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‘What ought to be seen’: Tourists’ Guidebooks and National Identities in Modern Germany and Europe

In 1858, John Murray III, working for his father’s London publishing house, produced the twelfth revised edition of a tourists’ guidebook to northern Europe, generously entitled A Handbook for Travellers on the Continent: Being a Guide to Holland, Belgium, Prussia, Northern Germany, and the Rhine from Holland to Switzerland. In contrast to the anodyne tone of most contemporary tourists’ guidebooks, Murray’s preface was contentious and direct, beginning with an attack on the existing guidebook literature and a clear reference to his readership. ‘The Guide Books hitherto published are for the most part either general descriptions compiled by persons not acquainted with the spots’, read the preface, ‘or are local histories, written by residents who do not sufficiently discriminate between what is peculiar to the place, and what is not worth seeing.’ The Murray handbook would be different: ‘The writer of [this] Handbook has endeavoured to confine himself to matter-of-fact descriptions of what ought to be seen at each place, and is calculated to interest an intelligent English traveller, without bewildering his readers with an account of all that may be seen.’ Appealing to this ‘intelligent English traveller’ meant outlining possible itineraries, avoiding too many chronological details, judiciously including anecdotes about monuments and other sites, adopting a condensed writing style and extracting pithy quotes from Scott, Byron or other literary figures who had written well and elegantly about particular places. Finally, the handbook aimed for comprehensiveness, being ‘intended to preclude the necessity of resorting to any other Guide Book in the countries which it professes to describe’.

The Murray handbook is an early example of a type of publication that has now become widespread in a world of mass tourism. Almost anyone who has been a tourist has used a tourists’ guidebook, just as he or she has used travel agencies, guided tours, trains, airplanes, automobiles, hostels, and hotels and motels — all significant elements of an infrastructure of tourism that began to grow in unprecedented ways in the middle of the nineteenth century in Europe. To say the least, such guidebooks have had a bad press among scholars, despite the fact that we have no general analysis of their cultural

history in any language. Regarded by many as a debasement of an earlier and more sophisticated travel literature of the Enlightenment, the guidebooks have been criticized as superficial and formulaic. This negative attitude stems from a broader cultural critique that links tourism with new patterns of consumption. To the very limited extent that we have a history of tourism as it has evolved since the middle of the nineteenth century, scholars such as the literature historian Paul Fussell have seen tourism as an eviscerated form of early modern travel and a crude displacement of the artistry of enlightened touring by the mindless consumerism of mass leisure and entertainment. Just as tourism destroyed travel, according to this scholarship, commerce dislodged art. Fussell and a long list of other scholars and writers have championed 'sophisticated travel' in opposition to the superficialities of tourism.

A full response to this literature cannot be offered here, but a strong scepticism about it can be registered, supported in part by a recent though dispersed scholarship on tourism in Germany, the USA and England, suggesting that a more serious assessment of tourism in general and of the infrastructures of tourism in particular, including travel guidebooks, is in order. This scepticism is reinforced by recent work on the history of consumption, especially, though certainly not exclusively, for the eighteenth century, such as a new volume edited by John Brewer and Ann Bermingham, which regards consumption as a 'complex social organization'. This point of view invites one to

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3 See, for example, Paul Fussell, Touring: British Literary Traveling Between the Wars (New York and Oxford 1980).

4 See the discussion in James Clifford, Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century (Cambridge, MA and London 1997), 65–6, 220–37.


rethink an older scholarship’s tendency to see consumption as passive and superficial. In a similar vein, the theoretical work of Pierre Bourdieu and Michel de Certeau, both of whom have been critical of consumer society but willing to consider forms of consumerism as ‘positive’ or even ‘subversive’ agents of individual and collective identity construction, points to alternative arguments. Although sociologist József Böröcz’s statement that tourism is ‘a logical extension of the general principle of industrial capitalism to the realm of leisure’ is too deterministic, it, too, suggests new and more challenging approaches to the study of modern travel. Finally, in his now classical theoretical work on tourism, Dean MacCannell has argued that tourists search for experiences, objects and places that enable them to recover structures from which they are alienated in daily life. The implications of this general theory of tourism for my research are considerable.

MacCannell’s theory suggests that what I will call ‘the optics of tourism’ is both a product of modern consumerism and an attempt to circumvent or even challenge the tendency to reduce everything to a commodity. This approach contrasts with that of John Urry, who has argued that tourism is a force of democratization characterized by the search for novelty rather than authenticity. Urry’s approach is problematic because the ‘tourist gaze’ becomes an uncritical and undifferentiated extension of consumer behaviour. The difference in the approaches is reflected in the terms ‘optics’ and ‘gaze’. Whereas the former connotes an active search for knowledge because optics refers to the scientific study of light and its effects, the latter connotes passive consumerist entertainment. Tourism has entailed both the pursuit of knowledge and ‘fun’, of course, but I would argue that the search for knowledge and an ‘authentic’ identity beyond the marketplace characterizes even some of the most mindless and commodified forms of touristic behaviour.

