certain British identity with a competitive position in a global tourist market:

'If for an international audience, the England these films validate and advertise is a theme park of the past, then for an English audience they gratify the need to find points of certainty within English culture.'

Craig (1991:10).

Here we see our laboriously naturalised self-identity validated in the gaze of others - we do not seek necessarily direct recovery of the past portrayed but we accept the recognition it accords in the eyes of others. That is, following Lacan, we seek confirmation in the approving gaze of others - so our past, our 'heritage' can become fixed as the envy of the world and thus validate our identity (Billig 1993, Lacan 1977).

The impact of such a film world of the past is a part of the pressures setting the standards of presentation by which museum portrayals are judged (figure 31). As a positive feature this has led to an emphasis of improving standards elsewhere.¹² But such inter-textual competition also risks forcing others to either compete in producing, or be read in terms of, the melancholy pleasures of nostalgia - portraying what Cromley (1987) called 'a static past when things were nicer'. The presentation of synchronic but entertaining episodes of the past seems to support Lowenthal's (1989c) contention that Anglo-American histories commonly assume that the past can appear as a timeless, pristine realm existing in the almost reachable past.¹³ Walsh (1992:88) points out how this leads to attempts to preserve a timelessness that only really exists when we are watching period dramas. Surely here is the background where '[t]he promotional milieu of the late 20th century, informal education, tourism, the appetite of the mass media for events and "docu-drama" or "eductainment", a social premium on experiences and self-awareness, all have popularized Living History as a picturesque and intriguing activity and fuelled demand for more, bigger and better events' (Fortier 1987:3).

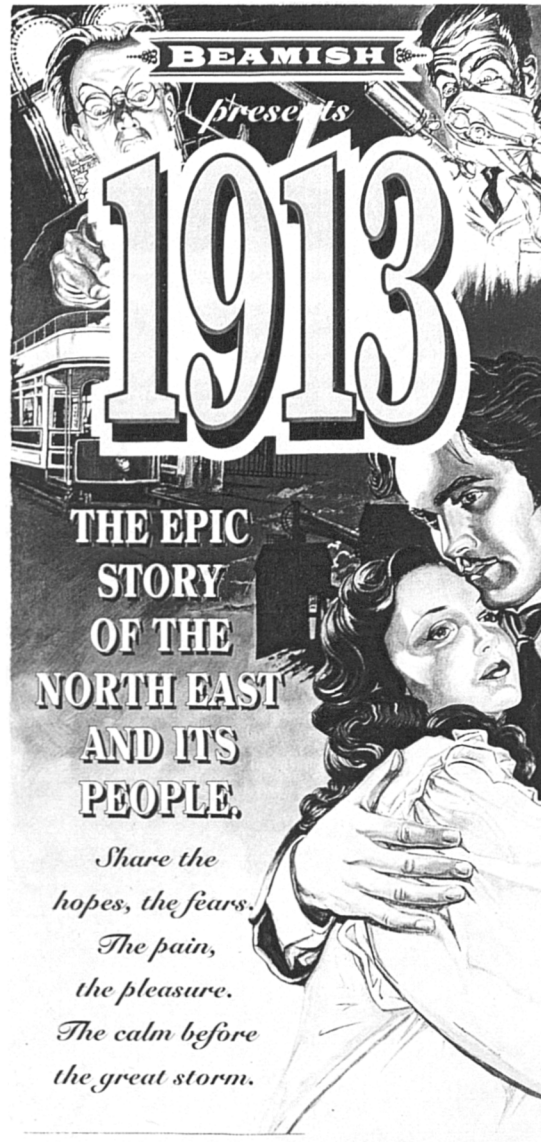
Lowenthal (1989c) and Rosaldo (1989) usefully suggest the wider parallels of this

¹² Indeed the owner of the Manor complained loudly of the inaccuracies of 'period drama' and its lack of realism in comparison to the living history done there.

¹³ Though both Lowenthal (1989a) and Merriman (1991) suggest that very few visitors would actually wish to live in the past, it is consistently portrayed as pleasant (Lowenthal 1989b; Martin 1984; Piatt & Leone 1989).

Figure 31:

Museums and Cinema.



The connection of cinematic space and that created by living history museums could hardly be clearer. These leaflets were complemented by a TV advert (August 1994 Tyne Tees TV) with the slogan "1913 showing all summer". A connection supported when looking at previous Beamish advertisements promising 'Simply acres of nostalgia' (Porter 1989).

fantasy of a static past with such trends as salvage anthropology. Looking to nationalism and living history, the congruence of the 'salvage' of folklore and nation state formation are striking (Dundes 1985; Palmeri 1992). I want to position the folk museum (and living history work that has emerged from it) in this nexus where traditionally it has recorded folklore, and then used it to define the true folk, at just the juncture at which they appear to be disappearing - again Rosaldo's nostalgia for a non-existent pristine period which the very presence of the recorder signals is over and helps to conclude (cf.. Rosaldo 1989). If we think of Skansen folk museum, it was created to preserve the disappearing rural, pre-modern ways of life of Scandinavia as metropolitan modernity transformed the space-time of Europe. Or, as Dundes (1985) pointed out, there is a tradition of finding a fixed and idyllic past, defining only this fixed past as 'authentic' and excoriating any 'corruptions' of this essence as 'fakelore'. We can look to this static, pristine, authentic 'folklore' as being used to create and preserve a sense of fixed identity that can stabilise or, at least, position the turmoil of a modern world:

'Our present day sense of ourselves, of the kind of relationships we characteristically engage in and of the kind of society we inhabit is defined by contrast with a conception of a very different kind of society and of very different relationships of which mediaeval society is one, but not the only, example.'

Stafford (1989:37).

In the creation of a static, perpetual past there are strong parallels and conjunctures with the technology of living history and period drama, such as the pressure for the visualisation of a past (Urry 1990:112). The intertextual environment suggests not only an imagistic fetishism in the desire to see the past as it was, to gaze upon it until it is really seen (Schole 1985:309) - but also suggests that objects will be taken as signs, so a recreated village will partake of associations with organic, harmony that may have been created in other locations and other genres. The seriality sights and intertextual sources suggest sites will be, or at least will be desired to be, experienced in terms of similarity and the replication of (perhaps increasingly televisual) anticipations (Adams 1992:120; Taylor 1994).

The role of pre-formed images of what the past was like have prompted the suggestion of Susan Enscoe (1993) that visitors expected and desired an 'authentic' experience judged in terms of *verisimilitude* to anticipated images of the past while the academic and scholarly criterion for 'authenticity' was made in terms of the *verifiability* of the

past depicted. The idea then of a quest for authenticity suggests two markedly different sets of practices should be invoked. Yet I want to suggest that in the manipulation of spaces to produce living history there are conjunctures as well as frictions between these two structures of feeling - producing a more complex relation than Enscore's image bound analysis can admit. There are important implications in the role of images in heritage *sights* (Urry 1990) but we cannot forget that historic buildings are just as often *sites* for interpretive activities, sites that may try to replicate the isolated and timeless past not just as images but through the creation of particular spaces.

Times and Places Apart.

Magic kingdoms and time machines.

"*The Manor 1593* re-creates the costume, the crafts, the people and the bustle of the year 1593. Visitors pass through the Time Tunnel and enter Tudor England to meet some 200 Participants dressed speaking and pursuing activities as their Tudor forbears did. *Spend a day in the 16th Century.*"

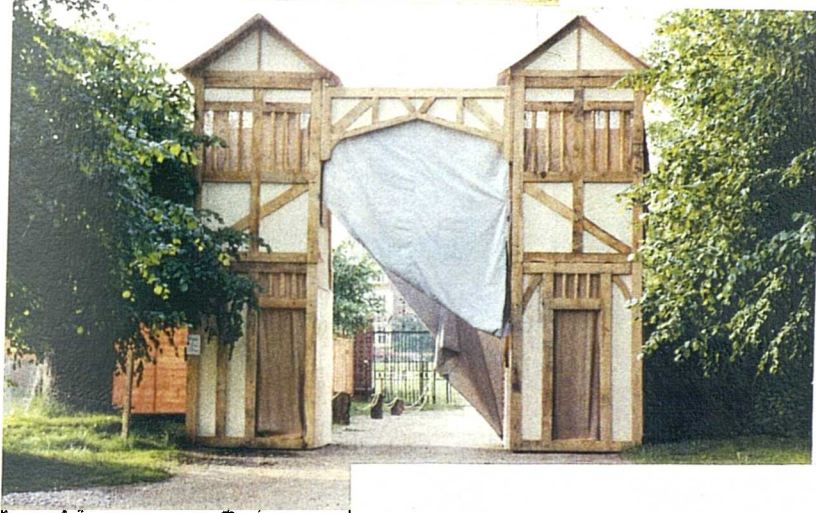
(brochure in archaic print).

The Manor aimed to produce a space magically divorced from the present, a 'magic kingdom' where the past lives. As such it fits with the many museum technologies described in terms of time travel and time ships (eg "Time capsule", "the Museum Time-Machine", "Time Walk"). To enter the Tudor recreation visitors had to pass through a 'time tunnel'. As a concept (and as a plywood construction) this appeared laughable. But it can equally be looked on as a way of accustoming visitors to an interpretive strategy where they were invited to do the impossible and step back in time to visit Tudor England. They approached the manor but could not see it behind a gate-house. They then had to pass through this 'tunnel' and when they emerged the manor farm and house were suddenly revealed (figure 32). It was a device to create a dramatic space on which, with the willing collusion of the visitors, a performance could be inscribed (Chaney 1993:17; Moore 1980). Let me be clear, everyone knows - participants and especially visitors - that they are creating an imaginary space for a performance.

Rather than see an old house which has undergone change and alteration as time flowed by, it must be made out as 'from the past'. The capsule effect, then, involves denying the passage of time - turning the marks of history into anachronisms. In fact the owners of the manor had systematically removed many Georgian features to bring

Figure 32:

The Time Tunnel and Dramatic Spaces: Entering the Manor.



The pictures show how the Manor was entered. The avenue of lime trees was about a mile in length. Visitors passed through the 'time tunnel' to the right of the gate house. Participants having to enter or leave the event during the day used the doors in the gate house towers - 'time locks' - to change in and out of costume. No costume was allowed outside the event or vice versa.

the house back to a more nearly sixteenth century layout.¹⁴ There were necessary anachronisms such as cedar trees that could not be taken away for one month, power cables that were needed for the kitchens or farm - as the Manor worked the rest of the year - or radiators and electrics in the house. These 'temporal anomalies' as one re-enactor termed them had to be dealt with and the standard strategy of re-enactors was to ignore them studiously or alternately cover them in hessian sacking. The latter response was so common that a fake verb was invented ('to basco')¹⁵ to describe the activity of creating temporal blank spots. It is to this sort of strategy to which Sorensen (1989) refers:

'they are all places out of time - anyway, out of *this* time. They are visits to times past. They allow, encourage, us to play, for a time. In order to do this some of them, rather worryingly to some of us, play *with* time. Death and decay are, it seems, denied. Strangely and paradoxically in the context of institutions nominally preoccupied with the passage of time, these phenomena are not allowed to occur. This denial of the realities of time, this artificial omission of any interval between then and now leads to the ready assumption, indeed the implication that then and now are very similar, and that *we* and *they* are, except for a few superficial differences, similar also.' (p65).

Certainly the event is remarkably poor in telling visitors about the history of the house so the 'visitor gets an impression of the past that lacks any connection to the building's actual history' (Cromley 1987:33; cf. Potter & Leone 1992) in much the same way as a historic facade glosses the history of buildings. The creation of a static time, or a place at that time was a key point of the Manor in its literature and in the first person interpretation it adopted:

"It is vital that everyone keeps in role at all times when in costume and dealing with the public. Check every day that you are wearing nothing incongruous (a watch, etc.). Women must always have head covered. Never come out of role. Never explain "how they did it". It is not "they" but "This is how I/we do it". Try always to adopt the Tudor speech patterns.

No other group practising living history insists upon this approach.

¹⁴ There are ironies in this, since in other years when the period portrayed was, say, 1486 only the moat house was actually period. Demolishing the manor itself seemed somewhat extreme. Likewise some amendments were kept or added if they were deemed in tone - such as a couple of octagonal gatehouses, because, said the owner, it was in the Tudor spirit that the house should be owned by a family who could and should improve things.

¹⁵ There was a standing game to use phrases to describe anachronistic activities in some neutral manner, and to attempt to slip these past visitors, as will be seen below. All the invented words were modern yet only on one occasion was an eye-brow raised by a visitor - though adepts at this art were informed the owners would not be best pleased - see below.

This is what sets '*the manor*' apart. It is vital that all observe this *manor* practice. In this regard Heads of station are custodians of the *manor's* way."

