

Chapter 4

Modernity and Nature Tourism

Technology is not a new and distinctive phenomenon in modernity; previous civilizations also had technologies. What is new is that in the context of modernity technologies have been "projected and embodied in organized forms which dominate every aspect of our existence" (Mumford 1934:4). Technological advance is, so to speak, one of the most convincing and striking dimensions of modernity. Marx's famous dictum "All that is solid melts into air" describes the consequences brought about by modern technological advance. One such effect is the dramatically increased mobility of the modern subject (Lash and Urry 1994; Urry 1995). The connection between modern technologies and modern tourism is obvious enough, but it can often be overstated, as Urry (1995) notes, as a form of technological reductionism. In many textbooks on tourism it is taken for granted that modern tourism is simply the product of technological advances, such as those in transportation and communication, as well as increased personal disposable income and time. Tourism is seen as the immediate and direct extension and application of transportation and other technologies into leisure areas as part of a general improvement in living standards. The tourist is seen as a rational actor who is ready to take full advantage of the latest advances in technology.

Such a model is useful and correct to some extent, but it suffers from several limitations. First, it ignores the role played by organizational innovation (such as that pioneered by Thomas Cook), which is no less important than new transportation technologies. Tourism is not simply the immediate extension of new technologies into the field of travel, it also involves the organizational transformation and viability of new technologies necessary to economic success (Urry 1995:142). Second, it ignores changing preferences and tastes (Johnson and Thomas 1992:3). If transportation technologies provide the physical precondition for new

patterns of travel, then it is the changing preferences and tastes that make a particular pattern of travel culturally acceptable. Third, it fails to consider negative cultural reactions to some technological advances. Historically, there used to be hostility towards railway travel for the purpose of sightseeing (Schivelbusch 1986). Indeed, the romantic movement, which originated in the late 18th century, was a negative cultural reaction to the age of the machine (Mumford 1934). Technologies are, in short, not necessarily welcomed. Finally, it ignores the significance of the cultural construction of travel and tourism. Tourism is not exclusively the product of technological advance and economical improvement (Urry 1995:142), but it is also the outcome of cultural change (Andrews 1989; Green 1990; Jasen 1991; Ousby 1990; Squire 1988; Urry 1990a). For instance, in the heyday of romanticism some tourist activities were in fact the result of a cultural, romantic, or nostalgic critique of industrial and technological civilization. This situation was manifested in an enthusiastic search for picturesque and sublime landscapes unspoiled by technological civilization (Andrews 1989; Jasen 1991; Ousby 1990; Squire 1988).

Such technological (economic) reductionism of tourism finds its psychological counterpart in the Maslowian psychology of tourism. According to Maslow, there is a hierarchy of needs and individuals do not strive to satisfy all these needs simultaneously, rather the more derived needs—self-expression, spiritual fulfillment, and so on—are satisfied only after the more basic needs—food, shelter, and procreation—have been met. For its part, tourism is possible only when more basic needs have been satisfied. This view implies that tourism is only possible when there is sufficient disposable income and time, as well as efficient transportation and other relevant technologies. Such a proposition is only partially true. One of the problems this suggestion faces is the fact that a hierarchy of needs is culturally specific: it is relative rather than universal. A need defined by one culture as basic may become a derived one in another culture and vice versa. Western aid providers in Nepal, for example, have been horrified to find that poor villagers spend their money on refurbishing their temple rather than improving the agricultural conditions of their rice fields. For Western aid providers an adequate supply of rice is considered to be the most basic need of the villagers, but the latter do not think this way. Establishing a good relationship with their gods is thought of as no less basic a need than the supply of rice (Thompson, Ellis and Wildavsky 1990:55).

Certainly the rise of tourism is dependent on the tourist having "a surplus over bare subsistence" (Pimlott 1976). However, in terms of Maslowian psychology it is difficult to explain why a person is necessarily willing to spend this surplus on tourism rather than something else. The cause of the rise of modern tourism is not merely technological or eco-

nomical, nor is it solely psychological: it is also *cultural*. Modern tourism involves the emergence of a new *culturally* made subjectivity. Therefore, in addition to other causal forces, "once the self is operational, it becomes an independent causal agent" (Csikszentmihalyi 1988:17). The gap between technological conditions and the genesis of tourist activity is filled by cultural factors. Therefore, it is crucial to identify the cultural genesis of modern tourism. This does not imply any denial of the important roles played by technological advances and the related improvement of living standards. Rather, it helps overcome any rude and simplistic technological/economic reductionism.

Technology can be double-edged: it can be either the means of death and destruction (e.g., nuclear bomber, bioweapons, technological accidents) or it can be the means of protection and enablement. In relation to tourism, technology is also perceived to be highly contradictory and ambivalent: it can be positive by enabling travel, such as transportation technology (e.g., the growing use of jets in the post-war period; thus tourism as consuming and celebrating technologies), or it can be negative, appearing as a constraining and depressing daily environment from which people really want to escape. Tourism is thus in a sense a negative reaction to and an attempt to escape from the technological environment. Each of these aspects of technology—the enabling aspect, characterized by consumption and celebration of the technology, and the constraining aspect, where people are pushed away—are *mediated by cultural factors*.