This article will suggest that tourism’s ability to promote national identity is one example of that search for meaning beyond the marketplace. Scholars of leisure travel have done little to explicate the collective rather than individual dimensions of tourism. Specifically, they have ignored the national elements of touristic behaviour, just as scholars of national identity and nationalism have done little to analyse consumption and travel. The German anthropologist Hermann Bausinger has argued that leisure travel promoted and crystallized

the 'national orientations' of tourists.\textsuperscript{11} This article will explore the link between the optics of tourism and the national by analysing how both tourism and nationalism are grounded in the idea of opposition to the everyday and the desire for authenticity. In doing so, it will discuss the significance of the tourists' guidebook and will develop a number of comparative perspectives on German tourism and German tourists' guidebooks. That such comparative cultural history has been lacking in European historiography cannot be elaborated upon here.

Tourists' guidebooks were designed to be used at the sites of travel, and therefore, in comparison with earlier guides and travelogues, they were more practical, more 'objective', and more standardized to meet the requirements of an increasingly commodified 'leisure migration' in an age of industrial capitalism.\textsuperscript{12} Above all, they were designed to be transparent, to use an unmediated language in which 'referential proliferation' was all but impossible. The idea was not to bewilder the reader/traveller or to introduce the potential for a multiplicity of meanings while viewing particular touristic sites. The uncertainties of travel and the possibility of semiotic static were to be answered by the guidebooks' clarity, precision and 'scientific' accuracy.\textsuperscript{13} A supply-side phenomenon, the tourist guidebook arose in response to new forms of consumer demand. The intelligent English traveller of Murray's preface looked back on a tradition of English tourism on the Continent, nourished in part by the Grand Tour, whose main attractions were Italy and Switzerland, and whose participants were by no means exclusively aristocratic. After the fall of Napoleon, the Continent saw increasing numbers of English professionals, intellectuals, industrialists and entrepreneurs on tour. These groups, the users of the Murray guidebooks, which first appeared in 1836, needed to organize their time more efficiently than earlier generations because they had substantial but not unlimited economic resources. Appropriately, Murray fashioned a guidebook for them by eliminating unnecessary detail, streamlining prose and focusing primarily on what ought to be seen rather than what could be seen. Having witnessed more than two decades of substantial railway building on the Continent by the time the twelfth edition appeared, Murray outlined a number of 'skeleton tours' for the Continent, including one 45-day excursion from London through Belgium, Rhenish Prussia and Nassau. Although this excursion represented a substantial investment of time and


\textsuperscript{12} It is impossible to consider the definitional problems of the genre here, as outlined in Lauterbach, 'Baedeker und andere Reiseführer', 209–17. Defining the guidebook precisely is made difficult by the fact that the genre has included elements of the travel account, atlas, geographical survey, art-history guide, restaurant and hotel guide, tourist brochure and address book.

\textsuperscript{13} I base this argument on Grewal, Home and Harem, op. cit., 85, 103–4.
money, it was by no means as long as comparable tours before the onset of rail travel.\textsuperscript{14}

The traveller to whom the Murray guidebook was addressed thus covered more ground in a shorter time than his predecessors had. He was by necessity a more efficient consumer whose outlook fitted a broadly upper-middle-class English desire for pleasure, tempered by restraint and utility. This approach constituted a potential critique of tourism and the expanding commerce from which it emerged. Just as the Murray guidebook chastised earlier travel literature for its unsystematic and amateurish approach to sightseeing, the emphasis on efficient uses of space and time for a well-to-do but by no means aristocratic audience worked as a corrective to wastefulness, luxury, and excess — products not only of aristocratic culture but of that overconsumption to which capitalist economies were so susceptible. By being a better tourist, the user of the Murray guidebook also became a better participant in the growing web of economic transactions that increasingly characterized modern nations.

What ought to have been seen? Unsurprisingly, statues and monuments, historical buildings such as Gothic cathedrals and castles, and ruins were among the prized sites in the tourist’s itinerary. In addition, scenic natural beauties and their counterparts, sublime natural disasters, received significant attention. Historic and natural sites had been among the favoured objects of Romanticism in England, and such sensibilities found expression in the Murray guidebook, especially in its praise for the ‘glories’ of the Rhineland. Adoration of the Rhineland had helped to initiate English Romanticism more than five decades earlier and had also inspired German thinkers, who gave Rhine Romanticism a specific political and nationalist colouration as it was translated into German terms.\textsuperscript{15} This impulse was shaped in part by nostalgia for medieval and pre-modern times, but the Murray guidebook balanced it with a strong appreciation of technological and economic advances. The Dutch were praised for harnessing nature’s powers to create an exemplary agricultural system, the Germans for mining Ruhr valley coal. The Murray guidebook also supplied information for an area that most later guidebooks would shortchange or ignore — namely, the social existence of a variety of groups: Rotterdam apothecaries, the Amsterdam poor, Rhine river raftsmen, Halle salt workers and Frankfurt Jews. From one perspective, this landscape of touristic consumption became a vast and undifferentiated container for actual and anticipated ‘purchases’ of objects, sights and people. But the optics of tourism also reinserted such purchases into a landscape of what were regarded


