Discovering the Self: A Critical Phenomenological Paradigm for Tourism Research

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by

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The Thesis of Alexia Alisabeth Arani is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Discovering the Self:

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by

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Masters of Arts in Anthropology

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Travel is becomingly increasing associated with self-work, in the form of self-discovery, self-transformation, or self-documentation through writing and photography. In light of this expansive social trend, I argue that tourism research would benefit from an exploration of the existential self. I suggest that by discovering the self, anthropologists can connect tourism research to broader theoretical questions, such as: What is the relationship between structure and agency, subjectivity and power in an individual’s self-ex-
perience? I draw heavily on Douglas Hollan, Michel Foucault, and Pierre Bourdieu to propose a critical phenomenological paradigm that moves to address this complex set of questions. To demonstrate the utility of this paradigm for tourism research, I analyze two contemporary ethnographies, one on young Israeli backpackers and the other on multinational pilgrims who walk and cycle the Camino to Santiago, Spain.
Introduction

You see yourself, you see yourself…

- Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place*

Jamaica Kincaid’s critiques of tourism, based on her experiences growing up on the island of Antigua, have offered an astute observation of the forefront of the self within international travel experiences (1988). In recent years there has been a plethora of books and films that treat travel destinations as a backdrop for one’s self-discovery or self-transformation. Films such as *Eat Pray Love* (2010), *Under the Tuscan Sun* (2003), *Darjeeling Limited* (2007), and *Wild* (2015) tell the stories of Americans who discover their “true selves” through the experiences of extended travel. The protagonists in these films use their newfound environments as a space to repair broken relationships, evaluate one’s life, and ultimately shape a happier and more fulfilling future. While these films offer glimpses of ordinary lives unfurling in India, Italy, Indonesia, and the California-Oregon coast, these glimpses are ultimately overshadowed by the centrality of the protagonists’s own inner journeys throughout their desired exotic locales.

This emphasis on the self is also prevalent within study abroad advertisements and imagery. Advertising strategies focus on self-discovery as the most important reason to spend a semester abroad. As the Princeton Review’s webpage suggests: “The opportunity to reinvent yourself, to discover that you are capable of so much more than you ever
thought possible…and most of all, to discover who you are and where you come from… can only be described in one way: priceless” [emphasis added]. These opinions are echoed in a number of webpages and forums that unilaterally embrace self-discovery as a positive outcome of study abroad. Indeed, the discourse of self-discovery has become so hegemonic that study abroad programs no longer need to stress the value of these experiences. Consider the following quotation, featured on the IES Abroad webpage: “Overall, I learned a lot more about myself in that one semester than I did in the three and a half years in my home school.” The benefits of self-discovery are presumed to be so readily apparent that they no longer necessitate an explanation.

It is clear from these representations that international travel is strongly tied to self transformation within contemporary Euro-American thought. While it may be easy to confirm the existence of these associations through images, discourses, and media, it may be more difficult to explain how these connections are created through individuals’ travel experiences. There have been a number of sociological studies that have focused on the outcomes of study abroad semesters, but these studies limit themselves to quantifiable results and never stop to ask how and why a traveler may be changed (Carlson 1990; Gullahorn and Gullahorn 1958; Nash 1976; Shank 1961). Nash’s before and after assessments of study abroad students is indicative of these methodological trends (Nash 1976). Nash relies on self-evaluation assessments to measure whether the students become more autonomous, tolerant, flexible, and confident following the completion of their semester abroad. While self-assessment is a questionable methodology in and of itself, this mode
of inquiry provides no context or explanation for students’ potential changes. For example, students may indicate “less alienation from their feelings” by providing a more positive response to the question: “I like to let others know how I feel” (1976: 197). While this response potentially indicates an increased attention to, and communication of, one’s feelings, it does not explain the relationship between the travel experience and the end result. It does not question how this change was experienced by the students, what triggered the change, or whether it was apparent or relevant to the students.

While touristic research on self-transformation has been minimal and largely inadequate, I nevertheless believe that the self remains a promising field site for future tourism research. As evidenced by contemporary representations of travel through books, movies, and advertising materials, practices of discovering, transforming, or documenting the self are the central focus of many people’s international travels. I suggest that this trend should not be taken for granted as a natural or timeless practice. Rather, the ubiquitous touristic emphasis on knowing and shaping the self may point to larger social processes that are unique and significant in this specific space and time. I hypothesize that future research on the touristic self may be able to link travel practices with neoliberal discourses, forms of governmentality, and technologies of the self, thereby connecting travel practices with larger questions of structure, power, and hegemony.