Technologies do not automatically determine modern tourism since they are culturally mediated. Tourism is linked to technologies, but the relationship between them is not merely a technological or economic one; it is also cultural. The cultural relationship between tourism and technology is multidimensional: it can be either positive (thus celebrating) or negative (thus escaping). In the early stage of modernity, tourism partly originated as a negative and hostile reaction to the industrialized urban environments that were associated with technological change and civilization. The case of tourism in the Lake District, shaped by the romantics in the late 18th century, is one example (Squire 1988; Urry 1995). The process whereby technologies came to be culturally assimilated and accepted was gradual (Mumford 1934).

Hence, there are basically two different ideal-typical cultural orientations towards, and cultural transformations of, technological civilization with which modern tourism is connected: the idealistic/romantic orientation, and the materialistic/hedonistic orientation. The former tends to focus on the negative/depressing consequences of technological civilization, particularly the urban environment, built with the modern technologies associated with industrialization. Conversely, the latter focuses on

the positive/liberating aspects of technology. In short, from a cultural perspective, technological civilization is *ambivalent*. This situation has of course been echoed in the culture of tourism.

It is acknowledged here that technological advances, such as those in transportation and communication, are extremely important to modern and contemporary tourism (especially mass tourism), but, as the positive functions of technology in tourism are well documented they will not be repeated here. Rather, this chapter focuses on the *idealistic/romantic* critique of the negative/depressing features of technological or urban physical environments, and on the impact on tourism of negative cultural reactions to technological environments. The chapter consists of three sections. In the first section, the relationship between modernity and technology is outlined. The second section examines the romantic roots of modern tourism. The third section discusses the interaction between romanticism and the technological or urban physical environment.

Modernity, Technology and the Environment

Nature is the original home of humankind. Nature is also dangerous and represents various hazards, threats, and disasters. Therefore, the "drive to modify the natural or given environment so that it will be safer, more abundant, and more pleasing is as old as humankind" (Williams 1990:1). It is during humankind's transformation of nature that technologies and artificial environments such as houses, villages, towns, and cities gradually appear. In this sense, "Environment and technology form not a dichotomy but a continuum", and the "human environment has always been, to some degree, artificial" (1990:1).

But the "degree of the artificiality is what has changed so radically in modern times" (1990:1). Modernity, to a degree, originates from industrialization, involving subduing and conquering nature through scientific and technological means. The physical dimension of modernity consists of systematic technological systems, manufactured goods, and artificial or built environments. In the condition of modernity, "nature literally ceases to exist as naturally occurring events become more and more pulled into systems determined by socialized influences", and people thus increasingly "live in artificial environments"; nature is now "represented only in the form of the 'countryside' or 'wilderness'" (Giddens 1991:166).

Modern technological control and conquest of nature is epitomized by the modern (particularly early modern) philosophy of nature, as exemplified in the works of Bacon and Descartes. During the period of modernity, which was characterized by instrumental reason, nature came to

be dominated, disenchanting, reduced to the status of what Heidegger (1978) calls "the standing-reserve" of technology, and treated "as instrumental, the means to realise human purposes" (Giddens 1991:165). "Nature was seen as waiting to be 'mastered' and many of Bacon's writings emphasized the way in which male science could and should dominate female nature" (Lash and Urry 1994:293).

Modern Technologies and the Built Environment

Under the condition of modernity technologies penetrate every aspect of life and they are, according to Williams,

best considered as environments rather than as objects... From such an environmental perspective, technological change is best evaluated in terms of the general direction of change rather than in terms of the supposed effects of this or that device (1990:127).

Thus, as Tester puts it, "technology tends to come to take on that overwhelming and independent existence which had once been attributed to God or to nature" (1993:85). Indeed, technology, in the context of modernity, has replaced God and become a new idol to worship.

It is prone to enchantment virtually in direct proportion to the disenchantment of nature... the destruction of natural artifice meant at least in part the construction of technological artifice (1993:89).

Nature is no longer the masterpiece of God, but rather something that is amenable to human manipulation and control. God is dead, as Nietzsche claimed; and God was in a sense killed by technology in the modern world.

Technology, the product of modern rational subject, has thus been reified in the condition of modernity (Tester 1993:85,100). Just as Marx described "commodity fetishism", modernity has also witnessed the emergence of technology fetishism. What is produced by humans then confronts humans as "an independent system in its own right" (1993:85). In other words, "technology... has become the second natural artifice" (1993:101). From the perspective of reification, technology is today the "second physical environment" or "second nature". Mumford calls this second environment "megatechnics":

In terms of the currently accepted picture of the relation of man to technics, our age is passing from the primeval state of man, marked by the invention of tools and weapons, to a radically different condition, in which he will not only have conquered nature but detached himself completely from the organic habitat. With this new megatechnics, he will create a uniform, all-

enveloping structure, designed for automatic operation (Mumford 1966:303).