\textsuperscript{15} Horst Johannes Tümmers, Der Rhein: Ein europäischer Fluss und seine Geschichte (Munich 1994), chap. 6.
as historically authentic places and people. In the process, the guidebook implied, something could be learned about both the Self and the Other.\textsuperscript{16}

If the guidebook affirmed processes of commodification and homogenization, then, it also reintroduced notions of irreducibility and differentiation. A blend of reverence for nature and history, the embrace of material progress, and an eye for the social ambience of place, intersected with a specific sense of national difference on the part of the tourists themselves. The guidebook's pride in Englishness could be seen from the very beginning, as when it discussed travel preparations. 'Of all the penalties at the expense of which the pleasures of travelling abroad is purchased,' it read, 'the most disagreeable and most repugnant to English feelings is that of submitting to the strict regulations of the Continental police, and especially to the annoyance of bearing a passport.'\textsuperscript{17} If the necessity of having a passport for Continental travel was an affront to a specifically English sense of freedom, then the German bed represented an equally distasteful assault on the English sense of comfort. In its preface to the section on Germany the handbook told its readers:

A German bed is made only for one. It may be compared to an open wooden box, often hardly wide enough to turn in, and rarely long enough for any man of moderate stature to lie down in. The pillows encroach nearly half-way down, and form such an angle with the bed that it is scarcely possible to lie at full length, or assume any other than a half-sitting posture.\textsuperscript{18}

Yet if even the most advanced parts of the Continent lacked English political and material advantages, the Murray guidebook advised that the English traveller 'should divest himself, as soon as possible, of his prejudices, and especially of the idea of the amazing superiority of England'.\textsuperscript{19} Recently, Mary Louise Pratt, writing about European travel in South America and Africa, used the term 'anti-conquest' to refer to 'the strategies of representation whereby European bourgeois subjects seek to secure their innocence in the same moment as they assert European hegemony'.\textsuperscript{20} I would argue that this idea may also be applied with some qualification to Europeans travelling to other European nations. English tourists were conquering the Continent, but Murray appealed to their sense of national modesty, stating that they should not only appreciate the accomplishments and differences of other cultures but also shake off feelings of superiority and domination. One should not be too cynical about this strategy because it could lead tourists to view other cultures in a more positive light. It suggested the possibility of communi-

\textsuperscript{16} I take issue here with Allen, "Money and the Little Red Books", op. cit., 223, where the author writes that through guidebooks 'travellers no longer needed to communicate, only to consume'.

\textsuperscript{17} Murray, A Handbook for Travellers, op. cit., xvii.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 201.

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., xv.

\textsuperscript{20} Mary Louise Pratt, Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation (London and New York 1992), 7.
cation between Self and Other and the idea of relative equality between various national cultures, the latter being a key trope of nationalist discourse since its inception. But, of course, English tourists’ openness to other cultures evolved in a context of often highly unbalanced power relationships. One could not hide the fact that English tourists’ views of Italian or Greek peasants, for example, were based on a dynamic of domination and deference comparable to that existing between the English and ‘Third World’ inhabitants.

English national modesty meant that Holland was seen by the guidebook as being ‘artificial’ because of its dependence on a complex system of retrieving the land from the sea, but it was also praised for its radical contrasts with England, not the least being the extraordinary cleanliness of its homes. This aspect of Dutch ‘manners’ was handled with respect and not a little irony, as in the following passage:

It is on the last day of the week that an extraordinary schoonmaken (cleaning) takes place. Every house door presents a scene of most energetic activity — the brushing and mopping, the scrubbing and scraping, are not confined to steps and doorways — the pavement, walls, windows, however guiltless they may be of impurity, are all equally subjected to the same course of ablution. . . . The unsuspecting stranger who walks the streets is subjected to the danger of perpetual wettings. He looks up to ascertain whence the shower descends, and he perceives a diligent servant girl, stretched out of a window two-thirds of her length, and, with eyes intently turned upwards, discharging bowls full of water upon some refractory stain, imperceptible to all but herself.21

As for German towns, the guidebook found room for praise for their ‘gardens and houses of public recreation’, where rich and poor, noble and artisan, mixed more freely than in England, because in Germany they knew ‘the exact boundaries of their position in society, and act accordingly’.22 Praise for what was seen as the relative harmony of German public life — despite the still strong echoes of the revolutions of 1848 — led to the intimation that England suffered from a comparatively more contentious and disorderly society. The Murray guidebook’s love of English freedom was not expressed without some anxiety. Moreover, the assertion that everyone ‘knew their place’ in Germany suggested a certain discomfort over the ‘levelling’ effect not just of English political culture but of an industrial mass society as well. The spread of mass consumption in the middle decades of the nineteenth century in England had specific echoes in the world of tourism, as merchants and wealthy craftsmen were invading the spas and seaside resorts of the country for one- or two-week stays,23 and as Thomas Cook’s cheap tours of England, Scotland and the Continent had become widely successful. Cook was also producing his own tourists’ guidebooks, less prolix than the Murray publications, cheaper