(instructions to participants, emphasis in original)

Thus in the Tudor recreation of the year 1593 visitors might ask what was being done and would be answered in period terms. Thus if a visitor asked a lowly peddler (me) what they thought of an issue of high politics, let us say relations with Spain, they would receive a response appropriate to a peddler's knowledge - not a historian's treatise. This does cause problems. A Tudor re-enactor commented that 'we never recreate the past, just produce interpretations of it - ones that might be of more interest than dry books' (cf.. Wexler 1988:67). Or as a couple of Civil War participants described it, 'it's an effort to produce something not totally dissimilar to what might have happened and we just have to try and get as close as we can within the limits'. But in the re-enactment, no one could explain that there were competing theories about some issues as to what might have been done, thus we were leaving over-definite statements of disputed issues. And just as re-enactors cannot show ignorance of what the characters would have known they cannot be knowledgeable about what they would not have known. Participants on the Tudor manor may have attended seminars that covered political repression but they cannot suggest that good Queen Bess runs/ran the equivalent of a police state since (a) they would not know of this parallel and (b) since she does/did, the character would not dare say it. At the heart of the effectiveness of the medium is then its holistic view and its immediacy, yet at the same time this is also its greatest drawback.

The practices of actively chatting with visitors, talking with and to them were vital though in shifting ideas away from a passive experience and encouraging visitors to raise their own queries. As Susan Enscoe (1993) noted in her study of a first person living history museum, after visiting:

'Visitors' constructs changed as Conner Prairie shifted from a place for observing to a place for interacting physically and verbally, primarily with interpreters. First person interpretation also affected visitor's images of the interpreters at the museum who became known strictly for their characterisations, thus demonstrating a "willing suspension of disbelief", enabling visitors to "time travel" during their museum experience.' (p. 215-6)

The production of this holistic space peopled by character actors lays the display open

to the charge that it created a static cameo (Walsh 1992:104), which, however authentic it may be, is poor at illustrating abstract concepts and, almost by definition, historical change (Leon & Piatt 1989:90; Stover 1989:13). Just as in films, the focus is on the human interest - although now 'everyone' has the chance to act out the past with the site as *mis-en-scène*. And just as in films this risks becoming a self-contained narrative episode that does not bring in wider issues - what Thomas Schlereth (1978:39) criticised years ago as 'peaceable kingdoms'. The focus on practical activities and scenic re-creation are poor vehicles for communicating belief systems (Ronsheim in Enscoe 1993:38) and at illustrating wider spatial and economic patterns, so that in US pioneer museums the focus is on the type of people and individuals in settlements rather than their location in, intelligibility and reliance on a global economy (Lowenthal 1989b:116; cf.. Breen 1989). All of these large-scale processes are erased in portraying a necessarily isolated part of the past - while conjuring up dangerously unfounded assumptions of stability, timelessness, changelessness and an organic scale of life in the past.¹⁶

However, there are coping strategies, if not solutions to this. One that is used by one group is to have 20% of participants in red T-shirts acting as third person interpreters (Robertshaw 1992). Another is adequate orientation material. For instance, the Tudor re-enactment is designed to fit into the national curriculum for school visits, so the hope is that such issues may be covered in the class room.¹⁷ Participants may also use teleological explanations - that is that apparently innocently invoke future events 'as if by accident, without mentioning them directly, drawing in large processes as though through personal experience. This could be almost teeth gratingly irritating if it went wrong but if/when the visitor made the connection their normal burst of pride and enthusiasm was worth it. For example, a Tudor re-enactor referred to tensions in the church (a long run social issue), by cursing the curate for shutting the ale-houses. This got blank faces, so she calmly added that she cared not for 'these purists that would have everything from the book' and no pictures. Suddenly visitors made the connection to Puritanism.¹⁸

16 Certainly, I have to ask whether a visitor to the manor would have realised its wealth and the wealth of the neighbourhood came from the cloth trade - things re-enactors were told but the presentation on site did little to highlight.

17 The fear is that the Tudor period was selected and promoted precisely in order to present a picture a timeless British essence.

18 Every participant was briefed on the spread of the plague and told to raise it as a prominent issue. Likewise everyone learnt scales of pay and costs of living - though even on the market, using 'Tudor' coinage, I am not sure how many people could do the relative equations of four hundred years of inflation and coinage changes.

The personal or human interest focus may limit some interpretations but it does allow some measure of connection to ordinary people, for so long the goal of the 'new' social history, and this is by far the most popular aspect (Robertshaw 1992, Wexler 1988, Woods 1989). The Tudor event occurs at a manor house, but rather than just see a building that has been preserved as some beautiful aesthetic legacy, emptied out of people there were people everywhere (figures 33 and 34) . There were servants, artisans and a lower-middleclass cottage as well as the grand house. The Manor therefore tried to offer a privileged vision into the 'back stages' of history, the previously private and domestic. This surely is part of its appeal as an *authentic* version of the past which shows not just the bare elements but promises the whole of past lives in action.

Instantly I know that this is not so, that we cannot recuperate all the activities and, even should we wish to, we could not think like past people (Handler 1987:340; Peterson 1988:29). But it is extremely difficult to write about the feelings of re-enactors without slipping into dangerous clichés - Wexler for instance starts talking of 'reverse reincarnation' (1988:62) and Anderson starts talking of seeing life from 'the point of view of stone age peoples' (Anderson 1984; figure 35). I would suggest the experience is like that of watching a play or a good movie, perhaps a horror story where the atmosphere draws you in until, suddenly, you leap out of the chair in shock. Afterwards, laughing a little nervously, you are embarrassed at once again falling for all the obvious cues. Likewise some new re-enactors and myself had to agree there is something stirring about hearing Civil War drums echo around a valley and seeing a column of troops emerge from a wood. And people feel something. Just for a moment. And then it is gone. It is the "magic" of a visit that participants and visitors to the Manor mentioned.

So we can again return to the idea of these bounded pasts and suggest that they allow a dream of seeing the world as 'they' saw it even as modern society cannibalises its past and stages it for its own amusement (MacCannell 1992). It allows not only the similarity of the past to be suggested through human interest but is also premised on its distinction - indeed marks it out as ever more distinct (Lowenthal 1985). Rather than providing the sense of core values, to which people can return, the abiding effect in the groups I worked with appeared to be showing the strangeness, alterity, and distance

Figure 33:

The Built Legacy.



Aerial View of the Manor. The oldest part of the house is the moathouse (left corner on the moat). At one stage a double moat ran around the back of the walled garden to the rear. At the top of the picture is a lawn inside, an extended moat, with cedar trees growing - an anachronism on a grand scale. None of this sense of change and development, which the owner was very informed about, was presented to visitors at the main event.

Figure 34:

Peopled Landscapes.



from the past:¹⁹

'We should not believe, however, that this sense of discontinuity finds only unfocused and vague expression. Paradoxically, distance demands the *rapprochement* that negates it while giving it resonance. Never have we longed in a more physical manner to evoke the weight of the land at our feet, the hand of the devil in the year 1090, or the stench of eighteenth century cities. Yet only in a regime of discontinuity are such hallucinations of the past conceivable. Our relation to the past is now formed in a subtle play between its intractability and its disappearance ... How can we but see our taste for everyday life in the past a resort to the only remaining means for restoring the flavours of things, the slow rhythm of past times - and in the anonymous biographies of ordinary people .. ?'

Nora (1989:17).

Yet such an analysis is an insufficient conclusion leaving us examining only the pleasures of nostalgia. It ignores the creation of this time apart through a space apart on which to stage the performance of the past. As an explanation nostalgia misses that these were *dramatic* experiences, perhaps truly modern in their requirement to stage, to dramatise, in order to create an 'authentic' feeling. It is not an immediate confrontation with the past 'brought to life'. Rather in a truly modern manner it is also an acceptance and inclusion of the mechanisms of staging that past, and a self-consciousness of their own artifice that produces pleasure. There is not just voyeuristic pleasure in viewing the hidden but also pleasures to be had from in recreating, re-presenting and re-producing parts of it.

*Times apart for participants: Postcards from the Field*²⁰

¹⁹ There is a somewhat tortuous debate over this. I say tortuous since it seems one of those occasions when there are more concepts than words available - so any given word is likely to refer to different if not diametrically opposed concepts between two authors - and on a bad day even in any given work. Broadly it can be argued that a sense of alterity is used to validate where 'we' have come from and thus how much better things are (Wallace 1981), providing a sense of Progress; or the nostalgia for the past may suggest certain core values to which a return is desirable (Taylor 1994 on museums in the South of England) or that certain values have been surpassed (Taylor 1994 on museums in the North of England; cf. Wallace 1981); or that it may be possible to suggest both the importance of the spirit of forebears forged through simplicity and the progress this has led to through the sense of radically separate time (Enscore 1993). In the cases I worked on the sense of alterity was played up quite strongly.

²⁰ These are not actual postcards sent - they are rather composite entries from field diaries, letters and postcards, notes scribbled and so on. Mostly the field diary was made at the end of a day and again later at night, simply as a stream of consciousness into a tape recorder. For obvious reasons a notebook or recorder would have been wildly inappropriate during the events and especially at the Manor. Given the source, and the reference to a 'time apart' and being 'outside of normal time' I have adopted the tense of the 'ethnographic present' as particularly appropriate to this section (Harris 1991; Hastrup 1992a; Fabian 1991). The postcards idea harks back both to Derrida and the idea that these are times apart. I liked the idea of the academic in the field imitating the touristic process of sending messages home (Gordon 1986).

Recruitment - Feels like a *Bunacamp* meeting - the returning participants all very much in the know and greeting each other, chatting about lord knows what. It feels really exclusive - like people who had done camp counselling before did at *Bunacamp*. I don't know anyone, so the three mid-twenty year olds huddle together while lots of teenagers give us the 'seen it done, worn the' err 'smock' I suppose. The twenty-somethings are all broke and looking for a cheap holiday - though we all ask each other 'why are we doing this?'. None of us can provide an answer. Returnees are in costume - eeks making one - while others are wearing 'White Company' sweatshirts. This is my entrée into this exclusive community - I can trade cannon stories from *****.

Briefing - Peter, the owner of the Manor, says we should wear our costumes on the bus and on the train to the manor. "If it feels like a costume it will look like one, if you feel like a prick you'll look like one - so get used to the costume". Well it looks bloody shiny and new. Nowhere near the lived in look cultivated by your average pikeman - they look like they sleep under a hedge, but then again that could be because they can't crawl any further.

Recognition - It's the smell that does it. I walked in and the smell of wet woollen cloth, creaking leather. I knew it a mile off. The moment I stepped into the manor I recognised that smell - exactly the same as in the beer tent at ***** , how the hell am I ever going to write a smell.

Settling in - I am in a world and time apart, not a time-machine but a break from my normal time. Each day is a routine of breakfast, re-enactment with no glasses or watches (obviously), lunch of Tudor cuisine as and when ready. Took me a while to get the tent sorted out, but now it is quite homely for the duration. Still feels a bit weird to wake up and hear the bell for breakfast, but it is amazing to wander into the undercroft and get the bread they baked yesterday in the moathouse. Amazingly solid stuff - tasty but you spend hours chewing. Anyway it is less fearsome than the institutional porridge - arrgh, I haven't been exposed to this since school dinners. Amanda just offered it to people then turned the ladle over and waited to see whether they would change their mind or the porridge would move first.

Time off - Sitting in the undercroft, taking a break from the kids for 5 minutes and Thomas was talking about taking his day off. I asked him where he was going, if he could get a lift out of the village with someone - "I'm staying here on my day off.

When I'm at the Manor I like to stay in. Leave the outside alone." There are lots of teenagers around - let off the leash by parents, yet all safely inside the manor.

Cut off - Heard that Heseltine had had a heart attack when I was in the pub last night. I thought it was a wind up to just make me feel happy but apparently it is true! Taggart has promised to bring in a paper soon so we can find out. That reminds me, someone among the low players - is it Poppy - has a contraband radio. So whenever one of them wanders by everyone asks about the conflict between the Queen's white knights and the barbarians of the far south - to be told of the mighty blows struck, and that some three hundred are slain but alas 7 knights have fallen. So far only one punter apparently raised so much as a smile. It is the same with 'Reebok', someone was it Mo? or maybe Mat or Absalon started it as a contest - whether we could slip it into dialogue without anyone noticing. It was only appropriate, Mo decided it, would mean to tread heavily. Takes presence of mind but when someone stood on my foot I managed to remember 'reebok not so heavily on my toes'.

Out of place - Surreal, totally bizarre. Was in the centre of Bradford tootling along to a gig by a band that would be playing in the beer tent later, oh the organiser asked a group to go to raise the profile of the event. So I drove into town with a car load, only got lost a couple of times, but we were walking along and suddenly shouts of 'Hello ducky' and 'howdy partner' (strange). Forgot we were in costume. Got to the hotel late and the bouncer just said 'they went that away' as Stu said 'how did you know who we were looking for?' Mirth all round. Felt somewhat strange in a room with a hundreds of 'normal' people they all wanted to borrow hats and so on and giggle - wished our gear was a bit more upper-class, had more panache than the drab rain stained stuff we were in.