In addition to Mumford's "megatechnics", several other terms are used to describe the second physical environment: the "technological environment" (Williams 1990), "built space" (Giddens 1981), "manufactured environment" (Mumford 1934), "artificial technological environment" (Tester 1993), and so on. Moreover, efforts have been made to construct a model of this modern technological environment. What is the most typical model of the technological or built environment? For some it is the city (Giddens 1981); for others it is a spaceship or an underground world (Williams 1990), and so on. Williams describes the underground in the following:

Subterranean surroundings, whether real or imaginary, furnish a model of an artificial environment from which nature has been effectively banished. Human beings who live underground must use mechanical devices to provide the necessities of life: food, light, even air. Nature provides only space. The underworld setting therefore takes to an extreme the displacement of the natural environment by a technological one. It hypothesizes human life in a manufactured world (1990:4).

Technologies are also responsible for the dramatic expansion of the built environment such as the urban environments of modern times. The city, or built space, can be traced back to ancient Greece and China. However, the intensive involvement of technologies in the city is a unique feature of modernity. In modern times, cities as built environments are contingent on technology in at least two senses. First, the emergence of numerous industrial cities in the period of modernity is related to industrialization, which involves systematic and institutional application of technologies in the production process. Second, throughout this period cities have seen new technologies put to use for various architectural and administrative purposes (e.g., underground technologies, supply of running water, sewage disposal, traffic administration). In Heidegger's (1978) terms, technology is about the building of dwellings. And it could be said that the most magnificent technological achievement in terms of the building of dwellings is the city. In short, cities become built technological environments which move further and further away from nature.

Technology and Environmental Quality

Tourism can be related to technology in at least two senses. First, from a *positive* angle, technologies, especially transportation technologies, provide the most efficient and comfortable way of getting to, staying in, and returning from tourist destinations. They also increase the opportunities

for tourists to travel further afield, which is well illustrated by the example of the role played by jet aircraft in the mass tourism of the post-war age. In other words, modern technologies can enable people to travel and the consumption and experience of these technologies is part of a tourist's experiences. This aspect of the relationship between tourism and technology is so obvious that there is no need to discuss it in detail here.

Second, from a *negative* angle, technologies, particularly technological environments (e.g., factories) and built environments (e.g., urban settings), are in a sense the forces that push urban dwellers away from artificial environments to experience natural environments. In other words, technologies have to certain extent led to a deterioration in the quality of the environment, which motivates people to travel in search of more pleasing natural environments in order to improve their spiritual and physical well-being. The following discussion concentrates on the second aspect of the relationship between tourism and technology.

One of the essential aims of technology is to protect humankind from the severity, dangers, and threats that result from nature. In broader terms, it is for the purpose of improving the physical environment that humans develop technological civilization. As Tester states:

The modern technology represented so many practical and material attempts to ensure the possibility of the building of a magnificent and self-sufficient dwelling in the world. It stepped in to the gap which appeared when the order of things could no longer be assumed to be constructed by nature (1993: 84-5).

However, things often go in the opposite direction from that intended. Technology is designed to improve human environments, but due to "the primacy of instrumental reason" that is characteristic of modernity (Taylor 1991), technology frequently creates an "environmental crisis": a crisis in both the physical and the cultural (or phenomenological) sense. Technological rationality ensures the most economical application of means (technologies) to realize a given end. Maximum efficiency is the measure of its success (1991:5). However, each given end is often achieved at the cost of a higher, more comprehensive, or ultimate end—overall environmental quality (an aspect of the quality of life), including not only physical but also psychological and social quality. Some technologies, particularly those which are environmentally unfriendly, may be evaluated as rational according to some partial or organizational criteria and goals, but may at one and the same time be irrational if evaluated from larger societal perspectives and in terms of more substantial criteria, for they may bring about irrational and negative consequences, such as long-term environmental damage. The capitalistic nature of running such technologies undoubtedly encourages such short-termism and the "primacy of instrumental reason". Therefore, in the

condition of modernity, evaluations of environmental quality are paradoxical. On the one hand, the physical conditions of modern technological environments may appear better, especially the protection and support that they provide. On the other hand, the phenomenological dimension of these environments may be worse than before because of the undesirable consequences of a deterioration in the quality of the environment.

Environmental quality is thus an indispensable part of the quality of life as a whole. This includes not only the physical quality of the environment but also its phenomenological, experiential, affective, or aesthetic quality (Buttiner and Seamon 1980; Nasar 1988; Russell 1988; Seamon 1979; Tuan 1974, 1977). Or in Williams' terms, environmental quality involves physical, psychological, and social aspects (Williams 1990:2). Under some circumstances, technological and urban environments contain the physical capacity and an adequate material base to support and protect life in a better way, but may simultaneously cause unquantifiable psychological and social discomforts (1990: 2). Of these Williams writes:

Our environment will inevitably become less natural: the question is whether it will also become less human. The human environment is by definition technological to some degree. But if we allow technology to take over our surroundings, they can become inhospitable to human life (1990:213).

