

# Afterword

## Locating Imaginaries in the Anthropology of Tourism

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We anthropologists seem to have a penchant for using our terms of art in idiosyncratic ways. Culture, power, religion, ethnicity, transnationalism, kinship, even tourism—core concepts like these take on subtly and sometimes dramatically different shades of meaning from one scholar’s work to the next. Part of the variation is due to theoretical perspective, of course; in the writings of Lewis Henry Morgan and Clifford Geertz, for example, “culture” is scarcely the same concept (Kuper 2000). Other variations stem from the desire that our work reflect emic categories, and such divergent usages are typically prefaced with an explanation. But with some terms, I suspect, there is something a bit less intentional at work: a basic lack of conceptual unity, born of the recent importation of a term that carries multiple meanings in scholarship outside the discipline, such that no single definition has yet become the norm. Such appears to be the case with “imaginaries.”

It is worth noting that “the imaginary” did not originate as an anthropological concept, though as this book indicates, it is fast becoming one. It has come to us from psychoanalysis, philosophy, and social theory, with Jacques Lacan, Cornelius Castoriadis, and Charles Taylor, each of whom developed a conceptually distinct use of the term, being the most commonly cited by anthropologists (Strauss 2006).<sup>1</sup> Cultural studies, too, has adopted the term, developing a robust if similarly conceptually murky literature on the (tourist) imaginary that goes back at least to the 1990s (e.g., O’Malley 1992; Desmond 1997). Hence, depending on the anthropologist and the intellectual lineage from which s/he draws the term, “the/an imaginary” might refer to what is distorted, repressed, or fantasized, driven by psychological needs

(following Lacan); a composite image of a place or people drawn from pop culture representations (as in cultural studies); the self-image and values of a people (usually called *the social imaginary*, following Castoriadis); a broad assemblage of expectations and norms held by members of a society for how things should work (following Taylor); or something like the collective consciousness or imaginative capacity of an entire society or subgroup—which is how we get potentially reifying constructions like “the image of the primitive in the Western imaginary.”

So what about this book? Is there a distinctly anthropological perspective on—or even common definition of—tourism imaginaries? Reading through these insightful, ethnographically grounded chapters, I am left with a sense of having traversed a landscape dotted with diverse clusters of tourism-related images, interactions, imagery, institutions, and imaginings, each cluster referred to as an imaginary but each involving different imaginative phenomena. To wit: both within and across the contributions to this volume, *the imaginary* and *imaginaries* are invoked variously in the sense of worldviews, discourses, images, fantasies, stereotypes, interpretive schemas, cultural frameworks for interaction with others (and Others), representational assemblages, the imaginings and expectations of the individual tourist, a globally disseminated touristic image of a particular place, the self-conscious collective identity of a “host” population, and the beliefs tourists hold about locals—and vice versa.<sup>2</sup> From these chapters we learn, too, that tourism imaginaries are at once collective, individual, global, intersubjective, ephemeral, tenacious, and emergent. They shape and reflect the assumptions of entire societies and yet “there are as many tourist imaginaries as there are tourists” (Di Giovine, this volume). Despite this conceptual heterogeneity, however, each chapter can readily be situated within a common overarching area of study: what cognitive anthropologist Claudia Strauss (2006: 322) calls “shared mental life,” in this case specifically within the social field of tourism.

#### IMAGINING IMAGINARIES ANTHROPOLOGICALLY, OR MAPPING SHARED MENTAL LIFE IN TOURISM

If the idea of shared mental life seems to raise the specter of Carl Jung’s collective unconscious, with its universal archetypes and narrative structures, it need not. What is meant here, as Arjun Appadurai explains in his articulation of imagination as a social practice, is something “no more and no less real than the collective representations of Émile Durkheim, now mediated through the complex prism of the modern media” (1996: 31). While Appa-

durai does not elaborate, let us pursue the analogy. For Durkheim, collective representations were ideational forms common to members of a society. In their collective aspect they existed as abstractions of shared ideas, “simplified and impoverished” relative to the fullness of the lived experiences in which they were used (Durkheim [1912] 2001: 327). The vision of imaginaries generated in this book is quite different, perhaps because of the accretive effect of the modern media Appadurai highlights: here, what is available is not an impoverished abstraction to be fleshed out in each instantiation, but a surfeit, an excess of imagery, discourse, narrative, and representation that spills over and colors individual travelers’ perceptions of a toured landscape or people. As mental resources—in Noel Salazar’s terms, “socially transmitted representational assemblages that interact with people’s personal imaginings and are used as world-making and world-shaping devices” (Salazar 2011: 864)—imaginaries evidently contain far more fodder for the imagination than any individual experience can bring to light.