Out of Place again - The pub was sort of empty, all quiet in the village and Stu, Pete, Dan and the others were settling in for a heavy night, first the yarning about this battle, that muster, did you get to?, were you at?; Stu trots out his favourite phrase 'most memorable' to describe how an event promises to be. Dan is talking about the progress of his costume, just the buttons left - Stu starts a huge debate over buttons should there be more ties, would poor soldiers have had buttons or points, and wasn't it odd the manor let me get away with beads. Peter is waiting for another mate to launch a drinking game - I can't face it and I am getting increasingly perturbed by lots of weird looks from the locals at the other end of the bar but the rest seemed

unconcerned. I was getting well twitchy, when suddenly the door crashed open and in came an entire pike unit making straight for the bar. The locals were swamped, and I felt a whole lot less tense.

Out of place (not me) - 10.30 am and total shock when the punters were let in, it had been a gorgeous morning the woodsmen were carting wood round, I had got a chance to go down and do spot of archery practice "have to it would be very authentic" (but as my anthropologist mate Matt says 'not given how crap you are - you should have been doing this for 15 years not 15 minutes'). I was wandering back well just dawdling along chatting to people on other stations ('no my dear fellow, you can't be a true peddler if you don't do a bit of sauntering') (figure 36). When I saw the punters. It was hot so they were in dayglo pink shorts. We are not meant to mention how they dress but they are so incongruous. They look out of place. Apparently they raised the entry prices to round a tenner to reduce the numbers of public -otherwise any idea of the place being populated by 'Tudors' disappears under the scrum of punters.

Tudorese - Everyone down the pub is in costume and trying to not speak Tudorese - and failing. Horribly contagious and hanging out with Jasper is bad news - he is one of the worst offenders, I can't imagine him actually holding a conversation in plain English. Kate describes it as coming down with a touch of the *verily merrilies*. Apparently there is a forfeit for the first person each year to sound like they are off *Blackadder*.

Solstice - Very strange sitting watching the burning of the Green man on the solstice, with Absalon camping up his role as Jack Frost, the archers setting light to the thing, and the fire breathing let alone the dancing - led off by someone who looked suspiciously like they could do this sort of stuff dressed in hippie chick gear - instead of the Tudor garb. A real ceremony, a made up one? I don't know and worryingly I can't tell. A nice evening passing, then we all braced for the mile long walk down the avenue of trees to get to the nearest local. Have to go to a bank soon - Lord knows where one of them is nearest town I suppose.

Belonging - Is this the inversion stuff in Stallybrass & White all carnivalesque? More sort of sense of Turner and *communitas* of travellers, together on the road or err in this case the field. There is something about the interrupted nature of all this, err a community that is not always there. Here on the Manor it is here every time but not

Figure 36:

Research Praxis.



A somewhat untypically relaxed moment during the day. I am left of picture. We were actually on the scrounge for some greenery to cover up bits of nylon rope holding the market tents together. I say untypical since in the first week, when we were understaffed (due to the Glastonbury festival in part) we rarely had more than five minutes without a school party arriving.

always here while the civil war moves but the people and chat stays the same. How elegant, maybe that is worth keeping in mind.

Impossible Desires and Spectacular Histories?

Geographies of distaste

{Being a scholarly debate in which various critics put forward their commentaries for the benefit of the reader.}

Peter Fowler: 'Now, one of the most dangerous varieties of history, much favoured in educational and entertainment circles, is that called 'living history'. Feelings, as elsewhere on the interface of past and present, can run high on the subject. It is however, much relished by consumers with big appetites for pasts. Such gourmandising undoubtedly meets a demand, as undoubtedly do the *Sun* and fast-food takeaways; but they at least exist. 'Living history is an impossible concept; therefore any attempt to realise it is bound to produce a fraud. So much for the absolute, in practice, like so much else, it all depends on honesty and motivation' (1992:113).

Mike Crang: So you do at the end there at least admit that although it does form an impossible quest there is an honest motivation behind lots of living history? Isn't that a grudging concession for something that has made museums a lot more entertaining? The medium makes at least some history truly memorable.

John Fortier: 'We have tried hard to make culture less elite and heritage more accessible through Living History, yet we now run the risk of making history a spectator sport. A medium that should provoke thought is often undisciplined and superficial.' (1987:10)

Mike Crang: Ah so it is the case that there are bad practitioners. I thought I addressed the problems of distance and spectacle in terms of the British Civil War stuff earlier. Is it just that you doubt its educational value? Are you suggesting that it is this distance which is the bad bit? So the Manor is OK but the prattling around in uniforms isn't?

David Lowenthal: 'These vivid intimacies promote historical empathy but attenuate historical understanding, underscoring universal constants of human feeling while obscuring or ignoring the broader social and cultural trends that both link and differentiate past with present'. (1989a:30; figure 37)

Mike Crang: So the whole thing gives a distorted idea of a past as a thing not as a flow.

Figure 37:

Universal Archetypes and Static Pasts.



The pictures show both the strength of portraying 'ordinary people' and the tendency to emphasize commonalities between now and then. The (top) mother and child archetype has a long history as a universalising symbol (Hirsch 1981). Below the participants are almost just a sign of some bucolic past - a floating signifier of the rustic. Particularly if you note the anachronistic *bales* one is lying on.

They give the idea that...

Peter Fowler: 'History like water, can apparently just be turned on; privatised, at [living history] places like Kentwell it may also be polluted.' (1992:15)

Mike Crang: How does this place 'pollute' history? Perhaps you can elaborate on your concerns?

Peter Fowler: 'Much in vogue today is playing at the past: Britaineering, Sealed Knottery, Druidic dressings up and mediaeval quaffing and wenchery. By and large this is harmless, affording pleasure and at least not damaging tangible history whatever it may do to its image and, sometimes, to those involved. If it provides vicarious fun to participants, entertainment to spectators, and helps raise charitable funds, as in Ian Botham's route-march across the Alps Hannibal-style with elephants, so be it. It is probably kinder to regard such goings-on as illustrative of the stimulus of the past rather than decry them as the prostitution of history itself. The only danger is that participants and watchers dupe themselves into thinking that what they are doing *is* history.' (1992:14)

Mike Crang: You say 'kinder', I wonder if you'd like to elaborate on that? What would be your harsher verdict?

Peter Fowler: 'All this activity, far from illuminating the past, is actually saying something profound and poignant about the present. A radio programme featuring the participants at 'Tudor' Kentwell (BBC Radio 4, 29 December) illustrated the pathos and very necessary therapy behind the fun and pretence. An individual dissatisfaction with unimportant and uncolourful lives is a fairly obvious part explanation' (1992:14-15)

Mike Crang: But Peter you know this is too glib. You heard about Kentwell Hall as a first person 'recreation' on the radio, you never actually say you visited the place. That aside are you suggesting that there is some sort of contemporary psychological need to find some non-modern, real - yes colourful - fantasy of self-importance or chance to be a hero in your own 'movie' that re-enactment affords these people? People without access to ceremony in normal life?

Peter Fowler: 'It is but shading down a scale, opening such opportunity to the man {sic} on the Clapham omnibus who does not have such pomp built into his daily life, to provide the setting for a week's make-believe 'historic experience' or to invent spurious historic occasions for dressing up for a Sunday afternoon's entertainment. The historical validity of the pomp and circumstance matters not one jot..' (1992:14-15)

Mike Crang: So if it is all harmless fun why are you so down on it?

Peter Fowler: 'To dress up seems a natural urge, indulged in from childhood and nothing more than a physical expression of personal fantasy, of wishing, but perhaps not too seriously, to be someone else. The experience is temporary, enjoyed knowing you can return. ... A possible danger when grown-ups do it is that they *do* take it too seriously. The proverbial 'little man', perhaps trapped during the week in anonymous routine work on the assembly line or office desk, can release his self not only by imagining that he is a named pikeman in Cromwell's New Model Army for the purposes of an evening's re-enactment; he can go on to delude himself that he has actually become that person and is engaged in an authentic reliving of a real, historic event. Such recreation is, of course, impossible; any sense of reality exists only in the contemporary delusion.' (1992:15)

Mike Crang: Aren't you being a bit OTT here? I mean OK there is a present, motivation there has to be, but do these people lose total track of themselves? I suppose the owners of the Manor did have paintings of themselves, in Tudor gear hung up on the wall - which sort goes back to the idea of being a hero on your own stage - I just thought they were naff rather than they thought they were real Tudors. I felt it was a clear case of make believe. I mean most pikemen I met were damn clear that it was fun - in fact you'll no doubt be horrified to learn - rather like rugby. I suppose that sort of 'fun' re-creation is just what scares you Kevin?

Kevin Walsh: 'these events are nothing but mere titillation, meaningless amateur dramatics, promoting the post-modern simulacrum, a hazy image of a manipulated and trivialised past ... many such events contribute to the destruction of place. More often than not the events will not depict occurrences from the past of the locality being used, but there will be, perhaps, a set piece, an imaginary battle that moves from one locality to another each weekend.' (1993:102-4)

Mike Crang: But aren't you ending up in exactly the Quixotic quest Richard Handler speaks about, whereby a re-enactment on original topography (how near? have the fields the same crops? the same uniforms? same numbers?) is tolerable, is real history - but the idea of groups portraying the American Revolution in Britain is beyond the pale. So you define what is a 'real' recreation by its relation to the past instead of looking on them all on dramatic acts with present educational force. Because surely real 'living history' is impossible anyway. Shouldn't we judge it in terms of present effects rather than in terms of

'provenance', as though it were a museum object?

Richard Handler: 'living history is as much about the present as the past. Inevitably, living history is shot through with the sentiments of modern culture. As analysts of reconstructed traditions have pointed out, the very attempt to relive the past entails a distinctive consciousness - of the past as a past worthy of being relived...' (1987:340)

Mike Crang: Let me butt in there. You are saying it is not only impossible, but also significant because the choice of period and style of presentation speaks to deeply modern concerns?

Richard Handler: 'history buffs expect simulation to deliver an authentic subjective experience... where "reality" is defined as what an individual person feels. But modern culture seems continually to deny authentic feelings to those who most crave them' (1987:339)

Mike Crang: Ahah we are back to the quest; if everything is a sign of itself, it provokes a desire to get to a 'back region'.

Richard Handler: "This in turn motivates a desperate search for the real thing, in which people happily borrow the personas and accoutrements of those whom modern mythology defines as quintessentially real" (1987:339)

Mike Crang: So you are saying that displays portray the unsophisticated and unself-conscious as an authentic, unproblematic identity. An identity they then give a solid reality to as though it had existed and isn't a modern interpretation - yes that seems a problem. I remember you reckoned it was due to overpowering the audience with the realism, or should I say the reality effect created through the manipulation of space. You certainly can see that here in this museum brochure ..

Robert Hewison: "The caption reads "Bring these people back to life for £1.20". But you can't bring people back to life and you can't go back in time. The past is unknowable. All you can do is imagine what it was like. But the realism of so many heritage displays in fact serves to block the potential individual act of imagination. In the case of displays of the recent past, it erases individual memories, and substitutes a simulacrum - a perfect copy of an original that never existed". (1991b:25).

Mike Crang: Look I like the point about the impossibility but it seems to me that we can't yet square this circle of wanting to laugh at their buffoonery, pathologise their motivations and say they create a sham while at the same time having to admit their meticulous attention to detail.

Richard Handler: 'Like many who flee unreality, buffs are obsessed with authenticity. Moreover they pursue it, as we would expect of twentieth century Americans, competitively' (1987:340)

Tom Woods 'These living history pioneers orchestrated re-enactments of historical events which have been and in many instances still are characterised by a sophisticated antiquarian concern for detail wedded to a kind of playful dramatic recreation' (1989:43)

Mike Crang: Exactly we have to include that sense of historical fastidiousness - that was what took me aback. What I want to do is to keep that duality alive - both the commitment to authenticity *and* its acknowledged impossibility. I do wonder at why you lot are so upset that they make history popular.

Elizabeth Hitz: "Academic historians would love their books to be bestsellers, but their careers and their futures simply do not depend on a general public acceptance of their work, and they do not totally trust others who are so dependent" (1987:74)

Mike Crang: So a sort of state versus market thing, sanctified legislators displaced by the Thatcherite market. Yes, there is something in this but I still found people doing their damndest to be 'academic' and re-enactors read lots of 'legitimate' works yet still are damned for *both* any inaccuracies *and* their attention to accuracy. I keep feeling they are caught in the middle, David you were pretty scathing about Peter Fowler's analysis - what had he written?

David Lowenthal: ' " Pulling crowds to olde-tyme happenings, tourneys, jousts and pseudo-gunfire in the lawn-precious precincts of ruinous castles sanctions false images of the past, as jousting itself is demeaned by 'contamination' with showbiz, its ersatz mediaevalism" ... and, needless to say, the fact that it enjoys neither posh followers nor participants. Not only inauthentic, in short, but vulgar.' (1989a:23.)

Mike Crang: Well I think that leaves us nicely poised then for a brief exploration of the tastes involved, in this not 'vulgar' but maybe middlebrow pursuit.