It is clear enough that deterioration of the physical environment brings about psychological discomfort. People are horrified by the numerous environmental disasters caused by technologies, such as leakage from nuclear power stations, chronic environmental pollution, the possible future disappearance of the ozone layer and rain-forests, the number of animal species on the decrease, and so on. In other words, late modernity is increasingly becoming what Beck (1992) calls a "risk society" to which all human beings are exposed. Even these physical environments which protect and support life do not comfort people entirely because technological environments are essentially ambivalent. They may provide the physical protection and support necessary for human survival and the maintenance of well-being, but they may also be psychologically depressing. They may additionally cause intolerable and negative psychological feelings that lead to sense of rootlessness and helplessness in highly complicated technological complexes. Hence, they cause a desire among people to search for roots, simplicity, wilderness, and authenticity in natural environments that are relatively unspoiled by artificial technologies.

One key source of these psychological discontents is the disappearance of nature following its domination by technologies. Humankind is *part of nature* (Lash and Urry 1994:293), a human being may have an inborn preference for natural amenities (including visual amenities), "Nature",

says Taylor, "draws us because it is in some way attuned to our feelings... Nature is like a great keyboard on which our highest sentiments are played out. We turn to it, as we might turn to music, to evoke and strengthen the best in us" (1989:297). But whilst providing the material foundations for a better life, modern technologies also destroy such natural amenities and sentiments in everyday life. The "grey jungles" of high apartment buildings in big cities, for instance, offer people comfortable flats in which to live, but simultaneously isolate them from nature and original natural amenities. Modern science and technology, as Giddens suggests, play a fundamental role in "the sequestration of experience", which includes the sequestration of experience of nature (Giddens 1991:8,156).

According to Williams, from a historical perspective there may be two fundamental spiritual breakdowns related to environmental changes. She quotes the historian of religion, Mircea Eliade, to show how the first "spiritual breakdown" took place during the Neolithic shift from a pastoral to an agricultural civilization. A profound spiritual crisis occurred when the nomadic existence gave way to an agricultural way of life, in which humans no longer wandered freely but were bound to the soil (Williams 1990:2). Elaborating on Eliade's view, Williams suggests that there has been comparable spiritual breakdown during the modern period:

that humanity's decision to *unbind* itself from the soil—not return to a nomadic existence, but to bind itself instead to a predominantly technological environment—has provoked a similar profound spiritual crisis. We are now embarked upon another period of cultural mourning and upheaval, as we look back to a way of life that is ebbing away (1990:2).

It is perhaps this spiritual crisis concerning environmental change that constitutes one of the most important cultural foundations for modern and contemporary tourism, particularly nature tourism: the technological environment is ambivalent, in that it is not only celebrated but also complained about. One of these complaints is the romantic reaction, which has had a considerable impact upon nature tourism.

Romanticism and the Rise of the Natural Landscape

Nature is today universally regarded as a source of pleasure. Before the eighteenth century the story in the West was different. As Squire puts it, until the flowering of the romantic ideology in the late 18th century, Western culture tended to see nature very negatively. In contrast to cities... wilderness was considered chaotic and therefore dangerous (1988: 238).

For example, Wales, a popular tourist destination today, was described by Daniel Defoe in 1724 as a country "full of horror" (Squire 1988:238). Similarly, before the 18th century the Lake District was described as inhospitable. Daniel Defoe described Westmoreland in the Lake District as "the wildest, most barren and frightful of any that I have passed over" (quoted in Urry 1995:193). Indeed the wilderness was for long "a place to fear" in the West. It is no accident that the wilderness (e.g., forests) was seen as the "home of evil spirits" (Short 1991:6-8). As far as the sea was concerned, its attraction and charm were discovered only during the 18th century. Before that, "the classical period knew nothing of the attraction of seaside beaches, the emotion of a bather plunging into the waves, or the pleasures of a stay at the seaside" (Corbin 1994:1). In other words, the sea was a source of horror, associated with the repulsive image of the Great Flood described in the book of Genesis (Corbin 1994:1-18). Or in Seligman's words, "the sea has been feared and often hated" (1950:74).

Thus, even if human beings may have some inborn preference for specific natural amenities, under certain circumstances they may be repressed by a fear of the uncontrollability of nature. "Nature as landscape was, then, a historically specific social and cultural construction" (Urry 1995:175). In Western culture, the rise of the notion of landscape is linked to the rise of romantic taste and the romantic movement that began in the later stages of the 18th century (Andrews 1989; Jasen 1991; Ousby 1990; Squire 1988).

"Romanticism" is a vague term that resists precise definition. There is a range of various and even competing definitions. The romantics themselves, for instance, defined this term quite differently and from various perspectives (Furst 1976). The philosopher Bertrand Russell tentatively linked it to "a way of feeling" (1979:651) and regarded Rousseau as the father of the romantic movement (1979:660). Some radicals adopt a Freudian approach by linking romanticism to the id as a contrast to classicism (linked to the superego) and realism (linked to the "reality principle"); a French critic simply insisted that romanticism should be felt but never defined (Riasanovsky 1992:69).