I want to say more about this idea of shared mental life, as it is the unspoken core of most anthropological uses of the imaginary, and particularly so in work on tourism. It is here that we may locate what a distinctively anthropological perspective entails. Like its conceptual predecessors, culture and ideology, the concept of imaginaries rests on the existence of ideas, beliefs, interpretive schemas, and imaginings that are potentially shared by large populations but, being products of the human mind, cannot be seen other than in their materializations or in the forms of encounter and interaction they motivate. Thus, because we can “see” them only through their effects, there is a danger of overestimating their consistency or reach, or hypostatizing them entirely as independent entities (Sneath et al. 2009; Rautenberg 2010; cf. Bruner 2005: 26). Strauss (2006: 326) poses the problem clearly: “What is the best way to understand compelling, widely shared, historically durable meanings without turning them into a ghostly abstraction ... and without reifying societies as entities that can imagine?” Put another way, how do we capture an inchoate, fluid, dynamic phenomenon that is simultaneously demonstrably collective and yet necessarily ontologically particular? If we are to be true to anthropology’s theoretical core, the answer can only be fine-grained, detailed, painstaking research, building on multiple lines of evidence and working from ethnographically telling moments on outward to the whole. We cannot presume the existence of an imaginary unless we have derived it from its material presences—representations, interactions, monumental forms—and verified our interpretations through careful attention to the commentary, assumptions, and behavior of individual people thinking and acting in the world-out-there. The contributions to this volume set a standard to be followed; Baptista, Swain, Stasch, and Di Giovine, with

their fluid movement across multiple types and contexts of ethnographic evidence, are especially good examples.

The concept of shared mental life can and should be refined further, for the “imaginaries” described in these chapters vary tremendously in their relative abstraction and generalization.<sup>3</sup> At the most general level, we find Baptista’s analysis of the imaginary of “community” in the modern moral order and its institutionalization in community-based tourism development projects in Mozambique. Because this imaginary exists in the abstract, embedded in a long tradition of critiques of modernity, it can potentially be mapped onto any location—and not necessarily only in relation to tourism. At the other end of the spectrum is Di Giovine’s Pietrelcina, a single Italian town caught up in the process of creating and embodying a new imaginary of a single saint’s early life there. This is an entirely specific, narrow use of the term “imaginary,” here referring to something generated in and projected back onto a unique destination.<sup>4</sup> Somewhere in the middle lies Ferraris’s tourist imaginary of Cambodia as past-in-the-present, with the destination being the great but long-vanished civilization of Angkor. While her analysis is particular to Cambodia, the imaginary is not; as is the case with Theodossopoulos’s Emberá, Stasch’s Korowai, and Bunten’s indigenous tourism providers, there is a broader set of imagined relations at work, in which the touristic desire for cultural distance finds expression in temporal displacement, or “allotropy” (Introduction, this volume). For Ferraris’s Italian tourists, faced with the time-space compression of the global present, the only way to experience profound cultural difference is to locate the country of their destination in the past. In the chapters by Theodossopoulos, Stasch, and Bunten, many tourists carry an image of the “primitive” or “native” peoples they travel to see as still residing in the past themselves—maintaining traditional lifeways, untouched by the global cash economy or Western dress (Stasch, Theodossopoulos) or by cultural self-consciousness (Bunten).

So far, then, we have seen “imaginary” used in three related but distinct ways. The first is in the sense of a widely shared construct that could potentially become institutionalized in any number of settings, not limited to tourism. The second, and slightly less general, is in the sense of tourists’ imaginings (imaginaries) of particular destinations or peoples, given shape by broader cultural conceptions (imaginaries in the most general sense) of the relationship between self and Other, commonality and difference, civilization and “the primitive,” and so forth. Finally, the narrowest sense is as a continuously modified, constructed image of a unique place in relation to a particular history; in this case, “an imaginary” is defined as “the constantly deepening, individually instantiated mix of remembered narratives and im-

ages that serve to inform an object or place's meaning" (Di Giovine, this volume).