Geographies of taste.

The above section is one way of coping with the vitriol poured onto living history - one that I found hard to believe. In much the same way that fiction forms a defining other for historiography so living history operates as the other of heritage studies. Yet I want to maintain a two-sidedness to living history, not cast it as a foil to some academic praxis. I would suggest its position is more of a middlebrow art, as Bourdieu

(1990) termed photography. It aspires to be recognised in terms of the legitimate learning which stigmatises it. In this its impossible quest is not to present reality so much as to establish its own credibility. The impossible position resulting is the one I want to use to maintain a doubleness to keep open the ambiguity created, an ambiguity where living history aspires to portray reality, yet its methods hail from amateur dramatics; it aspires to serious research while remaining playful; it aspires to legitimate knowledges while being performing dissident knowledges; it caters to the populist while at the homes of the elite; it resounds with hype yet risks being corny; it promotes exactitude while risking fakery; participants speak endlessly of authenticity while the whole is an artifice. Living history does not solve these dilemmas. It is rather the permanent welding of these couplets that keeps it going.

Surely there is a striking importance here in the simultaneous mockery as 'history buffs' and fakers. A cleft stick similar to one Pierre Bourdieu outlines for the 'petit bourgeois' autodidact who is 'always liable to know too much or too little, like the heroes of TV quiz games whose misplaced erudition makes them ridiculous in cultivated eyes' (1984:329). I shall start to locate this double position in terms of who are re-enactors. For example, the Manor aimed to recruit graduates if the placement of the adverts is anything to go by.²¹ The Civil War group used to have block memberships from Student Unions and in the small gunnery unit I joined, virtually every member would have to be described as professional middle class. The manor, especially the house, had photographs in *Country Life* magazine, while notable traders at re-enactments were pictured in costume in their bohemian church/cottage conversion - as a both humorous but plausible couple - begging the question to whom this sort of lifestyle appeals. Certainly I have to record that among the younger re-enactors 'alternative lifestyles', non-school education and the festival scene were probably over-represented. However, before it appears that re-enactors are seeking an imaginative past with druids and magic (Wright 1991) we must again inscribe most as again being inside and accepting legitimate knowledges - even if their aim is to produce an illegitimate one their means are legitimate. Perhaps this is not surprising when in the small gunnery unit (a paper strength of say thirty to forty, a turnout of averaging fifteen to twenty) there was one museum curator, lots of graduates and three postgraduates excluding me (in fact writing up your PhD was regarded as a legitimate excuse for non-attendance). The case was not so extreme at the manor yet turning to a

²¹ Which is not the same as saying they formed the bulk of participants. The popularity of the manor's presentation among local schools ensured there was an ongoing struggle to control the number of teenagers present.

professional company, 'Past Pleasures', recruitment adverts specified graduates and their latest recruit had a doctorate in seventeenth century poetry (Marling 1994:22).

The enjoyment of re-enactments stands as a middlebrow art in using the tools of scholarship, seeking recognition in the terms of the legitimate culture (bookish interpretation) while exploring the scandalous possibilities of other ways of knowing (empathetic or holistic approaches Woods 1989). I want to draw out how the reflexivity of re-enactment performances is crucial to sustaining their doubleness - to allow both the pleasures of accuracy and fiction, authenticity and imagination. Rather than just being a choice of playing at being a peasant or king for a day, based on inverting the social position someone normally inhabits (Gottlieb 1982), re-enactors engaged in a reflexive form of play. Play tends to be socially and spatially separated from learning yet here is a genre of presentation blurring these together. People do this because it is fun. They also enjoy it because they feel it is serious and worthwhile. To use Bateson's terms, play is about saying things at the same time as unsaying them - a play fight quite clearly aims to say this is not really a fight while also communicating about fighting (Moore 1980:208). Re-enactors take it all very seriously at the same time as it is not all serious.

Between Academy and Field:

Playing Sancho Panza?

Through the last two sections I outlined the awkwardness of re-enactors' positions. Here, I want to set up it up clearly through the awkwardness of mine. My intent is to further reveal the vacillations of re-enactors' positions through the vacillations of mine.²² Partly the awkwardness of my stance was caused by my attempt to double the way of understanding history into the field method which meant that I functioned more as participant than observer²³ since, as seen above, commentators stressed that re-

22 Around a camp fire at a late and drunken hour Paula asked 'do you think that in two hundred years they'll be re-enacting us re-enacting the Civil War?' to which Amy replied, 'they'll have some trouble with all the crap we did at Wem, all those earth works they won't know what to do. Still I expect in a hundred years some pillock will do a PhD on why we do this.' My contact Ray falls off his stool laughing and I decide that now is not the time to introduce myself to Amy given the tones of disdain with which she referred to a PhD. I did explain to her later that muster, largely when everyone was more sober. She appeared unconvinced then but not hostile.

23 Many participants knew my purposes, but I did not wear a lapel badge with a 60 word summary of the project. Partly in acknowledgement of this, and after speaking to many informants, I agreed to their wishes that they be kept anonymous. I trust the reader will bear with the various inexactitudes in descriptions, which would be highly untypical of my informants, that I have used to uphold this promise.

enactors sought an authentic, subjective experience, that would feel and not just look real (Anderson 1984, Handler 1987). Participation seemed to be crucial to understanding this heritage experience. Such an emphasis on participation does cause problems, both at the time, and now in terms of distancing myself from the re-enactors (Fyffe 1993; Johnson 1983). It will become apparent that the degree of overlap between my position and theirs is strong and for this reason I have tried to be explicit about my own positionality and engagement.

The overlap of their and my positions and methods was something that I came to realise was far stronger than I had anticipated. It went much further than merely trying to experience them experiencing the past, or participate in their 'participation' in that past. The parallels were striking:

I did the usual things for budding participant observers, I went to try and get some source material on the community to be studied.

I attended seminars on how to be a participant observer, on techniques and tropes, methods and others' experiences.

I laughed outloud when one member of staff at my department suggested a participant observer he knew was like a 'spy' trying to blend in with the natives. I was out of my normal group seeking to play a role that would gain group acceptance - not necessarily one I would like to live with. I was prepared to go for the earthy banter till I achieved some sort of 'acceptance' which I felt I might have done when Matt introduced me 'as a most fine and bawdy fellow' to his returning mates.

All at the Manor were told to go off and look at some Breughel paintings and try to read up on the period. People were encouraged to develop plausible biographies and were given maps of how the area was laid out and prevailing economic conditions

At the Manor there were compulsory days of seminars, including body language to include viewers in the conversation. How to adopt a role and maintain it and advice from established re-enactors.

Kate laughed and announced that she *had come over all Breughally this morning.*

Everyone was able to play out sides of their character. Some were lewd and licentious - well quite a lot on the Manor and at civil war events. Some were debauched - not as characters but around the event, some were more assertive, others quieter getting on with a craft. I had little idea what they would be like outside the event.

To put this for an academic audience, I might liken the seminars, background information and costume preparation involved in 'becoming a Tudor' to preparing to carry out a classic ethnography - but of a Tudor manor. I would use all the problematic maxims that the ethnographer/re-enactor is *trying* to get inside the world of the

'Tudors', that they are *trying* to empathise with the world of the subjects, and all the provisos that ethnographers/re-enactors know they will never totally succeed but that the attempt is crucial to the endeavour. In fact it would be possible to look on the whole operation of living history as anthropological.

Of course, the difference is that the Tudor community only existed because we were all studying it. It was a totally discursive and reflexive object where everyone was learning the culture by studying everyone else studying the culture. This reflexivity lead to the possible creation of "fakelore", a consistent performance that owed more to the participants' dynamics than the period when, because an influential participant starts something, everyone follows until it becomes an orthodoxy. But I would stress this is not my insight for, in the participants' rest room, at the Manor, there were warning notices about just such re-enactment 'myths'; and the civil war group had been founded, in part, to escape a group that was perpetuating such myths. Failings were noted and corrected. The discursive nature of the community parallels not so much classical ethnography as the newer critical varieties, where 'Fabian speaks of a *performative* as opposed to an *informative* ethnography. Information is not there, ready in the natives head to be called up and expressed in discursive statements which can be collected by the ethnographer and taken home as 'data'. It has to be made present through enactments, *performance*.' (Pool 1991:70). I was left asking whether that wasn't the process I was engaged in anyway? My initial, ironic inclination to suggest I would be the voice of reason, the Sancho Panza in someone else's Quixotic quest for historical reality, began to look threadbare to say the least.

Playing Cervantes?

I want to highlight here both my final power in authoring this work which does set me apart from re-enactors as well as exposing my limitations. As will be readily apparent, I am not a Cervantes. However, if you accept that 'cynical anthropologists are professional alienated souls, whose own anti-identity consists in scoffing at anyone else's serious attempts to establish and maintain one' (Friedman 1991:105) it does seem that in the writing of a monograph on this topic I am engaged in the textual reconstitution of my own identity - as author, as producer (Harris 1991:154).

So I have tried to destabilise some of these possibilities through textual strategies and conceits. Above all I want to break the unity of a bounded field separate from the academy stressing the connection of the two brought tangibly into contact through my

biography (Schrijver 1991). While doing this research I encountered persistent scepticism from colleagues, at a most visceral level, about why study such "weirdoes" and whether I was not becoming one. It may be true that much of the attention to detail in living history is almost obsessive over minutiae. But I am forced to ask myself whether researching a PhD provides the most Olympian height from which to sneer at this.

The real doubts seem to concern the way in which the past is enjoyed. There is an emotional and empathetic bond with what is depicted and this seems to provoke a hugely intemperate response from academics that overlooks the self-reflexivity of the re-enactors that I have encountered and invokes the superiority of a rational understanding of the past. But one has to ask then whether this dismissal of all 'emotive' and 'affective' knowledge is not dangerously phallogocentric, and whether rational research does not itself also form a way of 'enjoying' the past. Is it just that academic language and certainly I, find it hard to say anything convincing about emotions and feelings? Is it just the case that Cervantes could not have written about passion and enjoyment for the academy? How else can I explain the way one close colleague, buddy, drinking partner and fellow post-grad (ie the sort of person whose influence matters) commented 'sad, sad, sad' as a final (and first) verdict on living history. Incredulous that I would dress up he took the rip enormously and at every occasion. Mentioning it to other friends the reaction divided into either that sounds marvellous or 'sad weirdoes'.

I had sent a postcard a week into work on the Manor just saying 'sad sad sad' to my mate and my first contact in the civil war group was surprised to see me for a second season, since he thought I felt so out of place. He was also staggered about how favourable I had been to re-enactors when I showed him a draft of a paper saying he was used to more hostility from academics and hadn't I better think of my career? No wonder he had referred to me as the viper in the bosom of the group.

Producing Knowledges.

Who plays Quixote?

So in some way we need to look at the production of a sense of authenticity, a cinematic realism, an imaginative connection to the past and yet an almost obsessive

concern for detail. Living history sites have to rely on marketing themselves as 'time capsules', as re-creations allowing one to smell the smells of Tudor times, hear the speech patterns (Phillips 1984). It is this promise of an authentic recreation that distinguishes them as places to visit. Yet the participants know that they are only producing interpretations of what *might* have been there. Indeed, the participants tend to be much quicker than visitors to spot anachronisms since it is the participants who have put in the effort researching the period and tend to want to make the best possible job of it. In figure 38 it is easy to spot the anachronistic feature - yet 26 000 visitors went by it and only two commented on it.²⁴ I suggest visitors wanted to get something out of the possibilities of living history - once the initial suspension of disbelief, or act of imagination was made they were willing to let other things pass rather than render the visit pointless.

Yet anachronisms were deeply felt by re-enactors who committed themselves to enormous efforts to create an accurate depiction. Susan Enscore (1993) suggested above a distinction of authenticity felt as verisimilitude or verifiability. I want to begin by outlining the impossible quest and huge investment in accuracy among re-enactors. In recreating the Tudor domestic environment every participant was told to go off and look at period illustrations and sources in order to get patterns to make up costumes and, since the year portrayed alters, the participants have to learn trends in Tudor fashion. I had wanted to buy costume at a Civil War event from the traders there but was told categorically at the Manor that the changes in style between 1593 and 1640 were too great to countenance. In fact they were handing out sheets on how to modify 1580 costume for 1593. *There was no room here for 'coarse costume', the sort of rough smock theatres use to indicate peasants of all periods from 500AD to 1600AD* (figure 39). And should a participant wish to be a gentry personage then they had to research the historical biography of the character. Other groups recreate known biographies and events with details given in packs to each participant to build "mental maps" of the time, society and area (Robertshaw 1992).

I cannot stress enough the premium placed on accuracy. I spent a two hour car trip to a battle re-enactment with a non-stop conversation on sources and the difficulty in finding lower class clothing to work from. Meanwhile for the Tudor event costume was vetted, a video was available to show how to make it and instruction sheets given

²⁴ No one mentioned the chain link fence that remained as part of the working farm on the Manor. Does this mean some misleading idea that chain link fences are Tudor was created? I doubt it.