Furst (1976) has traced the evolution of the term "romantic". In the early Middle Ages "romance" referred to the new vernacular languages, as opposed to the learned tongue, which at that time was Latin. In Old French, "roman" referred to a courtly romance in verse as well as a popular story. This term first became familiar and widely used in England. At first it was related to the old romances and tales of chivalry, which were characterized by high-flown sentiments, improbability, exaggeration, and unreality. During the Age of Reason in the 17th century the word fell into increasing disrepute and was put alongside "chimerical", "bombastic", "ridiculous", and "childish". It was only from the early 18th

century that the term gradually began to recover its status and gained a positive meaning in English society. As early as 1711 the word "romantic" was associated with "fine". Later (from the mid-18th century onwards) it was connected with "imagination" and "feelings". Moreover, it referred to landscapes and scenes (Furst 1976:12–13). Thus, "romantic" was not, from its inception, a term of belonging to artistic criticism but denoted a turn of mind that looked favourably on things of an imaginative and emotional kind. Later on it was applied to the romantic movement in literature (1976:13–14). A taste and passion for landscapes and nature was one of the original characteristics of the romantic movement and romanticism.

Thus, tourism in Western societies can be linked to romanticism in two senses. First, tourism, particularly landscape or nature tourism, originated from "a turn of mind" and the emergence of a romantic taste for natural landscapes amongst the intellectual elite in the later stages of the 18th century. Second, famous romantics such as Wordsworth, through their poetic or romantic discourses on the taste and love of nature, in turn shaped nature tourism. The romantic feelings, emotions, and experiences of nature which were finely described and recorded in such discourses have become what many travelers and tourists now enthusiastically seek when they visit the Lake District, or more generally, nature (Andrews 1989; Buzard 1993; Ousby 1990; Squire 1988).

The Rise of the Romantic Taste for Natural Landscape

"Taste" is originally denoted a preference for particular kinds of food rather than others. The term has been elaborated on in cultural studies (see Bourdieu's (1984) classic study of culture and social judgement of taste). Taste is also crucial to tourism. In his study of the history of culture and nature tourism in England, Ousby has shown "how movements in taste have led to patterns of travel, and how these patterns of travel have in turn been expanded and systematized into a tourist industry" (1990:5).

Tourism, particularly nature tourism, involves a taste for landscape. For a tourist, nature is rarely seen as neutral. In other words a tourist *appreciates* nature rather than simply sees it in a cool, detached, indifferent, or scientific way. The fact that nature is transformed as "landscape" presupposes the formation of new taste, namely, a romantic or aesthetic stance rather than a utilitarian stance towards nature. Zukin puts it this way: "The material landscape was mediated by a process of cultural appropriation, and the history of its creation was subsumed by visual consumption" (1992:225). Such a visual consumption of landscape is

possible only when a romantic taste for nature and landscape has occurred. Thus, nature tourism entails romantic taste that refers to

the application of general tendencies of thought and cultural attitude to the act of judging one aspect of our environment as interesting, beautiful or otherwise worth attention and rejecting other as not. Travel quickly converts these judgements into practical, local and specific terms. In doing so, it creates a habit of vision and a corresponding habit of blindness: seeing our environment, getting to know a region of England or an aspect of its life, increasingly become a matter of appreciating particular sights from a particular angle. Tourism completes the process by turning the habits of travel into a formal codification which exerts mass influence and gains mass acceptance (Ousby 1990:5).

Two related aesthetic principles, the sublime and the picturesque, were integrated as parts of romantic taste for landscape (Jasen 1991:286–287). The picturesque, at its simplest, means "that kind of beauty which would look well in a picture" (Ousby 1990:154). In fact the term "landscape" was originally used by painters to allude to the pictorial representation of scenery. Gradually it was widened to denote the scene itself, viewed pictorially and from a fixed vantage point. Finally it described a whole tract of countryside or rural scenery in visual terms (1990:154). The earlier age's picturesque tourist usually appreciated a landscape by comparing it to a famous painter's paintings or poet's poems. As Andrews claims: "the tourist travelling through the Lake District or North Wales will loudly acclaim the *native* beauties of British landscape by invoking idealized *foreign* models—Roman pastoral poetry or the seventeenth-century paintings of Claude and Salvator Rosa" (1989:3). Later, English picturesque tourists moved away from comparing the landscape to examples of foreign poetry or paintings, and compared it to native poetry and paintings instead. Such "recognition and tracing of resemblance between art and nature" was "one of the chief excitements for the picturesque tourist" (1989:39).

The sublime is another important category in the judgement of taste of landscapes. The term "sublime" was well elaborated by the English philosopher Edmund Burke. In his influential *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), Burke linked the sublime to one of humanity's strongest instincts, self-preservation. When this instinct is threatened, terror is caused; and terrifying experiences are the source of the sublime. Thus, the experience of the sublime involves excitement with a mixture of awe, terror, and admiration when viewers are confronted by natural phenomena which remind them of their relative insignificance, fragility, or bodily powerlessness compared with the power of such phenomena (e.g., huge mountains, deep ravines, big falling waters, violent thunderstorms, vast oceans, etc.). The gap between the sublime and fear may be very narrow. The shift from fear to sublimity

presupposes a self-confidence which is partly derived from guaranteed safety (and partly from cultural cultivation) when facing sublime natural phenomena. The sublime is essentially modern because it represents a taste for those parts of nature that are not yet fully under control (or have not been controlled because it would not be profitable, such as transforming deserts into fields). Such a taste is associated with the growth of humankind's overall power over nature in general in modernity. It is only against such a background that the sublime can become one of the pleasant experiences that the modern tourist seeks.