There are still more types of tourism imaginaries represented here. In Santos's study of Portugal dos Pequenitos and the Portuguese colonial imaginary, what is imagined is the Portuguese nation itself, by Portuguese nationals. The tourist destination is neither the origin nor the object of an imaginary, but rather a materialization of it. This is imaginary as self-image, a conception we also find mentioned in passing in the chapters by Bunten, Theodossopoulos, and Stasch, only in the latter cases it is the self-image of "hosts" in dialogue with the exoticizing imaginaries held by foreign tourists. Finally, there is the imaginary as a trace of something ephemeral, fleeting, felt as much as imagined. In Little's richly textured evocation of Walliceville, a tourist destination in Belize that has become caught up in globally circulating imaginaries of paradise, we move through a series of transient, contradictory, highly charged moments of tourist experience as they pile up into imaginaries-in-the-making. These "incipient, sense uncertain" imaginaries are not quite the assemblages we find described elsewhere. Indeed, in this treatment of the term, there is more than a hint of chaos and instability: these imaginaries may disappear before they are ever shared by anyone at all.

Having teased apart some of the many different uses of the term, I submit that a heuristic distinction should be made between the seemingly synonymous *tourism imaginaries* and *tourist imaginaries*. *Tourism imaginaries* are those imaginaries—conceptions, images, and imaginings of self or Other, place or people, abstract moral order or particular historical site, variously held by tourists, providers, local populations, development consultants, marketers, guides, etc.—that are not necessarily particular to tourism, but in one way or another *become culturally salient in* tourism settings. *Tourist imaginaries*, on the other hand, are more narrowly those *shared, composite images of* a place or people, whether as general types or as particular destinations, held by tourists, would-be tourists, and not-yet tourists as a result of widely circulating imagery and ideas. Both appear in this book. By way of illustration, consider the contrast between the chapters by Tonnaer and Little. Tonnaer elucidates tensions between Dutch rewilding development projects and the work of cultural landscape restorationists, where differing conceptions of nature and the environment lead to divergent attitudes about the place of tourists in a "natural" landscape. Little addresses objects as affective mnemonics for "eccentric" moments of tourist experience in a Caribbean tropical paradise, moments that give rise to new tourist imaginaries and new ways of being in a tourist destination. For Tonnaer, tourism is one part of a bigger picture involving identity, heritage constructs, and environmental restoration; for

Little, tourism—and, more specifically, emergent tourist imaginaries and the unpredictable forces that lurk around the edges of “paradise”—is the very context, setting, and heart of the study. This contrast suggests that while all *tourist* imaginaries could be included under the heading of *tourism* imaginaries, the reverse is not the case.

To study *tourism* imaginaries as defined here is, broadly speaking, to undertake an essentially anthropological project. Whatever the precise questions and location, the process of identifying and analyzing overarching ideologies, discourses, values, and systems of imagery (i.e., shared mental life) in relation to particular tourism-focused projects, interactions, strategies, commodities, and other material forms requires the trademark holism of sociocultural anthropology; designing such a study necessarily involves holding multiple domains of human life in the same frame, and thus calls for a full complement of ethnographic methods. The study of *tourist* imaginaries, on the other hand, and again as defined here, has been undertaken by scholars in any number of disciplines, among them history, comparative literature, cultural geography, performance studies, and of course cultural studies. A common approach is to interpret multiple representations of a particular (type of) destination or people—brochures, posters, postcards, advertisements, recordings, and so forth—to derive an understanding of “*the* tourist imaginary of [place/people].” Depending on the individual scholar, the resulting construct will be more or less monolithic and may or may not be corroborated with other cultural or historical evidence. The study of *tourist* imaginaries is thus not at all exclusive to anthropology, and indeed may in interdisciplinary settings be recognized first and foremost as a topic most commonly addressed in cultural studies.

It is by highlighting the flexibility and breadth of tourism imaginaries as an object of study, coupled with rigorous attention to ethnographically grounded argumentation, that this volume makes a particular contribution to interdisciplinary tourism studies. With its dual focus on ideational and material aspects of tourism imaginaries, it also builds on two earlier, highly influential concepts in the anthropological study of tourism that reflect the same bifocality: Tom Selwyn’s “myths” and Edward Bruner’s “narratives.” For Selwyn (1996), tourist “myths”—widespread, idealized images or “stories” of types of places and people, drawn from a variety of sources and continuously reproduced by the tourism industry—serve to connect specific destinations with more general preoccupations and desires in the tourist’s own society. These myths have both ideological and material dimensions, he argues, grounded in political-economic relations of core and periphery. Although he notes in the introduction to his 1996 edited volume that the essays therein “concentrate on . . . the construction in the internal world of the

tourist imagination of ideas, images, myths, and fantasies about the Other” (1996: 10), among other topics, he and his contributors do not address the imagination in the sense of individual tourists’ imaginative capacity, nor as an activity (i.e., *imagining*) to be studied processually.