While I am ultimately interested in pursuing such a project, it will be difficult to research travel-based technologies of the self without first grasping the self as both analytical concept and domain of existential experience. This paper thus represents my at-
tempts to *discover the self* within existing social theory and within contemporary anthropological works on international travel. After reviewing the dominant trends within the anthropology of tourism, I will offer a critical phenomenological framework that contributes a much-needed complexity, intersectionality, and nuance to discussions of the self within tourism. This framework brings together psychological anthropology, embodiment, politics, and power to critically interrogate how the interior and exterior blend and blur in individuals’ self-experiences.

This critical phenomenological paradigm is useful for tourism studies because it provides an intimate portrayal of how tourism is experienced on the ground. However, this framework is by no means limited to scholars of tourism. I suggest that a phenomenological method may help theorists of politics and power account for subjective dimensions such as perception, memory, and lived experience. Likewise, analyses of power and politics can aid phenomenologists by connecting the existential self to the systems of constraint and control that work upon thoughts, bodies, and souls (Foucault 1975). A framework that accounts for both perspectives—the intimate, the interior, and the agentic as well as the structural, the exterior, and the coercive—may help anthropologists move beyond these unnecessary binaries, thereby allowing our research to reflect the complexity that is sure to be found within the self-experience.
Chapter 1: Building a Paradigm for Tourism Research

The Anthropology of Tourism: A Literature Review

As early anthropologists working in the early period of the study of tourism are quick to point out, the study of tourism was once seen as a fruitless endeavor. Tourism, imagined as a meaningless pastime, was beneath the purely scientific interests of the anthropologist (Nash 1981). Perhaps in response to this criticism, anthropologists of tourism sought to establish their ethnographic authority by relying on the most “objective” and “scientific” of the anthropological methods: that of classification. This early work focused on the “tourist” as a nominal category in need of clarification. Were tourists indeed the superficial and ethnocentric consumers that scholars critiqued and condemned? (Boorstin 1964). If one were only to consult Crick’s review of the state of the anthropology of tourism at the end of the 1980s, they may be persuaded to say this is so (Crick 1989). However, despite the initial bias within the social sciences to think of tourism in terms of the consumption of “sun, sex, sand, and sea,” one can argue that the tides have turned within tourism studies (Crick 1989: 302). MacCannell’s seminal contribution to tourism studies, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, offers a clear pushback against the understanding proposed by Boorstin and other critics who view tourism as a shallow and selfish act (MacCannell 1976). Whereas Boorstin, among others, viewed the tourist as superficial, MacCannell sees her to be earnest; whereas Boorstin sees her to be placated only by the safety and comfort of commercialism, Mac
Cannell sees her as driven by a pursuit of authenticity. In Graburn’s model, the tourist is on a quest for meaning through the secular ritual of tourism (Graburn 2001). Tourists continually flee the pressures of their home lives to seek solace in the rejuvenating effects of travel. These periods of recess from the pressures of modern life “re-create” the tourist, rejuvenating her with new vigor and spirit that will allow her to be successfully reincorporated into the home society (Graburn 1989: 36).