21 Ibid., 19.
22 Ibid., 216.
and oriented more to a broader and less sophisticated middle-class audience than was the Murray series. These guidebooks enjoyed a less exalted reputation than Murray’s did because booksellers saw them as little more than advertisements for Cook’s agency, which they indeed were until the 1930s, when the attempt was made to give them more legitimacy. The Murray guidebook thus not only reintroduced national differences in a process of consumption that theoretically levelled such differences in the vast destructiveness of the marketplace; it also affirmed its commitment to domestic class differences, as it used other national experiences to lament that which English culture allegedly lacked. The search for authenticity could thus result in the reaffirmation of power relations and structures of authority and deference. Such reaffirmation was consistent with Murray’s Tory loyalties.

Murray’s guidebooks were fantastically successful, leading one reviewer to write in 1855 that ‘since Napoleon no man’s empire has been so wide’. But even at this time, Murray competed with the Koblenz (later Leipzig) publisher Karl Baedeker, whose first guidebook on the Rhineland in 1838 (based on an earlier but heavily revised precedent) quickly led to other editions and guidebooks for other areas. Baedeker died in 1859, but his sons and grandsons carried on the enterprise, acknowledging their indebtedness to Murray’s format but making the ‘Baedeker’ the international generic term for the tourists’ guidebook. The Baedeker achieved this position in part because it was able to eliminate even brief commentary of the kind Murray allowed himself, creating what appeared to be an almost completely objective and therefore completely reliable guide. Like the Murray, the Baedeker focused on the individual bourgeois consumer who was to be freed from time-consuming and possibly costly interactions with the numerous representatives of the tourist industry itself. According to the 1896 Baedeker guide to the Rhine, the guidebook format was intended to ‘supply the traveller with such information as will render him as nearly as possible independent of hotel-keepers, commissionaires, and guides, and thus enable him the more thoroughly to enjoy and appreciate the objects of interest he meets with on his tour’. One of the functions of the guidebook, as envisioned by the house of Baedeker, was to manage and resist the spread of commercial relations within tourism. As one

appreciative English journalist of the 1850s noted, Baedeker was ‘the great terror of continental extortionists’.

Not only content but form was affected in this act of liberation. Adopting a Murray guidebook convention, Baedeker in 1844 first used asterisks to mark those extraordinary sites that hurried travellers were to see, and later he added a second asterisk to ‘especially stellar attractions’ and then extended the system to hotels and restaurants. The Baedeker also gradually refined a radically sparse style, often consisting of partial sentences and abbreviations punctuated with the famous ‘Baedeker parenthesis’, which inserted practical information throughout the itineraries. Note the extraordinary compression of a history of wars and violence in this 1925 passage on a small town between Mainz and Koblenz on the left bank of the Rhine:

Niederingelheim, with 3930 inhabs. and several factories, traces its founding to a church built by Charlemagne 768–84, which burned in 1270, was restored by Karl IV in 1354, then destroyed in the Thirty Years’ War and again in 1689 by the French, and recently partly uncovered; artifacts in schoolhouse on the market (key in the mayor’s office).

The emphasis on efficient use of space and time — on efficient forms of touristic consumption — was raised to a new level.

Impressive increases in travel and tourism created new markets for guidebooks in the 1860s and 1870s. From 1869 to 1872, an era of extraordinary economic growth for unifying Germany, geographical works and tour guides comprised as much as 24 per cent of total German book production, which reached over 11,000 publications twice in that period. The Baedeker became the accepted international paradigm for guidebook literature, but a distinct ‘national orientation’ still characterized the small red volumes packed with maps and information. The emphasis on heightened efficiency and the productivity of travel was appropriate to the burgeoning economic performance of the German states before 1871 and of the German Empire after unification. German nationhood was increasingly identified in terms of economic might, and leisure and travel could not escape the heightened cultural authority of the rules of economic performance or the evolving tradition of economic nationalism. That the Baedeker was exported for use on the international tourist market only strengthened the German nation’s identification with the standards of economic performance. The tiny guidebook became a symbol of Germany’s nineteenth-century ‘economic miracle’. That the Baedeker enjoyed such international authority reflected the enhanced economic power of those

31 Karl Baedeker, Die Rheinlande. Von der elsässischen bis zur holländischen Grenze. Handbuch für Reisende, 33rd edn (Leipzig 1925), 137.
German tourists who could travel not only to Paris and London but to Rome, Prague, Budapest and other European capitals as well as to the Near East, Egypt and India, for which Baedeker guides were published in 1875, 1877 and 1914 respectively. The Baedeker's evolving grasp of the international tourist market was thus also a symbol and instrument of Germany's economic hegemony over other Europeans and non-Europeans.