For Bruner (2005: 19–27), tourists anticipate, experience, and make sense of their journey in terms of narrative, from the most abstract level (“metanarratives”) to the most personal (“posttour stories”). Metanarratives are not specific to any one locality or tour, but instead function as conceptual schema for the journey. Touching on themes like the possibility of traveling to visit “authentic primitive cultures [that] are being eroded by the forces of modernization” (Bruner 2005: 21), they convey a framework of generic roles, dynamics, landscapes, relations, and outcomes that lend structure to tourists’ otherwise inchoate experiences. “Pretour narratives,” too, are quite general, but they take shape in the mind of the individual traveler in relation to the upcoming trip, based on metanarratives and “master narratives”—“the African primitive, the Balinese island paradise, Egypt as the land of the pharaohs” (2005: 22)—that are promulgated in pop culture media, tourism marketing, and other widely circulating systems of imagery. The total effect serves to shape tourists’ imaginings and expectations (Bruner 2005: 22–23; see also Skinner and Theodossopoulos 2011). Here, too, the material is as important as the ideational, for it is through somatic experience of the physical destination that the imagined world of the pretour narrative comes to life (Bruner 2005: 24; Chronis 2012; Leite 2005).

Unlike Selwyn, Bruner does not explicitly elaborate his argument in relation to political economy; his primary focus is on the role of tourism narratives in relation to experience and meaning. Both approaches appear in the present volume, in some cases within a single chapter. In implicitly combining Bruner’s processual analysis of the relationship between representation, imagination, and experience with Selwyn’s (and his contributors’) close attention to the political-economic contexts and effects of tourist myths and mythmaking, this volume offers an integrative perspective on imagination—and imaginaries—as both product and process.

## PROCESS, FLUX, AND PLAY

Tourism imaginaries do not exist *sui generis*, nor are they static. However, as Salazar and Graburn note in the introduction to this volume, it can be difficult to trace their origins, particularly when they have been in circulation for a very long time. By looking at cases of tourist destinations that are just emerging, on the other hand, ethnographic research can shed revealing

light on the macro- and microlevel processes through which imaginaries are (re)produced (cf. Adams 2004). For example, in Swain's wonderfully multilayered analysis of the efforts of two neighboring branches of an ethnic minority in Yunnan, China, to distinguish themselves as individual tourist destinations, we see how multiple strands of history, identity, culture, myth, and local and national politics come together in the making of locally self-determined "imaginariums"—Swain's term for "tourism sites where personal imaginings and institutional imaginaries dialectically circulate" (Swain, this volume). Di Giovine's study of Pietrelcina, too, documents an example of how (local) imaginaries develop and evolve, coining the phrase "imaginaire dialectic" to capture the continual process "whereby imaginaries based on tangible events and images are formed in the mind, materially manifested, and subsequently responded to, negotiated, and contested through the creation of tangible and intangible re-presentations" (Di Giovine, this volume). The chapters by Tonnaer, Bunten, Theodossopoulos, and Little each document the (re)production of imaginaries as well, though in quite different contexts and with likely divergent outcomes in terms of duration and degree to which they are popularly held.

The consumption and maintenance of imaginaries is in many ways easier to track. Participant observation among tourists at the destination, close reading of their posttour narratives, and fieldwork among guides and other "hosts" whose business it is to interact with them can all provide indications of the ways visitors draw upon both widely circulating and locally generated imaginaries to make sense of their experiences. In his study of Emberá indigenous tourism, for example, Theodossopoulos examines a series of questions tourists commonly ask of local people, and their interactions more generally, in order to identify the underlying imaginaries that shape their expectations and attitudes. His analysis reveals the widespread coexistence of inherently contradictory, but equally exoticizing, images of "the primitive"—romantic idealization and cultural denigration—that may or may not be disabused by the encounter, a similar situation to that revealed in Bunten's discussion of tourist responses to the Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park. The chapters by Stasch and Baptista provide fruitful material for comparison on this topic, as does Ferraris's chapter.