Figure 38:

A Small Temporal Anomaly.



Figure 39:

A Timeless Past: Trends in Clothing as Portrayed at the Manor.



Clothes from the Manor for the period years (anti-clockwise from top right) 1535, 1527, 1550 & 1593. Contrast these with costumes in figure 41. It should be noted that, unsurprisingly, fashion changes registered more quickly with gentry clothing. However, even among the ordinary folk you can tell top left is before about 1550 because the bodice and skirt are all one piece. It can also be dated by the drop spinning being practised.

out (25 sides for a peddler, more for gentry and more again on shoes). I retreated in some shock - costumery was not a research skill the ESRC had deemed mandatory (yet). So like many (male) would be Tudors I fell back on various (female) relatives and acquaintances for advice and help, who in turn were shocked by strictures that no machine stitching could be visible, that 'darts' were not allowed, let alone the colour and types of woollen cloth to use (figure 40). My mother kept saying she couldn't believe the level of exactness being demanded and questioning whether other people would really go to these lengths. As patterns were developed from illustrations my eldest brother passed by and commented it was "a hell of a palaver for a fancy dress parade".

The labour in creating gentry costumes was immense, the detail staggering. One civil war costume involved hand stitching 400 buttons, a Tudor one was made by a professional seamstress for fun with she estimated a market cost of £3000 for embroidery (an exceptional amount but spending £400 on just materials for gentry costume was not unknown. Even as a humble peddler the costume took a week or more to make and cost £75) (figure 41). In the winter I joined an e-mail discussion list on historic costume. I am now the proud possessor of 350 sides of discussion over the way to stitch 'snoods' (hair stockings), how to shape hoops under skirts at different periods, the prevalence of underwear by classes and periods, as well as hundreds of specific queries. The *bête noire* of this list was producing a completely anachronistic product - the chiffon mediaeval costume, the acrylic jackets and so on, all produced reactions of horror.

So in lots of ways the pursuit of documented 'authenticity' went on. In fact 'authenty' was a term reserved for 'kit' that re-enactors could justify historically. How? Well the other part of that list was spent in trading sources - endless bibliographies. So in this most academic of ways re-enactors seek historical respectability through discussions of the 'authenticity' of materials - and thus seem to end up in a quest for an impossible absolute that will answer all the questions (Fortier 1987:4).

Yet I suggest this impossible quest for an absolute record is strangely similar to the demands for scholarship and accuracy voiced by critics of the heritage industry. A similar combination of passion, rationality and calculation found in most collectors' (Danet & Katriel 1989) struggle to produce the perfect piece, the complete look for all

Figure 40:

Research Preparation.



Making a simple peddler costume took about a week and would have been impossible without assistance from my mother and aunt. The machine stitching had to be concealed from view, and the pattern made up as we went along.

Figure 41:

Gentry Costumes from 1593.



All these pictures were taken at the Manor. Notice the incredibly intricate costumes worn by the children, the ruffs would each take about six feet of cloth, let alone how long the hand-embroidery and beading would have taken. In the top picture contrast especially the costumes with those in figure 39. The woman in the top picture spent around £400 on material for her costume. Although it does not show in the copy here the bodice was intricately patterned velvet.

occasions.²⁵ The quest for ever more and better 'kit' also organises pleasure around authenticity and a technical argot that may well amount to 'a sophisticated antiquarian concern for detail' (Woods 1989:43) or almost a fetishisation of the material forms of authenticity. Surely this bears uncanny echoes of the attention to detail, and scholarly 'collecting' of information, sources and so on that is one of the ways academic 'enjoyment' is organised? And in neither case is it possible to reach the unattainable goal of completeness.²⁶ Indeed re-enactors are aware of this - commenting that although they may find a picture or a source the tendency is too easy to then build everything round that one source - as Mo said round a camp fire 'people think they have got it right, but it's all just one version. That's all we do - provide a version.' The tension in this appreciation of detail is between the typical and the authentic. If re-enactors care about detail they are labelled antiquarian 'buffs', *if they do not they are accused of 'bending history'* (Hewison 1991), and it is an important practical issue. Thus on the recreated Tudor manor there were activities of which there was no precise historical record - they may or may not have been there at the time, but it was useful to run them in order to give a sense of period life style.²⁷ Likewise sometimes it was almost dangerous to play up the 'authentic', but atypical, history for fear that it would provide a misleading impression - a documented historical exception becoming a mythical standard.

There can be no simple ranking or splitting of verisimilitude and verification in producing living history. However, going around the Manor the sense is not one of research. The emphasis in presentation is on the integrated effect as much as individual elements. Which avoids the pitfall of the 'authentic kit' leading into a '[r]eliance on accuracy [which] has helped lead to interpretations that rely on things, dates, events, and discrete units which, because of their apparent isolation from context, can be singled out as reliable.' (Leone 1987:42). The filmic verisimilitude provides a better interpretive authenticity by being deliberately and reflexively aimed at providing a reality effect - not being bogged down in discussions of provenance or the 'aura' of the original object.

25 Here I must add that verisimilitude plays a role in basing work on what others have produced, in the hope that their work is accurately researched - leaving the possibility of creating more fakelore.

26 I am reminded of the impossibility of Popperian science ever proving an hypothesis, of its endless quest for falsification. Such a process seems to be an equally quixotic quest. In historical studies the continual struggle for new sources, for the perfect interpretation, could be similarly portrayed.

27 The Civil War battles often could not be re-fought on the original topography - unless pikeblocks were to manoeuvre down the high street. In fact imaginary, but typical, engagements would be staged - leading to the absurd, but internally necessary, result in these cases that the Royalists tended to win on Saturday and the Roundheads on Sunday.

A reality effect that is then paradoxical in that it appears to provide a contact with a different reality that it cannot in absolute terms deliver. Turning to the visitor's angle it is possible to suggest living history is a good example of promising an alternate 'reality' where:

'The tourist seeks an experience that cannot be duplicated in his [sic] ordinary place of residence. The tourist endeavours to make contact with a different reality, manifest in undomesticated nature, in relics from the past, particularly an alien past, or in the behaviour of culturally distinctive strangers.'

Van den Berghe & Keyes (1984:345).

The time apart and separated world provides this alterity to encounter. Now MacCannell (1992) and others quickly point out such alterity is staged. It is not an authentic other in living history, rather the domestic back areas are manufactured for show. By and large I would agree with the findings of Moscardo & Pearce (1986) and Enscore (1993) that regardless of this, most visitors felt such sites were realistic. The problem the former especially over-look is that this not a sufficient answer. What has also to be considered is what they term 'the definitional absurdity of denying authenticity to environments where every effort is spent to achieve this very characteristic' (Moscardo & Pearce 1986:477).

In some ways, though, they, and especially Susan Enscore, are right to query the idea that staging necessarily renders an experience 'inauthentic'. The idea that a staged experience cannot be authentic surely replicates the idea of authenticity as an unreflexive, often pastoral sense of Being. Such is argued to be destroyed by the entry of spectators from outside - rituals cease to be ritual for participants who are converted into actors. Thus, speaking of the commoditisation of a festival of Fuentarrabia, Greenwood (1977) points out how its staging and marketing destroyed the essential relations that were now being sold.

"It is clearly not performed for outsiders; it is a ritual whose importance and meaning lies in the entire town's participation and in the intimacy with which its major symbols are understood by all the participants and onlookers (the latter having spent months sewing costumes, directing marching practice, and teaching music to the children). It is a performance for the participants, not a show. It is an enactment of the "sacred history" of Fuentarrabia, a history by its very nature inaccessible to outsiders".

Greenwood (1977:133).

The reason I choose this example is because living history also quite clearly involves the hours and months of expectation and preparation in sewing costume, quite clearly involves a sense of *communitas* among participants - yet is entirely designed for onlookers. Rather than the onlookers destroying the original through some cultural Heisenberg effect, where their intrusion destroys what is sought, surely their presence is the *raison-d'être* of the ritual. It is not here a case of the participants/natives turning into *tourées* or performers, rather actors are trying to become participants. Surely we have to allow for the creation of a dramatic space as a chance to create an experience not judged against an unreflexive Being. The problem is that this too often produces the appearance of such prelapsarian identities.

Embodied knowledges.

It is worth recording that re-enactors claim their form is not only superior as a means of communication but can also give benefits in terms of how the past is understood by placing a different emphasis on some historical theories. For instance, I had become familiar with academic discussions of how conventions in representations led to women being depicted as frail and incapable of physical activity. Some of the women re-enacting gentry roles saw this from a different angle, as when one grumbled at the Tudor event, 'you can't breathe in these bodices ... it is only some years when the men have to wear boned costume as well and they suddenly realise what we go through every year'. The re-enactors focused on the way clothes did not just reflect conceptions of gendered activities but played an active role in ensuring compliance with these conceptions. In general, you could not slouch, put your hands in your pockets or engage in so many other modern comportments. Meanwhile the holistic sense of the Manor goes further into trying to create a sense of ambience through material presence:

"Everywhere there is activity. Sometimes noisy with smiths, joiners or armourers hammering. Sometimes with quiet stillness. As when the chandler dips candles, basketmakers wind willow, ropemakers twist twine or brewers taste their ale; or the illuminators form their letters. Yet all is work."

Manor brochure.

Such a sense of animation and bustle provides a corrective to still images in books and manuscripts. The more extreme re-enactors do claim this allows some identification with how people in the past felt as they performed these actions (Anderson 1984). Not

only can performing activities give a different sense of the past it can throw new light on some sources (cf. Shaw 1992). One example is work done training recruits by a civil war society using period manuals. This suggested the impracticability of the procedures they outlined. The group came to the conclusion these manuals had not formed the basis of most training - instead they expressed their authors wishes to reform current practice. Such a suggestion then casts into doubt some historical work on military actions which had taken the specifications of the period manuals as though they spoke about average military performance.

If I do not want to suggest that the re-enactors I was with felt they subjectively 'knew what it had been like' I also don't want to strip the re-enactment experience of affective and physical elements. At the Manor those with glasses simply took them off - the doctrine being that if you were short-sighted you were short-sighted. The gentry danced or rode and had to learn how to do these things in period clothing. Things as simple as always wearing hats went into forming part and parcel of re-enacting - let alone the wearing of woollen garments on hot days. The embodied nature of re-enacting is perhaps the most difficult thing to write - how the spirit of being on the Manor or at a re-enactment was so bound up in the smell of wool and wood-smoke, the feel of the clothes and the work done. As both researcher and writer I have to struggle to convey a sense that much of the feel of the place was not intellectual or intellectualisable - in fact excessive self-consciousness was antithetical to getting on with the daily routine as Sue said "there's no time to think at the event otherwise you'd wonder what the hell you were doing" (cf. Lock 1993).

His-tory or radical account?

The bustle and activity have other impacts beyond making the past seem alive. Not only the number of activities but the types are important. I enclose a list for the Manor where most would be going on on any given day and at various times and stages through the day:-

hay making, brewing (great hall of moathouse for 300 years), low players, market traders, carpenters, potters, alchemists, basket makers, camera obscura, vagrants, stewards, gentry - dancing, hunting, dining and so on at different times, tutors of gentry children, lawyers at work for a property suite then current, musicians, men-at-arms, spinners, dyers, lower middle class cottagers, gardeners, bakers, stillroom (using herbs to make soap, posies or a wide range of other period items), dairy workers (mostly maids making cheese butter and so on), kitchens for the

gentry, sottlers for the rest, brick makers, a foundry, blacksmiths, period archaeologists (!) and treasure hunters, archers, fletchers, glass stainers/blowers, paper makers, felt makers, rope makers, chandlers, ostlers, cow- and goat- and swine-herds. (*Total 39*)

The simple point to make is that this is a lot broader in pattern than a history of monarchs and court intrigue, providing at least some presentation of ordinary folk and ordinary activities that did not until recently figure in many histories. The criticism still stands that this is only 'tea-towel' and lightweight social history (Marling 1994). It is a criticism that rings true on two counts; firstly, the manor is dominated by the Elizabethan manor house; secondly, the strife and conflict in society do not necessarily appear with a focus on happy artisans. In answer to the first, the manor did dominate economically - it would surely be wrong not to show that - the question is whether that was portrayed that as the natural state of things (as accounts by first person interpreters tended to have to), or worse projected current inequalities into the past thus legitimating them²⁸ (Martin 1984; Potter & Leone 1992:477), or showed the stark inequalities of mercantile capitalism. The second, is more difficult. On the Manor there were scenarios showing the eviction of vagrants but even such poverty tended towards the picturesque (figure 42), and because of the year in question re-enactors were told about local revolts but they did not actually 'occur'. In some ways the Manor remained a peaceable kingdom though it will have portrayed the year 1534 (in 1994) in the middle of the attack on the monasteries which should have allowed scope for broader issues and social conflict to be brought in. In fact re-enactors are often more radical than the public want. Fort Louisburg had to be changed because visitors objected to buying tickets from 'syphilitic whores' and being insulted by rude and unkempt soldiers. The limits on what can be done to show what life might have been are the public's willingness to believe in and play at it. Most successful attempts to introduce these issues appear to rely on not interacting with the public but staging 'dangerous' history as an action that they can witness.