Internally, the Baedeker promoted a sense of Germanness as well. Let us consider for a moment the third edition of Baedeker's guidebook to Germany, Deutschland in einem Bande, published in 1913. The existence of this guidebook, which synthesized material from five regional guides, was itself a sign of an important development in the tourist market. International travel had been available to the well-to-do for a long time, but they, as well as less well-off groups, in the second half of the century now began to visit hitherto unexplored areas closer to home. Cook's tours again served as a model in this process. Tourists were burrowing more deeply into their own societies, as it were, and discovering connections between regions and cities that were seen through increasingly national lenses. Writing in the preface that the new guidebook was a response to consumer demand, the Baedeker firm explained that an earlier single-volume guide to Germany and the Austrian Empire, first published in 1842 in over 600 pages, was too unwieldy. To create a more concise 400-page guide to the German nation alone was thus an attempt to grasp that nation more succinctly as a touristic entity. To create a guidebook that could truly be ‘at hand’ at all times was also to consolidate and focus the consumer’s attempt to assemble touristic sights and objects in a more precise image of the nation.

Of what did that nation consist? One of the most revealing parts of the 1913 guide is a nine-page section entitled ‘Main Points of Interest in Germany’, that introduced the traveller to 148 cities and towns worth visiting and mentioned one or more key attractions in each that could be pursued in the itineraries. I have grouped these sightseeing and vacationing opportunities into six broad categories, including those pertaining to monuments and history, industry and commerce, the military and politics, museums and the arts, nature, and resorts and spas. Almost 30 per cent of the points of interest belonged to the category of history and monuments and another 12 per cent pertained to art galleries and museums. This reflected the Baedeker guidebooks' close relationship with that stratum of educated consumers who referred to themselves as ‘the cultured’ (Gebildeten), and are often referred to in scholarship as the Bildungsbürgertum, or educated middle strata. Like the Murrays, the Baedeker family was itself a product of this milieu, keeping up a lively correspondence with the nation’s leading philosophers, novelists and art historians and relying on such

34 Karl Baedeker, Deutschland in einem Bande: Kurzes Reisehandbuch, 3rd edn (Leipzig 1913).
35 The data is derived from ibid., xv–xxiii. The percentages were as follows: monuments and history, 29.7; industry and commerce, 24.5; politics and the military, 13.5; museums, education and the arts, 11.8; nature, 10.9; resorts and spas, 9.6.
intellectuals to write pithy introductory essays for the guides. Among those who wrote for the Baedeker were the Dresden art historian Cornelius Gurlitt, the Bonn art historian Anton Springer, and the historian Theodor Mommsen. ‘The cultured’ placed great emphasis on the accomplishments of a specifically German Kultur, whose philosophy, music, poetry, architecture, monuments and scholarship were regarded as superior to a less authentic and more superficial ‘civilization’ of other nations, particularly that of France. This self-image was explicitly reflected in some of the Baedeker guides’ practice of including a separate index for artists and other cultural figures.

Still, the second largest category of sightseeing opportunities in the 1913 guide was industry and commerce, with nearly one quarter of the total. If the self-definition of the cultured Bürger depended heavily on the consumption of art and history, it also depended on the love of technology and material advance. Factories, dams, harbours and other sites of industrial and commercial activity had been an important element of guidebooks around the turn of the nineteenth century, and Baedeker guides of the mid-century continued this interest, though in reduced form. The 1913 guide failed to maintain the focus on commerce and industry in the itineraries, but the introductory material was nonetheless significant in the context of German studies scholarship that still too often pinpoints anti-modernism, anti-urbanism and anti-consumerism as dominant motifs in German cultural history. These tendencies were present in German culture, to be sure, but the Baedeker not only gave them little room; it also counterbalanced them with pride for an economic system whose pinnacle was Berlin, described glowingly as ‘one of Germany’s most important commercial centres and perhaps the foremost industrial city of the Continent’. Given its goal of formulating a more ‘objective’ language of travel, the Baedeker expressed a pride in German material advances that was understated when compared to the Murray guidebooks’ effusive praise of English economic might. Yet this pride was always evident, and it was not without critical international comparisons of the kind Murray also favoured. Berlin was a magnificent city, for example, but because of its earlier history as a garrison town and its subsequent rapid and badly planned growth, it lacked the truly ancient and venerable monuments of Paris and London, according to the Baedeker guides. Affirmation, criticism, and self-criticism existed side by side in the Baedeker’s image of the German nation.