An additional theme running through many of the chapters is the direct engagement of "toured" peoples with both tourist and tourism imaginaries (Bunten, Baptista, Theodossopoulos, Stasch, Swain, Little; cf. Fisher 1986; Selwyn 1996). To what extent do they consciously resist, appropriate, manipulate, or acquiesce to prevailing imaginaries? Under what conditions can counterimaginaries be mobilized by local populations, and with what likelihood of success? From Bunten's chapter on indigenous-run tourism venues,



we learn that local providers respond to prevailing primitivist imaginaries by co-opting popular forms of cultural tourism display, including demonstrations of indigenous dance, crafts, and traditional practices. In “performing themselves” for tourists, meeting expectations for an exotic glimpse of difference, they harness a productive context in which to share alternative visions of their culture and history. In other settings, straightforward appropriation may be a more strategically advantageous move, as demonstrated by Baptista’s chapter on the foreign imaginary of “community” and its role in NGO-based tourism development projects in Canhane, Mozambique. Swain’s Sani Yi and Axi Yi provide yet another example, manipulating globally circulating imaginaries of indigenous “purity,” Otherness, traditional culture, and rural life to market themselves as distinctive ethnic tourism destinations. Both groups also highlight different elements for different audiences, suggesting a sophisticated awareness of multiple imaginaries, cultural differences, and tourist desires. Their efforts reflect consciousness of their own position simultaneously as part of global humanity and as culturally distinct groups in relation to the world’s peoples, a stance Swain refers to as “indigenous cosmopolitanism”—a phenomenon implicit in the descriptions of several other groups in this volume, as well. Notable, too, are contributors’ analyses of how local populations fit foreign tourists into existing imaginaries or generate new ones to accommodate them (Theodossopoulos, Stasch; cf. Martinez 1996; Zarkia 1996).

As an aspect of human imagination, imaginaries are for all intents and purposes invisible. Yet, as nearly every chapter in this collection shows, they continuously crystallize in material form. Monuments, souvenirs, photographs, landscapes, maps, models, development projects, and patterned interactions between various actors in the social field of tourism all provide glimpses of shared mental life in operation. Some destinations are fairly direct objectifications of imaginaries prevalent at the time they were produced, whether as representations, reflections, or modes of organizing or utilizing space (Santos, Di Giovine, Tonnaer). When in the form of physical places, tourist sites may provide a point of embodied contact—as a mnemonic trigger, an imaginative prompt—with the imaginaries that motivated their original marking and marketing as destinations. Note, however, that the imaginaries tourists consciously or unconsciously recognize while visiting these destinations may well evolve over time, as Di Giovine and Santos take pains to stress. Paradoxically, as mnemonic nets, touchstones, and anchors, the ephemera of leisure travel—Little’s beer coaster, for example—may provide a more durable point of contact, desired or not, with imaginaries both fleeting and tenacious. As Baptista argues, imaginaries also become materialized, or institutionalized, in the form of tourism development proj-

ects; and, perhaps most complexly of all, so too can they become momentarily concretized in interaction (Stasch, Theodossopoulos, Bunten). Stasch's analysis of the reciprocal imaginaries held by Korowai and their tourist visitors, and the ways in which they "amicably [talk] past each other," provides a particularly nuanced example.

In numerous and varied ways, the contributions to this volume illustrate forcefully that the capacity for imagination itself is crucial to how tourists make sense of any engagement with the material realm, whether in the form of buildings, objects, landscapes, or other human beings. This is true not only of the role of imagination (and imaginaries) in creating pretour expectations, but also in the ongoing imaginative processes that shape the tourist's experience during the visit, as well as his or her understanding of it after the fact (cf. Bruner 2005; Chronis 2005, 2012; Leite 2007). More broadly, the chapters collected here all address processes, changes, tensions, and influences that take us beyond the tourist encounter and even the sphere of tourism in general. Not content with identifying and labeling tourism imaginaries as they arise in different ethnographic contexts, these chapters examine how they work in practice, on the ground, in the mutually constitutive realms of the ideational and the material.

#### OTHER IMAGINARIES, OTHER IMAGININGS

Whither the anthropological study of tourism imaginaries? Two promising research trajectories come to mind, the first ethnographically particular, the second theoretically integrative. Beginning with the ethnographically particular, I am struck by the almost exclusive attention to imaginaries of *difference* in this volume. Of the three contributors who do not focus on some form of alterity, all address ethnographic situations where the imaginary is produced and consumed within a single nation (Santos, Di Giovine, Tonnaer). But what of tourism imaginaries of international or even global commonality, interconnection, solidarity, and kinship? Julia Harrison (2003) has convincingly argued that many tourists hope for, and may actively seek out, moments of connection *despite* cultural difference. Analyses of reader responses to photographs in *National Geographic*, that time-honored locus of "armchair tourism," similarly suggest an impulse to find indications of commonality even in the most exoticizing images of difference, for example, in the display of emotion or in depictions of mother-child relationships (Lutz and Collins 1993). At the most general level these are expressions of the humanist imaginary of "the family of man," according to which the common origin, and hence kinship, of the species supersedes our seemingly infinite cultural

and phenotypic variety. With their emphasis on common life experiences and basic needs shared by all human beings, collections of international photographs like *The Family of Man* (1955) and *Material World: A Global Family Portrait* (1994) also source their visual rhetoric from this imaginary, which may account for their remarkable, lasting popularity (Edwards 1996).<sup>5</sup>