Indeed staging conflict itself runs into the opposite attack for glorifying butchery. It is worth asking whether critics would want the omission of the British revolution, when they criticise the bad taste and blood-thirstiness of Civil War re-enactments as a case of portraying a boys own fantasy of His-story as a series of male dominated, heroic

²⁸ For instance, one site owner suggests the superiority of living history by pointing to the fascination of boys with blacksmiths and swords, and girls with embroidery (Phillips 1984).

Figure 42:

Picturesque Poverty.



The two characters here were known as the hags. They were seamstresses all week and highly respectable, but on weekends they liked to branch out.

actions. It is an issue and certainly the limits of re-enactment quickly come when they can only portray the pomp of war rather than the casualties, focusing on the battles not the causes (Walsh 1993:2). Having said that, the civil war group tried to provide a sense of camp life with mocked up camps and announcements of casualties - including the extreme suffering caused in some areas. Perhaps there is a limit here where living history needs great practical care in taking on issues of conflict (cf. Patterson 1989; Uzzell 1989).²⁹

However, there is another sense in which living history can be suggested to be more radical or popular, and that is in relation to how knowledges are produced. The rise of re-enactments through the confluence of grass-roots activism in the early 70s and the popularity of costumed interpreters in museums (cf. Fortier 1987:3) seems to point at the contest for control of the historic apparatus as much as the rise in social and oral history at the same time (cf. Heller 1990). In re-enactment societies I would suggest that what we witness is a chance for some of the previously silenced public to assume the role of researcher themselves. For instance, I was trying to think through issues about how they\we were interpreting the civil war. I thus began looking for academic histories that might inform my research. I mentioned one to some members of the group (Carlton 1991 *Going to the Wars: the Experience of the British Civil Wars*). The first said he had not read it but began to cite the review of the book in the group's newsletter, while another member actually had read the book and began to list a specific set of criticisms. While attending an event near this latter person's home, a group of us slept in the attic where he and his partner kept about 150 source books on the civil war. On the floor were replicas of 2 cannon barrels he had made from wood and which would be used to make moulds and cast replica pieces for the society. After some people expressed interest he began recounting the precise sources he had used in creating these patterns - based on archaeological finds in Britain and America.

Much of the above discussion was based around articles in academic or technical journals with the swapping and comparing of 'new finds'. The thrill of discovering

²⁹ For instance one visitor to the manor asked about the number of Jews there, and was told there was no such thing - which they refused to accept, before ending up quite distressed when the participant outlined the way 'recusants' were treated. The incident left unresolved questions of whether religious intolerance should have been ignored, portrayed, or should there have been a disclaimer or a third person interpreter - since the visitor was very upset by the apparent unrepentant attitude of the character - whether the problem was the re-enactment's or the violence of history? Sometimes re-enactors worry that their work might be appropriated, thus there are no civil war re-enactments in Northern Ireland, and when one was performed in Scotland there was massive popular, and partisan, turnout resulting from a poster campaign of a negative of a pikeman's helmet with the caption 'Cromwell is Coming'.

new texts and sources for the period, that most academic of enjoyments, was also a part of this experience of living history. But these re-enactors had become convinced that disciplinary divides limited academic historians from understanding parts of the 'British revolution'. For example, historians often had scant understanding of ballistics and so made errors in assessing artillery. So not only does research among re-enactors indicate some striving towards authenticity it also shifts the balance of interpretive power somewhat more in favour of motivated amateurs.

However, the use of first person interpreters has another consequence on the practices of education as regards the visitors. It is clearly set out in contradistinction to what many re-enactors see as 'arid' or bookish learning. The genre of docu-drama is important in understanding the commitment expressed by the owner of the Manor that 'education should not be dreary'. School children reported that they remembered visits, they were popular with schools (otherwise they would not have some 20 000 kids through the gates each year), and some people could remember bits of them up to 10 years later. What first person role playing did do, though, was to shift the interpretive burden onto the visitor. The participant might try to subtly guide ideas but basically they provided information that was then actively interpreted amongst the visitors, democratising still further the research process some would argue:-

"By capitalizing on the public's preference to make the study of history an active rather than a passive pursuit, living-history museums can turn museum visitors into investigators of the past."

Leon & Piatt (1989:92).

I cannot count the number of times parents would point a child to something and say 'See that isn't that like?..' or 'how is that different to what we do now?' (cf.. Fortier 1987:7; Marling 1994). Elderly visitors started telling children about life before electricity or drew connections to some practices they remembered. But, if in error, they could not be corrected since participants could not comment on 'future' periods. Meanwhile to make the whole sense work there had to be the willed suspension of disbelief. Visitors had to enter into the spirit of things if they were to really get anything out of it. As one participant put it, "We are just trying to delude the public out of their ignorance". Which is why I earlier raised doubts about how myths could so easily be promulgated; by portraying 'the past' and asking for a suspension of disbelief visitors are given few ways of criticising or challenging what is going on.

Indeed to successfully engage with re-enactments it is often necessary for the visitor to have a reasonable competence in both the period and the style of exhibit before hand. Many participants at the Manor despaired of trying to break what seemed a stock periodisation of history into "Victorian, Medieval or Roman", and a staggering lack of historical awareness - in the worst example, one visitor asked Joe what he was doing to which the answer was that he was making bricks, 'you've got that wrong mate, they didn't have bricks in Medieval times it was all stone' (fortunately an exasperated Joe could point to the three storey Tudor House itself composed entirely of bricks). This was the sort of problem that led to the simplification and streamlining of the Jorvik exhibition (Addyman 1990) to make clear that Vikings came after the Romans and so forth. Such then suggests that participatory knowledge was not extended as far as visitors and that the re-enactors learnt more than the visitors (Sidford in Enscombe 1993:39).

Partly this is not helped by the format, that at the same time as enlivening history risks leaving many unsure of how to deal with re-enactors - I know I was useless as a visitor never wanting to actually talk to actors.³⁰ In this atmosphere it is possible to note how visitors did not know, and seemed wary of asking, why the sides were fighting a Civil War but tended to regard the situation in Sellar's and Yeatman's memorable description as "The Cavaliers Wrong but Wromantic; the Roundheads, Right but Repulsive". Efforts to disabuse them were made and did have some effect during living histories but the intimidation many visitors felt was I am sure a barrier:

"Museum-goers don't necessarily want to return to the days when guides at historic sites were tweedies who could bore for Britain on plasterwork or mediaeval fortifications... At the other extreme, we tend to avoid the full metal jacket re-enactment groups such as Sealed Knot, fearing they might be driven more by a personality disorder than a love of history and could be a bit unpredictable in their pike action".

Marling (1994:22).

It may well be that although it is a more lively style of presentation it too often assumes a basic familiarity with the period (Fortier 1987) and it still remains easier to change the presentation than visitors' expectations of history Lowenthal (1989b:120).

³⁰ As a measure of how visitors could be excluded by the style of first person interpretation is the game played on the Manor (strictly against the rules) of daring people to insert anachronisms unnoticed. A perhaps apocryphal tale had it that a couple of gentry characters managed to insert the lyrics from the theme tune of a popular soap ("neighbours, neighbours, everyone needs good neighbours") unnoticed into a dialogue.

Communities of performance: community, communitas and recreation.

Idyllic England: this sceptred isle set in a silver sea....

The performance at the Manor needs to be set in terms of wider expectations and discourses about the past. In particular I want to emphasise the connections to nostalgia, to a timeless past and a pre-industrial idyll. The Manor does seem to risk a nostalgia dreaming of an organic, bucolic past (Lowenthal 1991; Stafford 1989).³¹ As the Manor brochure put it 'The Manor induces idleness' and 'amid all the effort there is ever the chance occasion when all the activity ceases... At such a moment time stands still'. In fact there was a whole sub-class of participants who specialised in performing this idyll - much to the annoyance of owners and everyone else cohorts of teenager girls would practice wandering around aimlessly with hair flowing and bells jingling.³² Somewhat acidly they were known as 'winces' either since they made everyone else wince or they spent all their time looking winsome depending on who you believed.

Indeed there were moments when it was difficult not to feel the place was idyllic, be it a midnight swim in the moat with the moon rising over the bridge, or the sun glittering on the side of the moat house (used to full effect by installing a camera obscura there). The image of an English heartland has to be faced when *Country Life* described the Manor as "the epitome of many people's image of an Elizabethan house, rising tall and majestic, with deep wings and romantic turrets, a wide moat and noble cedar trees". I do worry that here is again the typically nostalgic identification of authenticity with an unself-conscious primitive time (Stewart 1984:11). How else can I take the introductory speech by the owner about the pace of the life on the Manor being slow, a slowness like he remembered up till the war in that rural area - marked with a politeness and respect for others he was appalled to find didn't happen when he first went to London. He sprinkled in some humour but I kept having visions of him and John Major cycling through the mist to church together.

More generally Susan Enscore also found that despite attempts to show dung, flies and discomfort, photographers interpreted the site she studied in the US as a pleasant place

31 Certainly this cannot be said of the Civil War period - so often characterised by contemporaries as being 'this unhappy land'.

32 This was the unintended result of a directive that in order to look more 'lived-in' people should carry authentic kit and accessories, or ornaments so they looked like they did live in their clothes rather than solely wear them during the day at the Manor. Bells became a trend among that set.

showing an equally pleasant past (Enscore 1993:227). Given the historical vagueness of many visitors I do wonder whether re-enactors were not occasionally like rustic folk in picturesque paintings inhabiting 'a landscape that could place them in any period, just as their clothing acts as no more than a general signifier of rusticity' (Street 1989:76). I suspect that the activity and bustle disrupted this to some extent but I was left with the odd twinge that we were playing nymphs and swains in someone else's pastoral myth, (figure 43) suggesting that the ideal social state of organic wholeness coincided with the period of Tudor national consolidation and the English greatness associated with the time of Shakespeare (Holderness 1992; Taylor 1994). The risk of places like the Manor is surely in re-inscribing the cult of the country house more firmly than ever within the new form of historical interpretation.

The Social Life of History.

So far I have tried to lay out many of the techniques objectives and pitfalls of living history. But it all sounds too pristine, too noble. While the above debates are known and discussed they are not the central occurrences at events. I want to bring in notions of the carnivalesque to explain what is going on here (Stallybrass & White 1986). The ludic aspect must be worked through where the separated space licences more possibilities for present actors. As one couple of participants put it:-

"I never understand it; you talk to these people at musters and you would never believe they could hold a responsible job." *Amy*
 "That's because you have never understood the switch off effect. You see these people on the 5 weekends a year when they are completely out of control" *Gav*

This was most noticeable among the civil war society but echoed elsewhere. This society had had to ban rugby socks initially, indicating the sort of pleasures sought by some (figure 44). There was still a huge scale of drinking at major events. The unit I was with prided itself on being able to turn almost the hardest of stomachs with 'earthy' banter - such as lengthy digressions on the relations of complex dress to toilets. These sociable 'pleasures' are also a part of living history, but not of some quest for a historically 'authentic identity'.

The experience is not of Tudor England but of re-enacting it, with all the complex pleasures and socialities that this involves. Thus jokes were bantered around about the

Figure 43:

Playing Nymphs and Swains in Someone Else's Pastoral Myth.



Figure 44:

"Full metal Jacket Re-enactment"



kid who came with his parents to his ninth year though he was only eight - wink, wink. Teenagers would boast about staying up till the early hours of the morning and having a wild time. People would play out bawdy characters - using authenticity as an excuse. After some competitively off-colour and innuendoed remarks one fellow marketeer at the Manor felt compelled to say - 'well we have to show then that it was the Victorians who invented prudery, the Tudors were a more earthy lot'. Well yes, but being honest the pleasure was in the innuendoes now, the flirtation and so forth.³³ The pleasures are derived from the social opportunities of a time apart. In the words of the final instructions to participants at the Manor :

"Have monstrous good XVIth Century fun!"

Dispersed pleasures and intermittent communities.

To bring this together then I suggest we have an economy of pleasure that links re-enactors into a community. But it is not a community of the bounded organic sort suggested in the idyll. On the contrary this is a typically late modern form of sociality. It extends over space and time and is certainly not continuous. It is maintained as a series of pleasures. Firstly, through the immediate pleasures of re-enactment - the acting, the performing of a role, the 'doing' as it were. But, secondly, through the anticipation building up to this - which reached almost palpable levels on a bus with people returning to the Manor for a new year. Then, thirdly, the social side of each event - the politicking, chatting, flirting, horsing around - in fact almost every normal social activity.