The understated quality of the Baedeker’s national pride would eventually give way to more alarming statements of national chauvinism after 1918 and especially after 1933, when the nazi regime emphasized the nationalist potential of tourism. The 1942 guidebook to the newly re-acquired provinces

36 Hinrichsen, Baedeker-Katalog, op. cit., 26–35.
38 Baedeker, Deutschland in einem Bande, op. cit., 8.
of Alsace and Lorraine allowed tourists to gloat over the sites of Germany’s commanding military victory over the French there two years earlier. The 1943 guide to the Polish Generalgouvernement, encouraged by the rapacious nazi occupier of Poland, Hans Frank, was laced with racist references to Poles and Jews, whose synagogues had not only disappeared from the guidebook itineraries but which were being wiped out in real life by the Holocaust at the moment the guidebook was published. But these were departures from a Baedeker tradition at a specific moment of racial war, occupation and dictatorship. For the most part, a bildungsbürgerlich emphasis on ‘tact’ rather than overheated emotion characterized Baedeker nationalism just as bildungsbürgerlich approaches to the marketplace stressed discrimination and quality rather than unbridled materialism. In Baedeker’s universe, consumption and the search for national authenticity went down the path of good taste.

I have discussed guidebooks dealing mainly with large parts of Europe or with a single nation, but after the 1850s guidebooks were often published for individual cities or regions as well. The Rhineland was again the key predecessor here. Tourists were now drawn increasingly from social strata who had more leisure time than before but who could spend only one or two weeks (or in some cases just two or three days) rather than months on vacations. These individuals and their families were more likely than their well-to-do countrymen to tour only part of a specific region or several cities. This trend was reinforced by specific conjunctural factors, as when German cities around the turn of the century discovered the economic potential of well-restored historical districts and folk culture, or when, in the years immediately after the first world war, German tourists dealt with strict passport and visa regulations left over from the war and the many uncertainties of an unstable currency by avoiding foreign travel and concentrating on cities and provinces within their own country. This was the age when tourist agencies promoted brief sightseeing tours with slogans such as ‘Three Days in Würzburg’, or ‘Short Excursions at Moderate Prices’, or even ‘Two Hours in Berlin’. An American travel writer published a series of guides for week-long trips to European cities, including Berlin in Seven Days: A Guide for People in a Hurry in 1935. The interwar era was a golden age for German city guide-

43 Keitz, Reisen als Leitbild, op. cit., 43–4, discusses the increase in domestic tourism in Germany from 1913 to 1929.
44 Ibid., 50.
books, not necessarily for the Baedeker, but for cheaper and less detailed
guides from the Grieben Verlag of Berlin and the Bibliographisches Institut in
Leipzig. The 1926 Grieben guidebook to Eisenach cost just one mark, the
Meyer guide to Oberbayern RM 5.75, while the 1925 Baedeker to the
Rhineland cost eight marks. The production of more inexpensive guides
reflected the demographic fact that lower-income groups were now entering
the tourist market more decisively than ever before. Among the main groups
to fuel a more than 60 per cent increase in the total number of tourists in
Germany from the pre-war era to the late 1920s were lower- and middle-level
white-collar employees (Angestellten) in administration and the retail industry
as well as teachers in primary education (Volksschullehrer). Male and female
manual labourers may have made up as much as 10 per cent of all German
tourists. Employees and workers not only bought cheaper guidebooks but also
chose less expensive accommodation, opting for second- and third-class
hotels, pensions and hostels.46

One could see the trend in other countries as well, as in Italy, where, during
the first world war, the Touring Club Italiano (or TCI) of Milan began issuing
a multi-volume guide to Italy based on detailed treatments of historical
regions.47 If the Murray guidebooks focused on the intelligent English traveller,
and the Baedeker on the Bildungsbiirgertum, the TCI guides stated that their
ideal consumer was the tourist of media cultura who 'wanted to get to know
his nation not superficially but without specializing'.48 Like the Baedeker, the
Italian guides could hardly avoid the impact of political developments, espe-
cially in the interwar era. One 1939 guide introduced the country's autostrada
routes by praising the 'great work realized by the Fascist regime'.49 Whereas by
this period the Baedeker guides had reduced information on economic and
social history to a bare minimum, concentrating more on the history of art and
architecture to give its readers background, the TCI guides to central Italy
included an impressive amount of information on the region's geography,
climate, agriculture, labour and industry. These themes were not carried
through in the itineraries of the guidebooks, which, like the Baedeker, focused
more on monuments and historical buildings than on factories or everyday
life. Nonetheless, the inclusion of more social, geographical and economic
background may be attributed in part to the fact that Italy's sense of itself as a
nation was still relatively undeveloped in comparison with Germany. This
meant that its guidebooks had to take on a more didactic and even propagand

46 For examples of the Weimar-era city and regional guides, see Grieben, Eisenach, Wartburg,
und Umgebung, 14th edn, Griebens Reiseführer, vol. 83 (Berlin 1926) and Oberbayern und
München. Augsburg, Innsbruck and Salzburg, 5th edn, Meyers Reisebücher (Leipzig 1930). On
the social composition and consumption habits of 1920s tourists, see Keitz, Reisen als Leitbild,
op. cit., 41–53.
47 L.V. Bertarelli (ed.), Guida d'Italia del Touring Club Italiano: Piemonte, Lombardia, Canton
Ticino, 2 vols (Milan 1914–15).
48 L.V. Bertarelli (ed.), Guida d'Italia del Touring Club Italiano: Italia Centrale (Milan 1924),
1:9.
istic function, and indeed the above-mentioned 1939 guide stated that one of its central purposes was to stimulate a 'higher consciousness of our incomparable country'. Moreover, Italy needed to have its own detailed guidebooks, freed, as the editors of a 1924 guide wrote, from those foreign publications that 'were always imposed on us'. This anti-foreign sentiment was mixed with a degree of compulsion absent even in the wartime Baedeker guides to German-occupied territories, as the 1939 TCI guide stated that every right-thinking Italian had not just the opportunity but the duty to see Rome.