Of course, such a taste for landscapes and appreciation of both the picturesque and the sublime, existed only amongst a small circle of educated élites (Squire 1988:243), or as Andrews (1989) calls them, the "men of taste"; during the early stage of modernity, particularly during the late 18th century. At that time, not all people could afford the intellectual education in the arts and literature that was required for an appreciation of landscapes (1989:3). However, as time went by, such a taste gradually spread to wider circles of people, particularly to members of the middle class. Even today the taste for landscape expressed by the early romantics is still alive, constantly renewed, and has even become one of central cultural values in the contemporary world, which transcends class conditions and appears, so as to speak, a common taste. Increased environmental consciousness has bestowed new meanings and sentiments on nature (Urry 1992). In short, today's popularity of nature tourism has its romantic roots.

The Influences of Romanticism upon Nature Tourism

The old romantics were the "persons of taste", an intellectual élite who set in motion one of the most influential cultural tendencies during the period of modernization. The romantics' discourses represent what Lash (1993) and Urry (1995) call the "aesthetic reflexivity" of modernity. Such discourses have greatly shaped cultural preferences and practices in the contemporary world. Campbell (1987) even argues that romanticism has had an influential economic impact. According to Campbell, romanticism has helped bring about a new hedonism in which the stimulation of emotion or "feelings" becomes a major source of pleasure. Due to the romantic ethic, objects and images are increasingly associated with feelings, which foster a desire for consumer goods and services. This desire in turn fuels the ever-expanding system of production and perpetual innovation that characterize modern capitalist society.

The romantic movement has also had a considerable influence upon tourism. This influence can be explained in two senses. First, the taste for landscape fostered and shared by the romantics gradually filtered to the

wider society, becoming more universal and fuelling people's lust for nature and their love of nature or landscape tourism. Second, the works or discourses of the romantics formed a perceptual framework or a structure of perception through which tourists came to see landscape. The sights mentioned and described by the romantics became sites of worship and pilgrimage for later tourists. They regarded it as a pleasure to gain similar emotional experiences from the same sights and, if possible, to look at the landscapes from the same perspectives as the romantics did (Jasen 1991; Osby 1990; Squire 1988).

Turning to the second sense, Osby claims that: "Romanticism had a profound influence on tourism: by changing people's perception of what was admirable or beautiful, it altered and expanded the list of sights people visited on their travels" (1990:99). The most influential romantic figure on tourism is perhaps Wordsworth. Through reading the poetry of Wordsworth, the natural landscape becomes, in a sense, a literal landscape. Osby describes this phenomenon as such:

Seeing the landscape—we might now say almost literally "reading" the landscape—in terms of the poems describing it became the nineteenth-century equivalent of the earlier systems that the cults of the Sublime and the Picturesque had established for teaching visitors what to look at, what to see and what to feel. The cultivated tourist convinced himself that he had experienced the distinctive atmosphere of the places he visited, or even come to know their essential character, by opening his volume of Wordsworth (1990:181).

Squire (1988) has also examined the impact of English romanticism upon tourism through a case study of Wordsworth's influence upon Lake District tourism. For Squire, "romantic literature helped to foster public appreciation of wild country and primitivism" (1988:238). "The popularity of romantic literature has also fostered tourism: hordes of visitors, anxious to recreate the emotional experiences in place described by a literary idol, still descend on areas immortalized in poetry or prose" (1988:237). Wordsworth is a romantic idol, whose importance "in popularizing the Lake District, and indeed in synthesizing this transformation of literary place into tourist place, should not be underestimated" (1988:243). His poetry, Squire continues, has

made each place he mentions a place of pilgrimage, and he has probably added more names than any other writer to a literary map of England. . . . Indeed, the images of place that Wordsworth created in his poetry now supersede and transcend environmental actuality (1988:243).

Urry (1995:193–210), in his case study of the Lake District, stresses the important role played by the "place-myth" that English romanticism helped foster around the Lake District. The "development," he writes, "of the Lake District as possessing a particular place-myth only occurred because of visitors and writers and of the incorporation of Romanticism

into what has come to be known, taught and revered as English literature" (1995:194). The place-myth, once formulated, is perpetually reproduced by the continual flow of incoming visitors. Indeed the place-myth itself becomes the very attraction of the Lake District.