I am not suggesting that tourists' desire to find indications of global commonality, or to identify points of connection with local populations, makes it possible for them to "think away" all difference. On the contrary, it is precisely in the face of pronounced cultural difference that the vision of "a family of man" takes on such power. In her research on interactions between tourists and tourees in Turkey, for example, Hazel Tucker found that the local people most able to satisfy tourists' expectations are those who "develop knowledge and skill in being able to perform 'difference,' whilst simultaneously emerging from it in their developing of new forms of human connection" (2011: 37). A more limited imaginary of essential commonality or, more precisely, of a substrate of unifying ethnic kinship underlies the oft-noted desire of Jewish heritage tourists for informal contact with "exotic" local Jewish communities during their travels (e.g., Loeb 1989); it is this imaginary, with its attendant imagery of peoplehood, ancestral dispersal, and mutual dependence for survival that lends particular poignancy and force to the idea of meeting "lost" or "isolated" Jews in far-off lands (Leite 2011a).

The tension between imaginaries of commonality and imaginaries of difference is a ripe area for ethnographic research of the type exemplified in this volume. At the most general level, we might ask how and when an imaginary of humanity as global family surfaces in tourism, and to what extent that imaginary propagates through other representational channels. What more particular forms of tourism does it underpin and motivate? Consider "voluntourism" in the global South, which arguably rests on intertwined imaginaries of the exotic Native/Indigene/Other *and* the basic unity of humankind (cf. Baptista, this volume). Denominational volunteer tourism, which may be combined in practice with missionary work, presents additional layers of imagined interconnection, commonality, and difference: like the Jewish *Am Yisrael* (the Jewish people), global constructs like the Christian family (brothers and sisters in Christ) and the Muslim *ummah* (community of the faithful) may provide a potent interpretive schema for interactions between denominational tourists and their local, culturally distinct coreligionists. Whether participants engage in their efforts as solitary or altruism, privileging commonality or difference, are questions for ethnographic research (Fogarty 2009). What imaginaries lead participants to one perspective or another—or to hold both simultaneously? Similar questions

could be asked of Global Exchange “reality tours” and other forms of tourism explicitly couched in terms of solidarity vis-à-vis shared struggle (e.g., feminist, religious, political, ethnic), a growing phenomenon that has thus far received relatively little attention (Higgins-Desbiolles and Russell-Mundine 2008; Spencer 2010). What imaginaries might we find in force there?

Tension between imaginaries of the known and the unknown, the foreign and the familiar, could also provide a fruitful framework for the study of “roots tourism,” including both genealogical and diasporic tourism. What imaginaries of self and ancestry, kinship and displacement, homeland and return are invoked in tourism marketing by countries with historically high levels of emigration (Wulff 2007)? Are these congruent with imaginaries held by tourists themselves? Much work remains to be done on the representational assemblages, to use Salazar’s phrase, that motivate and give shape to the emotional experiences tourists describe having as they interact with historical sites and local residents at the destination.<sup>6</sup> We would also gain significant insight from ethnographic analyses of meetings between genealogical tourists and their (presumed) relatives. Following the persuasive arguments laid out in this volume by Stasch and Theodossopoulos, attention to the reciprocal imaginaries that feed into and result from those encounters would be especially revealing (cf. Fisher 1986; Leite 2011a): might tourism itself be an instigating force in the creation of *new* imaginaries of homeland, ancestral/diasporic kinship, and belonging, with regard both to specific peoples and places and to broader cultural models?