Even as the intelligent English traveller, the Bildungsbürger, and the tourist of medien der kultur appeared as the readers of guidebooks, those readerships were being split into finer segments or, increasingly by the interwar era, joined by lower-middle-class and (to a limited degree) working-class consumers, as already mentioned. It may be useful to describe this process in terms of a larger shift from Fordist to post-Fordist forms of consumption. Fordist forms of consumption emphasized a high degree of standardization determined largely by producers rather than consumers and only minimally geared to changes in season, fashion and market segment. By contrast, post-Fordist consumption depended more on consumer want and reflected increasingly specialized markets operating according to more finely-grained and more rapidly changing patterns of taste and fashion. The evolving international hegemony of the Baedeker guidebook suggested that a considerable degree of standardization characterized the tourist market in the mid-nineteenth century. But even then, the growing emphasis on smaller regions within guidebook literature pointed to specialization, and, by the last decades of the century, considerable market segmentation had already taken place. Fordist and post-Fordist patterns of consumption appear to have been historically simultaneous possibilities rather than attributes of clearly defined historical stages.

Regardless of how we interpret such matters, the guidebook literature spanning the half-century from the late nineteenth century to the interwar era in Europe was extremely varied. Guides existed for nature hikers in the Black Forest; mainly female shoppers in London and Paris; Catholic priests; visitors to the first world war battlefields (Michelin published a massive and detailed multi-volume guide to the battlefields that is as informative as it is moving and filled with anti-German sentiment); the German aristocracy; and workers (the Dietz-Verlag of Berlin published in 1932 what it claimed was the first tourists’ guidebook devoted chiefly to the interests of ordinary workers). In 1938, the

50 Ibid., 3.
53 Julius Wais, Schwarzwaldführer, 10th edn (Stuttgart, Berlin, Leipzig 1929); Frances Sheafer Waxman, A Shopping Guide to Paris and London (New York 1912); Reiseführer 1933 für die Mitglieder des 'PAX'. Verein katholischer Priester Deutschlands (Cologne 1933); Michelin Guide to the Battlefields of the World War, vol. 1: The First Battle of the Marne, Including the Operations on the Ourcq, in the Marshes of St Goud and in the Revigny Pass, 1914 (Milltown,
Nazi Party’s paramilitary unit, the Sturmabteilung, or SA, issued a detailed guide to the sites of Nazi Party struggles against communists and Jews in Berlin.\(^{54}\) The list could continue, and indeed it becomes more varied and specialized as we move into the post-second world war era.

This trend was also reflected in guidebooks that explicitly created alternatives to the bestselling and most broadly appealing guides. The Baedeker’s dominance in the field generated not only imitations but also a ‘humorous Baedeker’ before the first world war, consisting of poems and kitschy vignettes that satirized the Baedeker’s arid tone and seriousness.\(^{55}\) More substantially, a series of guidebooks appeared from the Piper publishing house after the first world war, entitled Was nicht im Baedeker steht, which surveyed attractions in Vienna, Berlin, London, Rome, Prague, Cologne and other cities. Like some of the specialized guides just mentioned, these interwar city guides appear at first glance to have been too personal and too focused on the minutiae of the urban centres they surveyed to promote any broader sense of nationality. Written by individuals such as the novelist Ludwig Hirschfeld, the author of the Vienna book, these guidebooks were rather hedonistic, and focused on those details of urban life that the more general guides left unexplored or unmentioned. The Vienna guide thus included quite conventional material on museums, historical buildings, shopping, coffee houses, band music concerts, and the like, but it also guided the male reader to more salacious experiences, such as the best nude reviews in the city.\(^{56}\) The Berlin guide, written by Eugen Szatmari, was even more explicit in this respect, advising tourists to visit the Eldorado nightclub in the Lutherstrasse, whose ‘regular guests were recruited from those groups in which the mathematics of love was not entirely without error’. ‘Here men dance not only with women’, the guide noted, ‘but women with women, and the good-natured gentleman from Saxony dancing with the blond singer has no idea that this lovely fairy — is a man.’\(^{57}\) We associate such sexual tourism with more contemporary developments, and in fact the first guidebook to claim to be an ‘all-purpose guide to sex, love, and romance’ in Europe was the Englishman Allan Mankoff’s Lusty Europe, published first in 1972.\(^{58}\) But some sections of the Was nicht im Baedeker steht series clearly anticipated these later publications, as did ‘by gaslight’ guides to

\(^{54}\) Julius Karl Engelbrechten and Hans Volz (eds), Wir wandern durch das nationalsozialistische Berlin: Ein Führer durch die Gedenkstätten des Kampfes um die Reichshauptstadt (Munich 1937).