It should be acknowledged here that the *direct* influence of romanticism upon tourism may perhaps be relatively limited, since not everybody is familiar with or is sympathetic towards the works of the romantics. As Mumford claims, "Romanticism as an alternative to the machine is dead" (1934:287). But the taste for nature that was developed by romanticism is not dead; it has permeated culture as a whole and has often been viewed as a central contemporary value in regard to nature. In this sense, the *general* influence of romanticism is significant and should not be underestimated. To put it another way, romanticism shapes tourism mainly through its general cultural taste, values, preferences, "structures of feelings", and styles in regard to nature. These taste, values, preferences, and so on have been widely adopted by contemporary people. Romanticism as a concrete doctrine is perhaps transcended today, but romanticism as a general taste and regard for nature is never outdated. Rather, romantic taste for nature is spread throughout society as a whole, and constitutes the cultural foundation of contemporary nature, green, or rural tourism.

Romanticism and the Technological Environment

Romanticism has undoubtedly shaped and influenced the development of tourism, both in England and abroad (Buzard 1993:19), but the rise of romanticism in the West (including the romantic taste for scenery) should not be seen as an accidental phenomenon. The romantic movement is an historical phenomenon that, in broad terms, swept across Western and Southern Europe and North America during the 18th and 19th centuries. Its rapid growth implies that the romantic movement has a close relationship with modernity, and technological, industrial, or capitalist civilization. It can be argued that romanticism is a cultural reaction to and a critique of modern capitalist industrial civilization. In Lowy's (1987) terms, Romanticism is "anti-capitalism".

According to Lowy, the central feature of industrial (bourgeois) civilization is "the quantification of life", namely "the total domination of (quantitative) exchange-value, of the cold calculation of price and profit, and of the laws of the market, over the whole social fabric" (1987:892). Surely those are the *social* aspects of capitalist civilization that romantics such as Rousseau criticized. Discontented with the quantification of life, Rousseau defined nature as an ideal representing innocence and simplicity, expressing the wish to "return to nature", to a simple life. Likewise, what Lowy refers to as "the quantification of life" should also include the

impact of the *technological* environment upon organic human life. In other words, the *physical* dimension or the environmental consequence of modernization is also a target which romantics attacked. In a word, romanticism is a cultural demonstration against modern, artificial, urban or technological environments.

Mumford (1934) regards romanticism as a reaction to the civilization of the machine. For him there are two opposing ideas in reaction to this civilization: the romantic idea and the utilitarian idea. The utilitarian favored industrial and commercial civilization. "He believed in science and inventions, in profits and power, in machinery and progress, in money and comfort" (1934:285). Conversely, romanticism was "an *alternative* to the machine" (1934:287). Romantics wanted to restore the vital organic attributes of life to a prominent position because those attributes had been "deliberately eliminated from the concepts of science and from the methods of the earlier techniques" (1934:286). Thus, romanticism "provided necessary channels of compensation" for the shortcomings of the civilization of the machine (1934:286) and made efforts towards "the new social synthesis" (1934:287). However, in doing so romanticism often went too far: "it did not distinguish between the forces that were hostile to life and those that served it, but tended to lump them all in the same compartment, and turn its back upon them"; so "it was, for the greater part, a movement of escape" (1934:287).

Mumford classifies the romantic reaction into three groups: the cult of history and nationalism, the cult of nature, and the cult of the primitive (1934:287). All three are in some way related to tourism. The cult of *history* is expressed in the touristic love of relics, ruins, traditions or national heritage (Andrews 1989; Jansen 1991; Ousby 1990). In this sense, romanticism is nostalgic in character (Lowy 1987). The cult of the *primitive* was mostly clearly expressed by Rousseau. Echoed in tourism, it gives rise to ethnic and folklore tourism. Since primitive humans or the "natural" state can not be found in the home society in which modernity dominates, they must be found in remote parts of the world or in "the timeless society". Finally, it is the cult of *nature* that is most relevant to nature tourism. The romantic cult of nature represents an alternative relationship with nature: one that is sensible, affective, and aesthetic rather than utilitarian or instrumental. In Russell's words,

The romantic movement is characterized, as a whole, by the substitution of aesthetic for utilitarian standards. The earth-worm is useful, but not beautiful; the tiger is beautiful, but not useful. Darwin (who was not a romantic) praised the earth-worm; Blake praised the tiger (1979:653).

Nature tourism, as endorsed by romanticism, is not only a cultural demonstration against but also a cultural compensation for artificial and technological environments. It is not only what Mumford (1934)

calls "a movement of escape", it is also a cultural and imaginative creation. If science and technology alienate nature by depriving it of its traditional divine and theological meaning, then touristic romanticism gives nature a new meaning. This new meaning that the romantics bestowed on nature no longer belongs to the divine but to aesthetic sensibilities about nature. Bowie puts this idea well:

Nothing in the sciences provides a sense of the meaning of nature for the individual subject: the point of science is the production of laws which subsume individual cases. Nature seen with the eyes of modern science starts for many people, though, to look like a machine. Added to this is the awareness that the increasing domination of capitalism leads to nature being regarded in terms of the profit which can be extracted from it. One of the key attributes of the aesthetic is the fact that what makes an object beautiful has nothing to do with its usefulness or its exchange value (1990: 3-4).