Finally, the discourses and practices of heritage tourism seem to me a ripe arena for the study of tourism imaginaries. The very idea of “heritage” is based on the generative metaphor of family and familial inheritance (Graburn 2001; Leite 2011b); as such, the designation of a site as “world heritage” rhetorically positions the entire world as a (kinlike) community of heirs. Many national and world heritage sites are heavily visited by international tourists, and debates arise over who should be responsible for decisions about historical or cultural representation, preservation, and upkeep (Bruner 2005; cf. Tonnaer, this volume). As such, it would be productive to explore how sites designated as world (or national, or regional) heritage become touchstones for imaginaries of global interconnection, the human family, and mutual responsibility, or—on the other hand—of global inequality, dispossession, and disempowerment. More specifically, what imaginaries of ownership, belonging, and exclusion might be involved, and for whom? How does the international circulation of discourses and images of “heritage,” whether material or immaterial, give rise to particular tourist experiences and local attitudes, and what experiences and attitudes does it foreclose?

These are fundamentally ethnographic questions, requiring ongoing participant observation in particular sites among tourists, local populations, planners, and so forth. Although they all involve forms of tourism currently studied by anthropologists, we have only just begun to address them in terms of imaginaries, in the mode of this volume. Following on the contributors' persuasive analyses of how imaginaries of difference reproduce relations of power and inequality, what if we were to examine equally pervasive, though perhaps more subtle, imaginaries of commonality as they take shape in particular ethnographic contexts? Around the world, voluntourism, "reality" and "solidarity" tourism, intercultural exchange, roots tourism, and heritage tourism are booming. Together with the ethnographic accounts of imaginaries of difference provided in this book, the study of coexisting imaginaries of commonality may help us understand why—and to what effect.

Another potential trajectory for future research would be theoretically integrative. Reading through this volume, I find myself puzzling over how collective imaginaries become personal imaginings, and vice versa. From an anthropological perspective, there can be no imaginaries without imagining subjects, people in the world-out-there. As a number of contributors point out, the relationship between the two is dialectical (Di Giovine, Swain, Tonnaer), and throughout the ten chapters we find clear indications, in a wide range of ethnographically particular settings, that imaginaries—as assemblages of imagery, discourse, narrative, and representation—profoundly influence individual imaginings, attitudes, and behaviors (Baptista, Buntin, Stasch, Theodossopoulos, Tonnaer). Yet for all their topical and ethnographic diversity, the chapters in this volume do not quite point the way to a collective, theoretical understanding of the imaginary-imagination relationship, nor even a unified formulation of the terms involved. As I noted above, this may partly be due to the breadth and relative immaturity of tourism imaginaries as an area of anthropological study; but I wonder how much richer our comprehension of tourism-related phenomena might become if we were to shift our focus to examine, for example, the extent to which tourists' individual imaginings and experiences are overdetermined by the totality of discourses and imagery they absorb prior to their travels.

This is a question already taken up by other observers of the relationship between tourism and shared mental life, most notably Bruner, who suggests that tourist experiences are underdetermined, in that "the tourist story is emergent in the enactment" (2005: 26). Bruner's constructivist account emphasizes the idiosyncrasy of each tourist's imaginings and experiences, even as they are given shape and significance by widely circulating narrative structures. The ethnographic cases presented in this volume point

us in a different direction, toward the powerful influence of imaginaries as extraordinarily rich, collectively sourced resources for sense making and world shaping. To reiterate, these are not Durkheim's collective representations, "simplified and impoverished" abstractions that attain dimension only in the fullness of lived experience. Instead, inculcated and reinforced with layer upon layer of imagery, narrative, patterned interaction, logic, and practice, and propagated in a multitude of forms, the imaginaries of this book seem capable of flooding personal imaginings altogether.

Yet neither does this volume present a vision of tourism imaginaries as hegemonic forces that blot out all alternatives, for we have also learned that they are manipulated and resisted (Baptista, Bunten, Stasch), multiple and negotiated (Santos, Ferraris, Theodossopoulos, Tonnaer), and continuously in flux (Di Giovine, Swain, Little)—precisely as a result of the actions of *individual imagining subjects*. However, with few exceptions, here the acting subjects are members of local populations and those working in the tourism industry, whose awareness of imaginaries emerges out of repeated interaction with tourists (cf. Bunten 2008; Salazar 2010). Less clear is the relationship between widely circulating imaginaries and the tourists who are influenced by them. How is it that an individual comes to hold a given imaginary in the first place? Why one rather than another? Is it ever possible for tourists to experience an unfamiliar place or people without recourse to prevailing imaginaries?