\(^{56}\) Ludwig Hirschfeld, Das Buch von Wien (Munich 1927).

\(^{57}\) Eugen Szatmari, Das Buch von Berlin (Munich 1927), 144–5.

New York City and Chicago (written mainly for male business travellers) in the USA before the first world war and also Weimar-era guides such as the *Führer durch das 'lasterhafte' Berlin*. The last-named text, produced by a firm that called itself 'the publisher of modern city guides', was far more explicit about Berlin's gay and lesbian culture than the Piper Verlag series was.

Yet, even the Piper guides were not without national orientations. Continuing its sexual undertones, the Vienna guide opened one of its chapters by imagining that the Austrian metropolis was a 'coquetish older gentleman' who, upon meeting an attractive younger woman, tells her 'yes, if only you could have met me 15 or 20 years ago'. Vienna, the guide wrote, was in 1927 something like that old gentleman, whose youthful virility was now a memory. But this was more than a single city's fate. The text went on to survey the traces of Imperial Vienna, nostalgically recalling 'Habsburg greatness' in the Ringstrasse, the Hofburg and the narrow alleys of the pre-war Vienna Altstadt. The fading traces of Habsburg Austria represented the fading possibilities of the Austrian nation, whose decay and even decadence was to be lamented but also — and not paradoxically — enjoyed. A *fin-de-siècle* premonition of individual and collective decline was thus carried over into the interwar era as a theme in the optics of tourism.

Unlike the guide to Vienna, the Berlin guide, though not without references to the glories of the Imperial period before the first world war, represented that city as a living, dynamic entity at the centre of a world power. If this guide complained of the capital's increasingly congested traffic and, as it led its readers through the Reichstag, satirized not only the German Republic's penchant for constant political crisis but also its parliamentary representatives' many spoonerisms in public debate, it nevertheless treated all this as part and parcel of a major urban centre in a major country ripe for touristic exploitation. If the Baedeker's ideal of national heritage was a mix of cultural tourism and pride in industrial success, the alternative guide saw the German nation in terms of scenic architectural ensembles, bustling shopping districts, fine restaurants, nightclubs and sexual adventures. If the Baedeker's tone was measured and without either the colourful commentary of the Murray guidebooks or the sense of didacticism and compulsion of the Italian guides, the alternative guidebooks were breezy, conversational and ironic — a perfect expression of a 1920s consumerism associated with interwar modernity. In this sense, at least, the alternative guides revived the more personal, hybrid, and unsystematic approach to tourism that the pre-Murray and pre-Baedeker guides once used, though they did so in the guise of a hedonistic consumerism associated with twentieth-century mass democracy rather than with the more austere and puritanical liberalism of the nineteenth century. Still, if there was a contrast between these formal patterns and foci, they nonetheless always

60 Hirschfeld, *Das Buch von Wien*, op. cit., 156.
produced images not only of tourists but of the nations tourists consumed. In doing so, they pointed to a form of identity that was more than the sum of isolated and individual consumer choices made in a society increasingly fragmented by political, economic, social and sexual differences.

This article has analysed the tourist guidebook as the effect of larger infrastructural changes in the history of consumption and the tourist market. It has also argued that guidebooks were active agents in the formation of an optics of tourism, the attempt to visualize an authenticity that could provide meaning beyond the marketplace. Guidebooks functioned as manuals in a complex process whereby the tourist learned to consume time and space, then, but they pointed to a set of meanings and symbols that transcended the everyday life of commodification and consumption. In this sense, tourism, while being a product of the market, also served to critique the market by searching for a reality that was not only unavailable on the basis of commerce alone but was potentially threatened by overly powerful or intrusive commercial relations. It is plausible to argue that a comparative study of the evolution of tourist guidebooks would help us follow the timing and texture of this critique in an increasingly globalized tourist culture.

Particular emphasis has been placed on national identity as one of the key significations arising from tourism. National identity, like religion, depended on the identification of a realm of experience that was opposed to the everyday and that simultaneously permeated the everyday. More than other forms of consumption, such as sports or shopping, tourism, whether undertaken at home or abroad, contributed to a sense of national belonging even when it promoted the standardization of the international tourist market, revived interest in the locale or the city, or promoted the satisfaction of individual material or sexual desires. The tourist needed to feel that s/he had undertaken an extraordinary and authentic journey, that something both indisputably ‘real’ and beyond the ordinary had taken place, just as the nationalist felt compelled to identify with the nation as something elevated above specific social and economic interests. Whether travelling within the nation or abroad, tourists learned not only about the sites they visited but also about their origins in a national collectivity. Tourism and the nation thus met on hallowed cultural ground for which tourists’ guidebooks offered markers pointing the way to the objects, places and people that had to be seen. Traversing the path to the nation entailed a touristic journey rooted in both élite and popular critiques of the individualized transactions of the marketplace.
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