Bowie speaks of a notion of modern aesthetics. It can be deduced from this, however, that the meaning of nature is not to be found through a utilitarian perspective on nature (as in the case of science and technology), but through a romantic or aesthetic perspective of nature. It is the romantic orientation that idealizes and re-enchants nature, and hence bestows new meanings on nature: the beautiful, the idyllic, the pastoral, the sublime, and so on.

The romantic re-enchantment of nature should not be regarded as a reaction against specific concrete technological devices or objects, but rather as a reaction against the technological environment *as a whole*. It also does not do justice to romanticism to say that it is hostile to technology *per se*; rather it is fairer to say that what romanticism fights against are the *negative* effects of modern instrumental technology on the physical environment. Technological environments, such as the one represented by the model of the city, are felt to be inhospitable. The culturally based enthusiasm and love of nature and the countryside can only be understood against the background of such technological environments. It is such artificially built environments that account for the romantically idealized and mythologized images of nature and rural scenery. In Williams' (1973) language, the countryside has come to be defined as "pastoral" in terms of the qualities which are absent from urban settings. The idealization of the countryside and the past (based on the new "structure of feeling" exemplified by, among others, British rural-intellectual radicalists) is in fact a cultural reaction to and critique of the civilization of capitalism, industrialism, and urbanism. In other words, without modern technological, urban and industrial environments as a reference, the idealization of the countryside or nature cannot be understood. Mumford makes this point well:

So long as the country was uppermost, the cult of nature could have no meaning: being a part of life, there was no need to make it a special object

of thought. It was only when the townsman found himself closed in by his methodical urban routine and deprived in his new urban environment of the sight of sky and grass and trees, that the value of the country manifested itself clearly to him (1934:295).

Technology is intended to eliminate scarcity (hence the growth of wealth) and to protect humankind from natural threats and disasters. However, in so doing technology produces another *emergent scarcity*, a scarcity which is characteristic of modern technological and urban environments, namely the scarcity of "natural nature" (Green, 1990:11), of the sights, the ambience, and the amenities of nature. To put it another way, modernity has wiped out the "hunger of stomach". However, it has brought about another kind of hunger, namely, "the hunger of eyes" (Michael 1950b). The modern eye is thus hungry for *natural* nature, which is either beautiful, such as a landscape full of grasses, trees, wild flowers, and wild animals, or sublime, such as vast deserts, huge mountains, and deep gorges. In the urban environment (a product of what Lefebvre (1991) calls "spatial technology"), nature, if there is such a phenomenon, is only an ingredient of urban decoration (parks, gardens, etc.). To a great extent it is driven out of place. It is the scarcity of nature in urban settings that explains the cultural appreciation of nature. "Natural nature" becomes the symbol of a victim of the processes of industrialization, urbanization, and technologization, and therefore becomes the object of pity and nostalgia. Moreover, those parts of nature that avoided the violence of modernity and technology become the new object of worship and pilgrimage. The return to nature is therefore an escape from the hold of the technological and urban environment, or an "escape from the machine" (Mumford 1934:296). In Ousby's words, "as urban life took firmer hold, people would long for nature as a necessary refuge, a source of spiritual renewal" (1990:131). In Dann's terms, if in the Middle Ages the countryside was regarded as a dangerous place, then

During the overlapping Industrial Revolution, and the subsequent decades which extended well into the twentieth century, it was the city that came to be feared. Moreover, it was against the backdrop of this urban dread that the countryside was projected as a deindustrialized, depoliticized asylum far from the maddening crowds, well removed from the toxic waste and pollution associated with urbanization (1997:257).

Nature or rural scenery thus increasingly becomes the sign of simplicity, idyll, authenticity, and amenities, in contrast to the pollution, complexities, and artificiality exhibited in urban and technological environments. Natural nature acts as the "green" dream-place in contrast to the "grey" urban nightmare.

In summary, nature tourism, is not merely the outcome of a general improvement in living standards and of technological advances such as

the transport revolution, but also a phenomenon that involves the cultural formation of a taste and preference for landscapes and nature. Once formed, this constitutes a relatively independent causal agent of modern nature tourism. Whereas increased disposable income and time, and technological means of travel are *material* conditions that enable people to seek natural environments through travel based on their taste and preference for nature, taste and preference becomes a *cultural* condition for nature tourism. Without such a cultural condition, nature tourism is not understandable.

Taste and preference must be understood against the background of a technological environment which has its relation to modernity. Romanticism as a cultural phenomenon appeared to be a negative reaction to capitalist, industrialist, commercial, and urbanized civilization, including the artificial technological environment that tends to isolate humans from nature and natural amenities. The separation of humans from nature by technological environments may cause negative psychological and social problems. Thus, there was a romantic reaction to the technological environment by the Romantic movement from the latter half of the 18th century. The origin of nature tourism is closely tied to romanticism and the romantic movement. Although romanticism as a movement may no longer be alive today, its heritage and variants—the taste for and love and appreciation of nature—have been widely adopted by contemporary culture as a whole and are most clearly exemplified by contemporary nature tourism.