Further the pleasures were not solely located at the events. The making and researching were also integral parts of the enjoyment. And these seem peculiarly academic ways of organising pleasure - swapping sources (both material and textual). The sense of events for the Civil War group was somewhat like an academic conference, though they would be as appalled at that as I am sure academics will be. The similarity may, firstly, be in the male-dominated atmosphere and, secondly, in the sense of seeing again and socialising with people with similar interests from other parts of the country. The whole works to trade information, gossip and cross-experiences. Wherever I went I encountered people from other groups who had cross-memberships

³³Taking the other extreme, the Society for Creative Anachronism encourages detailed costume research and creates a world where people follow a mock code of courtly behaviour - so that one member claimed to be shocked by rudeness when she left events. They are clear that their motivation is to enjoy this fantasy and, according to one member, portray 'not history how it was, but how it should have been'.

comparing and elaborating experiences. A whole series of pleasurable knowledges were being produced and circulated in recounted episodes, in comparisons, and so forth. This is a side of re-enacting that is far more to do with the pleasures of re-enacting than the pleasures of the past.

Critical distance or realism?

I want to begin to draw the analysis of diverse practices of living history together by returning to the creation of cinematic space - a three dimensional stage. In light of all the above emphasis on who learns what I want to suggest that even the rigour of the Manor's presentations does not necessarily make living history a successful way of communicating about the past. As Kevin Walsh suggests (1992:104) it may be a very anti-critical mode, staving off critical debate by not allowing the explanation of what is seen and experienced. Yet at the same time I have noted that its humanistic roots and concerns (Anderson 1984:79) often seem to gel with those of social history. And it can be designed with a shock value, providing a series of question marks and upsets - permanently raising issues of not only 'why did they do that then?' but 'why and how things are done now' (Anderson 1984:52; cf. Greengold 1987). It is not enough to simply dismiss recreations as images obscuring an understanding of 'real' history. Rather analysis of how they are performed reveals much more is going on and for multiple audiences where the participants may seek a time apart, an escape from modern society, but the means whereby they escape are entirely modern and very reflexive. Rather than accept the charge of seeking an escape into some authorising 'real' period, some will comment that their study of the past has revealed much mythology of the past. Some women recounted finding that their Tudor counterparts had more powerful roles than they expected and as a consequence have found strength in that knowledge to be more assertive in their own lives. Turning to the past may be a strategy to find an authentic experience, but most re-enactors were firmly aware that it was a quest motivated by the present.

Given this awareness, the attempt to 'bring the past to life' must be read as both shot through with present concerns and reflexively constructed *about* the present. The reflexivity, even the irony, of the re-enactment does not render it inauthentic, rather it is what truly marks it as modern drama (Chaney 1993). The 'time apart' was never referred to as 'the past' among the re-enactors I observed, the time apart was referred to

as 'the Manor'. The authenticity was not so much found in the past as in the 'communitas' felt with others. To most, but not all re-enactors, the Tudors were not so much 'authentic' people as pleurably constructed roles. There was an immense level of attention to 'being authentic' defined in terms of material accuracy. However, coupled with this was a strong sense of the drama, theatricality and artifice - in short a sense not just of the power of the illusion but also of the means used to sustain it (Chaney 1993:22). But the tendency to create a suspension of disbelief, the magical realism of a dramatic space for visitors, rather than providing the tools of critique meant that 'fakelore' or Tudorbethan or whatever myths could be peddled with remarkable ease. Visitors were placed in the position of witnesses to past events as though those events could speak for themselves (Herlihy 1988:1187; Toplin 1988:1217). The great strength of living history is that it attracts people's imagination but there is a great deal of danger.

The reality effect produced can, though, give far more of a jolt than any number of critical monographs. Unfortunately the desire to be disturbed and shocked is not generally a strong motivation among visitors, to be informed may be, but the most effective events must engage the visitor then seek to lead them a little further. To bring them on board it is often the case that appearances have to live up to basically filmic expectations:³⁴

"appearance was the key, as visitors used this criteria to judge authenticity. In actuality, they were judging the ability of the staged area to present the past in a manner they found true. They did not try to go "behind the scenes". For visitors the staged area was the back region, a place and time not usually accessible to them. The contrived setting is, therefore, validly seen as an authentic experience of that place."

Enscore (1993:262).

Susan Enscore here concludes with a valuation of authenticity based on its effect among visitors rather than historical provenance. I have argued that certainly the latter is, if anything, the game living history wants to play, but I am not sure that she provides a successful alternative in the tautological definition that what is experienced genuine is genuine (cf. Potter & Leone 1992:479). For as visitors become interested and

³⁴ A more optimistic note on the desire for different experiences in tourism is given by Leone who suggests that '[m]uch of our population understands that what is apparent is seldom real or the whole truth. Our audience is turning to museums because they sense that history tells them, not what they know, but what they do not know' (1987:41). He suggests people are willing to critically engage with realistic presentations and criticise received wisdoms from his experience in running a critical public history programme in Annapolis.

curious, as they seek for insights, they almost inevitably push the interpreter into the unknown. The interpreter can then maintain a realistic effect but only at the price of deception about how reliable that portrait may be (Fortier 1987:5).

Even if all the details are correct questions arise about the type of past being created. The problem is that old humanist chestnut - the sites are set up to teach sameness, through their reliance on a common humanity, rather than difference (Leone 1987). The realism of the sites did draw people in and yet if they were to get a better appreciation of what was being attempted then they also had to maintain a critical distance. While such distancing did occur to some extent in myriads of discussions about how (recreated) history compared with present life (Robertshaw 1992) visitors also needed the interpretive wherewithal to assess the re-enactment, to argue with it (Walsh 1992:99). It was worrying when visitors seemed to occasionally assume that once we were safely in the past it was all much of a muchness and that it was static. So comments could be framed about half-remembered eras - in the fertile territory on the edge of memory and domestic folklore - and grandmother's life was not just compared to but likened to Tudor period activities. Such blurring of memories increases the power of these sites enormously, risks the bond between them/then and us/now, seeing the past as essentially the same.

A danger etched in the '[t]he public presentation of private life' since despite the realistic portrayal it 'is a juxtaposition that suggests we must speak of invention rather than preservation. Those elements of the past selected to represent traditional culture are placed in contexts utterly different from their prior unmarked settings. ... Reconstructed and reinterpreted as "tradition", they come to signify national identity.' (Handler & Linnekin 1984:280). The bounded organic communities presented may come to be retrospectively emplotted as essential elements of a national identity. The realism and nostalgia, the idyll and the organic all meant the Manor risked not titillation or entertainment but perpetuating a particular version of Englishness.

The Ends of Heritage.

Dedications and directions.

'To the Great British People without whose self-sacrificing determination to become Top Nation there would have been no (memorable) history. History is now at an end; this History is therefore final.'

(Sellars & Yeatman preface 1930)

In the 1920s Sellars and Yeatman produced a beautifully erudite and witty satire on Whig history "*1066 and all that*" - a work still on sale and in print to this day. That this parody endures when so many studious works have perished seems a good place to start to bring together this thesis by thinking of the changing contexts through which this work circulates and what they reveal about appropriations of the past. The contexts through which it generates its humour are precisely the intersections of official histories and popular knowledges, the terrain which this thesis has kept on crossing. The little book is set out as the *only* and *final* history - not defined that as what we thought it was but as what we can remember - focusing on the popular appropriation rather than the scholarly production of knowledge. And what is this memorable history? It is a parodic series of misrememberings insinuating themselves and ironically worked around history as a story, a grand story of 'our island history'.

The humorous appropriation thus resonates with the situation of historic education in contemporary Britain. We have a work attempting to subvert a dominant or hegemonic account, the Whig history of Macaulay where the world had one meta-narrative (allegedly) and could be divided into 103 Good Things (or some Bad Things), or 5 Bad Kings depending on whether they furthered the directional narrative or not. There are echoes of the end of grand narratives long before Fukuyama decided History had ended - Sellars and Yeatman close their account with "*A Bad Thing: America was thus clearly top nation and thus History came to a .*" (1930:123). Surely this sense of completion sets the predicament of Heritage, which Hewison suggests is a clinging to a past when the process of History has passed Britain by, a popular feeling that there is no longer a great story carrying the nation along. This diagnosis is supported by the surge of current imitators, in the retail chain "Past Times" you can buy books of the past as Quotations ('brush up on your classic', or tour the quotable bits of Shakespeare) or the book of military (or even 'historical') blunders (the South Sea bubble and so

forth). Meanwhile other books offer the 'bloody law of the Tudors', or 'a true and bloody history of England', all echoing Sellar's and Yeatman's style of small snippets and humorous prose.

What I want to point out is the transformed context and effect of all this. *1066 and all that* works as a series of misremembered snippets because it relies on a master narrative against which it can act - it is funny because its snippets break up and miscegenate this narrative. In later imitators history becomes a series of snippets, vignettes of interest to the reader, not an ironicising of 'straight' history. The welter of books in this genre have lost the specific edge against one overarching narrative, targeting instead the dry nature of academic history. As such, the profusion of history made available as little snippets surely represents a dispersion of a sense of history as process. It is not a case of Progress leaving history in ruins but of Heritage presenting history as bric-a-brac. If I have charted how Heritage has rendered unstable assumed hierarchies of historical value, it also leaves a possible portrait of the past as a smorgasbord of packaged incidents.¹ Yet, on another cut, I have laid out how Heritage is implicated with a simultaneous appeal to just "our island story" that Sellars & Yeatman lampooned. The question which this raises is how to relate the dispersion of Histories into these multiple small parts while at the same time keeping in view the unconscious effectivity of the grand organising account.

Unity and fragmentation in the field of Heritage.

The dilemma of interpreting heritage is to keep a sense of both the political urgency in critiquing often reactionary deployments of the past while not lapsing into an often trite condescension which obliterates the gains made by various formations in breaking down some of the hierarchies of historical value. What I have tried to enable is a reading at two levels, firstly, of the field of Heritage and, secondly, of the multiplicity of practices. However, I am not trying to make an argument that active practices are thus contesting the dominant regime through which the past is presented. They must obviously mark its limits yet they must also reproduce at least parts of it or the

¹ Meaghan Morris (1988c:184) suggests similar dispersion might be seen in the academic field: "Let's consider the function of famous quotations from Marx .. I can remember, dimly, a time when it was possible to watch in awe while Communist party titans hurled quotations at each other as weapons in serious battles of interpretation (ie policy). Then came a time when the use of a quote became a means of flashing one's pedigree ('where I'm coming from'). Now it is all too easy to imagine Famous Quotes from Marx as the latest version of Trivial Pursuit, or as the theme of an intricate video game. 'Now', of course, is the state of culture within which it's possible to use cutesy little pseudo-histories of the sort I've just made up."

dominant order would already have ceased to exist. The exploration charted in this thesis suggests just these compromises in practices and how they are articulated in relation and through a dominant discourse. I locate this dominant discourse at the level of the national past.

The practices explored here all point to diversity which in no case simply reproduces a sense of national identity. The local histories provide an alternate sense of the past which involves an explicit critique of 'national' portrayals, reinserting the specificities of lived, placed experience - indeed the oft cited heritage attractions of Beamish and Wigan Pier are profoundly interested in re-constructed a regional identity that is not entirely subsumed in the national one. The living histories again focus on ways of knowing about the past that concentrate on the human level - rather than grand politics. The visitors to sites are as busy inscribing themselves in their own futures as they are reiterating a sense of the past. At the same time they enable and allow reinscriptions of dominant pasts; in oral histories claiming a modern day fall, in the idyllic and aestheticised Manor and in the hallowing gaze of tourists at the sights of dominant histories.

I have tried to suggest that the articulation does not seem to be sufficiently worked through by suggestions that the nation is thus present through its symbols (Shields 1991). This appears to miss a dynamic sense of Heritage as a field and an activity rather than a static image. Thus, in creating a sense of national identity and shared past, it is not wise to look for a single presentation of that past appearing inch by inch or even metonymically in every instance. To unify a collectivity, it is not enough merely to aggregate serialised groups or instants of experience; Heritage must produce this synthesis without freezing it into a permanent goal or an achieved image of the collective (cf. Dienst 1994:10). Heritage is not providing distorted images of the past with which to blind the public, or indeed propagating some ideological reading of the past which directly legitimates ruling groups. Some sites and some practices may do so but that does not account for the diversity of events and experiences available.

Instead Heritage is providing a field for a series of practices. However, the practices operate and function because they can be oriented and mapped around the dominant sense of the past. Heritage provides an order, a virtual Map, delimiting positions and orientations. I have tried to work this idea through by both suggesting the positions and systems created through Heritage and how the practices I looked at still seemed to

work through these. I suggested that there was a spatialisation of time in one sense for Heritage, and I have tried to show a certain consistency between some modes of understanding the past. I have suggested the prevalence and importance of certain visual framing devices in creating a particular sense of the past in places through the freezing of past time into an isolated bubble - be it in pictures of the urban order or in living history. I have tried to show the continued reference to a sense of comparative loss and decline structured around these frozen space-times - be they in oral history and historic pictures. And I have tried to draw conjunctures between this position and ways of seeing that try to create a sense of the authentic as independent of the knower.