MacCannell and Graburn’s visions of tourism can be clearly identified within the field of tourism and pilgrimage studies. Tourism, conceived as a process of movement across space in pursuit of existential meanings and positive spiritual outcomes, resonated with scholars of pilgrimage and their focus on bodily movement in the name of spiritual meaning. Recently, scholars within this field of study have not been so concerned with differentiating the two groups, but have opted to explore their realms of similarity as a constructive methodology for illuminating shared tourist and pilgrim behaviors (Badone and Roseman 2004). As Turner and Turner famously declared, “A tourist is half a pilgrim if a pilgrim is half a tourist” (Turner and Turner 1978: 20). This quotation suggests that tourists will display qualities of reverence, devotion, and self transformation, while pilgrims will indulge in recreation, appreciation of new sights, and newly formed social relationships. These connections help to demystify pilgrimage by revealing the pilgrims as ordinary humans, interested in the superficial as well as the sacred. It also helps scholars view tourists as spiritual beings, with a capacity for complex beliefs and their own travel-based rituals.
Along with this move to situate the tourist in the realm of serious subjects, several anthropologists have called attention to the many similarities that exist between the tourist and the anthropologist. Proponents of the tourist-as-anthropologist paradigm cite shared practices, shared motives, and shared outcomes to argue that the line between the academic and the vacationer are not as stark as some anthropologists may desire (Crick 1995; Ntarangwi 2000). Those scholars who have rejected the tourist-as-anthropologist model have mostly relied upon ethnographic authority as the principal distinction, citing analytical practices and academic publications as the differentiating factor between the two groups. These arguments tend to be circular in nature, as the proponents of anthropologists-as-tourists are keen to point out that travelers often create their own “ethnographies” and form “analyses” of the social world (see Crick 1995 for a review of these perspectives). Ultimately, these arguments hinge on subjective evaluations of whether one’s thoughts and practices constitute serious ethnography or whether they are mere reproductions of the traveler’s tale. While this debate may provide a useful insight into the current reflexive state of anthropology, it does little to illuminate unexplored facets of the touristic experience.

Instead of viewing all tourists as pilgrims or all tourists as anthropologists, Cohen suggested that tourists can be placed along a spectrum (Cohen 1979). Some tourists may demonstrate strong orientations towards spirituality or analytical self-reflexivity while others may be more interested in “superficial” endeavors. According to Cohen, these tourists differ because they have different ontological centers. Drawing on Shils, he de-
fines a “center” as the “nexus of [one’s] supreme, ultimate moral values” (1979: 180). For a tourist in the “recreational mode,” the “center” of one’s values and norms is found within the tourist’s own home culture. For this reason, the recreational tourist will seek experiences that replicate the security and safety of home. On the opposite end of the spectrum is Graburn’s tourist-pilgrim figure, engaged in the “existential mode.” These tourists establish an “elective center” which is found in an outside culture. For these tourist-pilgrims travel is indeed a spiritual quest, for it is a means of gaining access to a moral “center” that one may lack at home (1979: 191).

It is important to note that Cohen recognizes these typologies as “speculative” (1979: 197). He readily admits that these typologies are false separations in the name of analytical efficiency. While tourists may strongly fall into one category over the others, a single tourist may move between these categories in a single journey (1979: 192). Despite Cohen’s admission that touristic typologies may not precisely capture the realities of touristic experience, categorization and classification are still preferred methodologies for producing knowledge about touristic practice. This is especially clear within the genre of backpacker studies, which has been inundated by taxonomies of backpacker motivations, preferences, and practices (see Hannam and Ateljevic 2007). Ironically, more and more backpacker typologies seem to emerge as scholars recognize that the existing types do not account for on-the-ground diversity. Maoz and Bloch-Tzemach’s moves to expand backpacker typologies to account for both “settler tourism” and “dwelling tourism” are examples of this phenomenon (Chaim and Noy 2005). While
these new terminologies help to complicate the one-size-fits-all definition of backpacker tourism proposed by Hannam and Ateljevic, they nonetheless rely on clumping and generalization. These terminologies, then, may account for diversity on a broader scale, but they nevertheless stifle the diversity that is sure to be found within the “settler” and “dwelling” tourism communities.

Recently, some of these classifications have been critiqued in light of the multinational character of backpacking communities. Scholars have questioned whether national origins may impact backpackers’ motives, behaviors, and practices. Chaim and Noy’s edited collection on Israeli backpackers, which I will discuss further in this paper, suggests that backpackers should be placed within the context of the politics and culture of the home society (Chaim and Noy 2005). Scholars embracing this national origin perspective tend to focus on how international travel may alter national identities. For example, Feldman argues that Israeli students construct a Jewish “survivor-witness” identity by touring Holocaust sites in Poland (Feldman 2005). She argues that discourses circulated by school officials and guides exaggerate the threat of a “hostile” Polish other, thereby making a Jewish-Israeli identity salient by opposition. Dolby, in her study of American students in Australia, finds more ambivalent responses to the nation. She explains that exposure to Australians’ views of the United States can either spur a defensive sense of patriotism or a newfound awareness of the divisions between the nation and the state. These two perspectives on US foreign policy can impact how students feel about their belonging to the US nation-state (Dolby 2004).
While Dolby’s findings do account for some diversity among its participants, the two studies nonetheless assume that travelers from a shared national origin are likely to experience their national identities in similar ways. It clumps travelers from a shared national origin into a single category, without questioning how differences across race, gender, class, or ethnicity may have impacted one’s experiences of citizenship and belonging. It also assumes that national identities are relevant for these travelers throughout their travel experiences. Given that Dolby’s data is drawn entirely from interviews and not from participant observation, it is also possible that national identities became salient as a result of the anthropologists’ interview questions.