One way to approach this line of questioning, following David Sneath, Martin Holbraad, and Morten Axel Pedersen, would be to undertake a comparative examination of "the specific 'technologies' through which imaginative capacities are moulded" (2009: 5) or, more precisely, the observable mechanisms by which collective imaginaries are invoked, influence, or surface in individual imaginings and in particular ethnographic contexts (e.g., as documented in Basu 2001, 2004; Brennan 2004; Bruner 2005; Causey 2003; Ebron 1999; Feldman 2008; Huberman 2012; Leite 2005, 2007, 2011a; Chronis 2012). Although only the most recent anthropological publications on this topic adopt the term "imaginaries," there is a substantial (and growing) ethnographic literature on the interrelationship of specific tourist sites, images and ideologies, tourist practices, and individual imagination and experience that awaits synthetic analysis. Much like the buildings, development programs, interactions, and other material forms examined in this book, social practices of imagining can be studied empirically. Greater attention to such practices, together with a rigorous theoretical distinction between practices observed and imaginaries inferred, may clarify the relationship between the two and help us avoid the rhetorical trap of tourism imaginaries that seemingly imagine themselves.

### “IMAGINARIES” AS CONCEPT AND CATEGORY

Before concluding this volume on anthropological approaches to tourism imaginaries, it bears mention that the concept of imaginaries has not been universally embraced in our discipline. According to some critics, the imaginary is little more than “culture or cultural knowledge [or cultural models] in new clothes” (Strauss 2006: 322), a synonym for culture as “an overarching template of thought and action” (Sneath et al. 2009: 7) that is increasingly invoked as a stand-in solely because the older terms have been tarnished by their connotations of stasis and homogeneity. However, the contributions to this volume can hardly be accused of simply recycling the culture concept; instead, taken as a whole, they point to a novel theoretical construct, indeed a new category of analysis. As the term is used here, “imaginaries” span the material, representational, and ideational realms and readily transcend geographical and even cultural borders. As the chapters by Swain, Stasch, and Theodosopoulos make clear, toured populations need not be familiar with their visitors’ cultural background in order to understand the imaginaries they hold; moreover, even the most processual, constructivist framings of the culture concept lack the fluidity and indeterminacy captured by the idea of the imaginary. The ultimate challenge presented by this volume, then, is not to refine or delimit what is meant by *tourism imaginaries*, but rather to embrace the entire range of imaginative phenomena it gathers under that heading as a single, useful category for anthropological analysis.

What does the concept/category of imaginaries offer anthropology that related terms—ideology, discourse, worldview, narrative, myth, representation, image, and so forth—do not? It should be apparent from the foregoing discussion that “imaginaries” encompasses all these terms and more; it is both more specific and more general than any of them; and it includes diverse imaginative phenomena at varying levels of abstraction and generalization. In its very lack of specificity, it allows simultaneous attention to process and product, the act of imagining and that which is imagined, commercial imagery and collective self-image, shared values and momentary transgressions. As the chapters included here demonstrate, at its best the anthropological study of tourism imaginaries combines processual analysis of the relationship between representation, practice, and experience with careful attention to political-economic conditions and effects. Fundamentally grounded in ethnographic practice, this approach tracks images, ideas, and individuals through diverse social fields that overlap and interpenetrate. Above all, it recognizes the centrality of the human capacity for imagination, both individually and collectively, in even the most disparate domains of life.

## NOTES

1. The imagination, treated as a social phenomenon, has come into anthropological purview by a different route. Particularly influential formulations include the work of Benedict Anderson (1983) and Arjun Appadurai (1990, 1991, 1996).
2. This heterogeneous cluster of meanings may reflect the equally numerous range of referents of the term in the original French, *imaginaire*. As anthropologist Michel Rautenberg explains, “In French, ‘imaginary’ is often employed to express a large scope of significations, from fairy tales up to the [individual] imagination of an artist. But we also use ‘social imaginary’ in order to evoke a large part of social identity” (2010: 127).
3. It is noteworthy that although some contributors cite one or more theorists as the inspiration for their understanding of the imaginary (Baptista, Di Giovine, Little, Swain), the majority introduce the term without explanation or citation.
4. To be sure, Di Giovine addresses several levels of imaginaries about Padre Pio and his life—including those held by tourists drawn from other venues (films, books, the competing site of San Giovanni Rotondo)—all offering alternative representations that circulate far beyond the nation of the saint’s birth.
5. *The Family of Man* began as an exhibition at the New York Museum of Modern Art and subsequently traveled to thirty-eight countries; it is said to have been “the most successful photographic exhibition of all time” (Edwards 1996: 216).
6. For accounts of roots tourism experiences in relation to narrative, expectation, and touristic practices on site, see, e.g., Bruner (1996), Ebron (1999), Basu (2004), Leite (2005), and Russell (2012).

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