However, the specificities of each are manifestly different and I do not think this drawing together of threads in some forced conclusion is particularly profitable. It should be clear that there is a virtually indefinite series of differences and conjunctions that could be pursued. Indeed I initially took this Saussurean thought into planning the thesis, thinking that the relation of these fragments was permanently inadequate always being inscribed in relation to the next. Where I no longer believe the linguistic model is quite sufficient is in dealing with the relation of the instants to the field as a whole which I do not think can be taken as analogous to *langue/parole*.²

In this thesis I have derived this relation from the idea of Map and Travel. That is that a Map frames the Journey, is its realisation, yet at the same time the Journey exceeds and shapes the Map. Crucially then I have treated Heritage not as an object or a collection of objects, but as a way of organising events and practices. Thus while it is vital to see that the fabrication of regional identities exceeds the sense of the national identity, I have suggested is so important to heritage, it is also important to see how Heritage allows these regional creations to then become part of a larger story - precisely through the commodification of regions as themed 'countries'. It is this dynamic that shaped the 'heritage debate' and I do not want to suggest an experiential view of heritage practices leads inexorably to a misplaced populism. In terms of the stakes of national identity, they are strategically located utterances. At the same time they are not examples of greater themes, they are not instances determined entirely by an order of difference. The practices cannot be determined since my suggestion is that Heritage exists only in the ways it is enacted; there is no Heritage-qua-object 'out there'

² As such I think it is important that I do not wrap these fragments up here. Rather I have to leave them open to suggest how small a section of this process is here covered - I ran out of time long before I ran out of connections to pursue.

somewhere. But the *idea* that there is Heritage-qua-object out there is *important*. *Belief* in such an object is vital but that is not the same as saying that it is imagined as the same in each occurrence. It need not be singular just so long as it appears so within each utterance, obeying a logic where it does not have to be either one thing or another but can be both/and (Dayan & Katz 1985:25) as with a 'public' sphere:-

"[W]hile all the single public forms or sites appear as part of a unified public sphere, no such unified public sphere actually exists, except as the *impression* of unity differently constructed by (and often in the particular interests of) the single forms in question.

Bommes & Wright (1982:260).

Thus in each of the studies here there seems to be a different Heritage that orders and animates each practice, and in bringing them together I hoped to show the disjunctures which are normally and necessarily hidden. Heritage is not only a national abstraction that is made present in these symbols, as Shields (1992:191) suggests, but a national abstraction which is created through its partial symbols, the one reciprocally organising the other. Such an argument is familiar in part from critical analyses of 'nationalism' which begin to analyse and interrogate the formation of nations. In one sense I am suggesting, then, that Heritage is a means of communication, a technology, which allows the realisation of a sense of community as a performative and collective action - though the collectivity is scattered. Through it people can feel a part of community, a nation. Not through immediate identification with the symbols but through the assumed shared process and participation. The analysis draws very close to suggesting that the nation is an intended object (eg Bauman 1991) created through belief. Such is the case as far as it goes. However, the symbols are important, in ways this intentional analysis cannot allow. It seems to me that matters of address or awareness that others are watching are insufficient in themselves to interpret the relation among the spectators as one of group-in-fusion or community (cf.. Houston 1984:187). To do so seems to emphasise the voluntary nature of the object too much and to make it too much of a rational enterprise. Such seems to miss a sense of the power involved in the created or valorised symbols(cf. Zizek 1992). The symbols and discourse have a sense of materiality beyond that ascribed to an intended object. So, while there is no reified object outside the utterance of Heritage, that is not the same as saying it is a momentary and unstable. The performative Journeys are organised and marked as significant by the Map of Heritage. They work in a virtual order that they invoke as a cause of the performance, so:-

"It is tempting to take systems of national symbols at their own valuation, as *expressions* of a latent national life, spirit, character, or identity; but a more scrupulous and sceptical history would invert this order of explanation, presenting the invention of national traditions as an *effect* of the larger logic ..."

Rée (1992:10 emphasis added).

It is this reordering of cause and effect that is crucial. What is created is a 'Thing' that apparently causes these symbolic forms. But the causality is dialectically reversed. "It is the cause itself that is produced by its effects (the ideological practices it animates)." (Zizek 1990:52). Importantly, this suggests how the nation is invested with a sense of reality.³ In short what I am suggesting is that just because Heritage may be discursively produced that does not mean it cannot have any ontological depth; it does not make it a transparent (Rée 1992). The term 'Thing' comes from Zizek's strictly Lacanian terminology. The position of this Thing as a traumatic, unreachable sense of the Real seems to me to give a purchase on the identity created through Heritage. Out of the Symbolic forms comes the pressing sense of something beyond, something ungraspable in those terms. In this way the power of Heritage is to speak in the name of the Real by denying that it *creates* a sense of the past (cf. de Certeau 1986:28). The creation of depth in this field, a sense of a beyond, is a dialectical and retroactive work. It operates through 'an inversion by means of which what is effectively an *immanent*, purely textual operation - the "quilting" [point de capiton] of heterogeneous material into a unified ideological field - is perceived as an unfathomable, *transcendent*, stable point of reference concealed behind the flow of appearances and acting as its hidden cause' (Zizek 1991a:19). In this way practices come to stand as proof of belonging rather than a cause of that sense of belonging. Heritage provides powerful mythic identities which have a 'force and an emotional power in the spheres of human action because their logic or reasoning connects with the way human beings are already oriented within their realities. In this sense the mythic may be as much legitimated by the world as it legitimates lived reality' (Kapferer 1988:46).

I am wary of taking this process direct from individual psychoanalysis and applying it at the national scale, extrapolating directly in the way Zizek sometimes attempts. I

³ It is true that it is not an actor in itself, but here I want to focus on how it emotionally induces and organises responses both on its behalf and as though it were capable of action. As opposed to an intended object which exists as long as someone believes in it, the suggestion is that the nation gains a sense of autonomy from this. Thus if no one believes in Hamlet he ceases if no one believed in Napoleon he would have ensured someone did. The sense of a Thing beyond the practices is designed to appeal to this sense of a Real beyond the immediate practices.

suggest, instead, that heritage performances are concrete instances where such a 'Thing' is created. Like the 'public' sphere, it appears to be beyond the practices it organises, it appears to transcend them. It is irreducible to the assemblage of practices it animates, always remaining as something more that is left over in them. This heritage-qua-Thing is the master signifier organising heritage phenomena and rendering them into a field. Seen in this way, it is what enables heritage performances to be totalised and allows diverse practices to be Mapped as part of the same. That is, the multitude of heritage practices are often not seen as ends in themselves. Rather they are seen as celebrating or experiencing parts of a wider theme. "*Our great island story*" is constructed as a field of rituals whose performance makes such an abstract discourse concretely present to 'us'. The rituals are made into a whole by this heritage-qua-Thing. In the case of oral history and neo-conservative political narratives, the Journeys can create a sense of originary wholeness that organises these experiences as about a decline from some golden era. This is a Thing created in and by these practices yet appearing to organise them. It provides a Map that combines these experiences. Perhaps through this process we can see the vast fragmentation of the past yet its continued logic and organisation subject to Heritage.

The organisation of this thesis has attempted to address precisely this feeling of organisation through its deployment of the idea of Maps as an organising principle. The suggestion has been, through from ideas of spatialised knowledge and mnemotechnics in museums to the patterning of pictures of the city, that the fragments of the past are created and rendered visible as a collection. Heritage is in this sense a technology in the Heideggerian sense. The conjunctures of ways of portraying the past enframe it in a way that makes the past legible as these isolated fragments. I have paralleled this to the way of seeing a Map can represent, in organising a collection of disparate parts. Against this I have run a different sense of parts unified as souvenirs, as products of itineraries and Journeys.⁴ I have tried to show the mutual implication of the two and the dependence of each upon the other. I have thus tried to retain a sense that the evasions and displacements of travelling do not provide some radical alterity because they rely on the very organisation of instances by Heritage-qua-Thing in order to work. A sense that it retroactively Maps and places these contingent practices as signs of an immanent object (Zizek 1991a, 1990, 1989), an identity anchored on the

⁴ I am indebted to the work of Stewart (1984), Schor (1992) and Danet & Katriel (1989) who work through this contrast with respect to different fields. My choice of Maps and Journeys is partly conditioned as an appeal to the ways people experience Heritage and partly as an attempt to avoid the polarisation of the two senses that can creep in to a contrast of collections and souvenirs.

past. The practices are thus experienced as signs of something other than themselves (Adorno 1993:6, Culler 1991:125).

Exclusive Cartographies.

Because Heritage-qua-Thing is beyond 'our' practices, it is untouchable. It is apparently made present in 'our' practices; an access that serves to define 'us' against all 'others' (Zizek 1991a; cf. 1993). In this way, 'we' are identified by our possession of an exclusive past, unintelligible to 'others' (who by definition lack a sense of it). The retroactive logic of the process of creating a sense of a special Thing is shown in the way contingent elements of the past are transformed into exclusive traits. Minor foibles and episodes become crucial keys to identity. Our practices form our identity, yet we invest our identity in a Thing beyond them. This can create so many "geographies of rejection" (Robins 1991a:42), so many essentialised identities organised on exclusive relations to untouchable essences. It is not possible to admit the artifice or selectivity in creating this past. The retroactive nature of Effects producing Causes erases the contingency of identity and makes it appear given and essential. It is this that forms the action of exclusion. So Stuart Hall can write of how the black part in British identity is repressed as an essentialised English identity is created:

"People like me who came to England in the 1950s have been there for centuries; symbolically, we have been there for centuries. I was coming home. I am the sugar at the bottom of the English cup of tea. I am the sweet tooth, the sugar plantations that rotted generations of English children's teeth. There are thousands of others beside me that are you know the cup of tea itself. Because they don't grow it in Lancashire you know. Not a single tea plantation exists within the United Kingdom. This is the symbolisation of English identity - I mean what does anybody know about an English person except that they can't get through the day without a cup of tea? Where does it come from? Ceylon - Sri Lanka, India. That is the outside history that is the inside history of the English. There is no English history without that history." (1991: 48-9).

Yet that other history is just what is excluded when Heritage creates a Thing beyond our practices, available only to and defining 'us'. The Thing homogenises or totalises heritage events and creates their order while multiplying distinctions into a Map of Heritage. The Thing guarantees their exchangeability even as it allows their diversity,

homogenising under the guise of fragmentation (Lefebvre 1991:353). It allows fragmentation within the field, but only at the price of setting up boundaries to announce what is (necessarily) outside Heritage. My suggestion is that heritage produces distinctions, in terms of class use, in terms of types of events portrayed, while trying to suppress qualitative diversity and difference. It cannot allow in this 'outside history'. The Left's critiques should not then focus on the content of the instances - that may be left to institutional politics - but rather on their organisation. For instance, Hewison (1987, 1989, 1991) ends up criticising essentialist versions of the past by invoking a national essence that is somehow in decline and may be cured if reactionary heritage is replaced by a 'true' history. But that replaces one Thing with another, creating a different but equally exclusive topography. The point I am making is not that one needs a true interpretation of the past, though new versions might alter the situation, but that one needs to reappraise what such interpretations prove. They must not be proof of identity: proof that one belongs within the Map organised by heritage-qua-Thing.

Disjunctures and Displacements.

I suggest avoiding this essentialism by acknowledging that people's Journeys can follow a myriad of routes - taking and repositioning places in their own narratives - disrupting the topographical system of Heritage and displacing the 'Thing' that organises this reactionary Map. The Journeys of day-trippers discussed earlier, serve to disrupt this Map, displace this organising principle, in their negotiation of pleasure from heritage. There is an engagement with a past that avoids this ordering, but at the same time employs it, in order to render the occasion significant. The Journeys (re)mark the absence of a centre. The organising Thing is constructed in utterances about the past, not beyond them. The Left must challenge the reactionary Journey that tries to silence all others, de-legitimise their utterances, and set up a 'true' Heritage beyond itself, unmarked by its creation - a Thing projected on a past whose malleability it serves to deny, an organisation that denies how it is created in highly specific practices. An organisation that then must exclude different practices. And this has to be done while seeing that this is an anxious projection to cover the heterology of utterances; Heritage-qua-Thing maps the fears as well as the strengths of the Right.

As perhaps a final thought, we should perhaps think how the Real is not only unattainable but marked out as a tear and a gap in the symbolic order. Likewise, the

subject is itself in the Lacanian schema marked by absence (Lacan 1977; Craib 1989; Žižek 1989, 1991a&b). If heritage is about an attempt to suture together a visualisation of the past, it has to be born in mind that we can never entirely fill up picture of the world gaps remain where we are (Merleau-Ponty 1962:207). The gaps remain, remarked through Heritage's struggle to close them. Heritage may attempt to suture a subject into its symbolic order to presentify a Real, the kernel of identity. Yet at the same time the same subject is marked by the absences of other instants of heritage. Heritage is, then, the struggle to attain an impossible closure, premised on a belief in the possibility of closure, and it is in this dialectical gap that people move - constantly affirming, constantly invoking and constantly evading the organisation of identity.

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