In conclusion, the anthropology of tourism has undergone a gradual transformation in its search for greater specificity. Although these studies have gradually moved away from universal claims and general categorizations, these approaches nevertheless fail to account for the inevitable diversity within a given touristic context. I suggest that this issue arises because of the top-down direction of methodology. Scholars begin at the level of universality (tourism as a global practice) and then gradually refine the subject of study by focusing on smaller levels of categorization (superficial or authentic tourists, backpackers, pilgrims, or students from the same nation). These categories are often pulled from pre-existing theories and not from the observations and interviews that anthropologists utilize as part of ethnographic practice. These methodologies are likely to be laden with biases and assumptions, and may contribute to theories that conflict with the participants’ own travel experiences.
I suggest that a more productive methodology may set aside pre-determined categories, typologies, and touristic groups, and turn its attention instead to the touristic self. This change in focus does not prioritize interest in the individual over an interest in social practices, relationships, and structures; rather, it recognizes that these wider dynamics are at play within every individual’s self-experience. As I will demonstrate through the critical phenomenological paradigm that I propose in the following section, the self is a site where memory, bodily experience, social interactions, culture, power, and social structures can be studied.

Towards a Critical Phenomenological Paradigm of the Self

When most people think of the self, they likely envision an embodied human person bearing consciousness, a composite of personality traits, and a range of physical and emotive capacities. Csordas explains this self as either objectified self or self-representation (Csordas 1990; Csordas 1994b). This objectified self is often regarded as a “person” who claims a unique constellation of identities, orientations, and values (Csordas 1994a: 6). While Euro-American thought has typically regarded the “person” as an autonomous individual, social theorists have long argued that the objectified self is co-constituted through social interactions. At its most basic level, the self is defined by that which is not the self. As Hollan explains, “As we interact and become more familiar with other people we become better at differentiating the phenomenal field, distinguishing ourselves from others” (Hollan 2014: 180). Although the self is necessarily constructed through process-
es of differentiation, it is also constituted through borrowing and appropriation. Parish writes: “We let others into our sense of self because we enter the world through them… We reference them in our acts and capabilities, in the way we understand and evaluate ourselves and our lives” (Parish 2008: 24). Parish’s quotation suggests that the self represents a composite of those non-selves that contribute to our socialization as human beings. We appropriate outside “acts and capabilities” into our own modes of being, thereby referencing human others in our modes of self-representation. Parish’s words may also resonate with Charles Horton Cooley’s theory of the “looking glass self” (Cooley 1902). According to Cooley, the way we see ourselves is strongly shaped by the ways we are seen in the eyes of others. We thus “understand and evaluate ourselves and our lives” according to the standards and judgements passed by other selves in the interactions of everyday life.

Phenomenologists have sought to complicate this picture by suggesting that the self exists even prior to objectification. Merleau-Ponty first introduced this concept through his exploration of the pre-objective self (Merleau-Ponty 1962). The pre-objective is that space of pure perception, prior to the interpretative process through which sights, sounds, smells, and sensations become known as objects to the self. Csordas explains this in the following way: “Objects are a secondary product of reflective thinking; on the level of perception we have no objects, we simply are in the world” (Csordas 1994a: 9). How does a human being simply exist in the world, prior to thought and evaluation? Merleau-Ponty suggests we exist through our bodies (1994a: 9). This statement challenges Carte-
sian dualism, which values the mind over the body: “I think therefore I am” (Descartes [1637] 1960). This phenomenological perspective suggests that the body is not an object to the self, but is an important subject of the self. It is through the perceptions and sensations of the body that a sense of self is made possible (Csordas 1994a: 9).

While phenomenologists suggest that the body exists prior to objectification, Csordas clarifies that the body can never be prior to culture (1994a: 10). He points to both Marcel Mauss and Pierre Bourdieu, who have theorized the connections between embodiment and culture through the concept of the habitus (Mauss 1934; Bourdieu 1977 as cited in Csordas 1994a: 11). While both Mauss and Bourdieu focus on the habitus as a “collection of practices” inherited from cultural traditions, Csordas suggests that Bourdieu “goes beyond this conception” by considering the internalized, psychological dimension (1994a: 11). This reformulation of the habitus recognizes that the psyche, or one’s orientation towards the future, is also molded by the “behavioral environment” in which it thrives (1994a: 11). The habitus, then, is at once social, biological, and psychological; a totality of one’s modes of being in the world.

Whereas Csordas’s discussion of habitus points to the relationship between the body, disposition, society and culture, Bourdieu’s A Logic of Practice argues that the habitus is always a product (and propagator) of power (Bourdieu [1980] 1990). Bourdieu notes that “society” is not an undifferentiated mass of selves; rather, it is composed of hierarchical divisions between sexes, age groups, and social classes (1990: 71). One’s habitus is largely decided by their position within these social structures, for the habitus
“reproduces the regularities of the conditions in which they were produced” (1990: 56).

Bourdieu explains that this phenomenon works to maintain the status-quo; in other words, the habitus naturalizes the social divisions from which it was born (1990: 71).

Bourdieu explains this concept through gender socialization. He writes: “The specifically feminine virtue…modesty, restraint, [and] reserve, orients the whole female body downwards, towards the ground, the inside, the house, whereas male excellence…is asserted in movements upwards, outwards, [and] towards other men” (1990: 70). These bodily practices uphold the idea of female inferiority/male superiority and “reinforces belief in the prevailing system of classification by making it appear to be grounded in reality” (1990: 71). With this example it becomes clear that the habitus is not a de-politicized concept; on the other hand, the habitus is a site of stratification and social hierarchy. In this context, embodied practices are cultivated by both culture and power in order to reproduce the privileged position of the masculine bourgeoisie (1990: 129).

The idea of society as a “structuring structure” that determines one’s bodily practice is perhaps best elaborated by Michel Foucault. If habitus provides a means for imagining the effects of power differentials upon the body, then discipline and governmentality explain the specific techniques of power whereby the body is made subject to observation and control. The idea of discipline first appears in Foucault’s seminal text Discipline and Punish, as the means by which institutions create docile bodies (Foucault [1975] 1979). Foucault explains that docile bodies are created through the “strategic distribution” of individuals in space, the creation of the timetable (and its “associated rhythms, regula-
tions, and cycles of repetition”), and the “inculcation” of postures, movements, and gestures of the body (1979: 141-145; 149-155). These disciplinary techniques can be seen in the primary classroom, where students are taught to walk in straight lines, follow a structured schedule, sit up straight in their desks, and raise their hands when they have a question. In line with Bourdieu, Foucault suggests that these techniques of the body are never innocent. Similar to the habitus, the docile body “is also directly involved in a political field” (1979: 25). Politics, here, relates to both economics and governance. The docile body is a “productive” body; that is, a body that can easily be exploited for its labor power. This “productive body” is necessarily a “subjected body,” or a body that has been molded by the disciplinary techniques of institutions to make one more easily observed and managed (1979: 25).

Foucault explains that discipline occurs hand-in-hand with surveillance, typically in institutional settings where prison guards, teachers, doctors, psychologists, or social workers are charged with the task of observation and enforcement of specific modes of conduct. Foucault suggests that it doesn’t really matter if these authority figures are actually observing, for the very threat of surveillance is sufficient to alter one’s behavior. He provides the infamous example of the panopticon, which is a watchtower placed in the center of a prison court yard. He explains: “He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he
simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection” (1979: 202-203). Panopticism helps demonstrate the subtle and coercive ways that discipline may function. Discipline may be more apparent when a prison guard uses a baton to beat the body of an unruly inmate, but Foucault suggests that a pair of binoculars can be equally coercive. Here, the disciplinary techniques are subtle and psychological. Yet, the fear of being observed is so persuasive that a subject will take on their own subjection.

The panopticon and its resulting techniques of “self-subjugation” are arguably the most ubiquitous forms of discipline in the world today. Foucault explains that domination has shifted from the punitive hand of the state to more decentralized forms of surveillance and discipline—a diffuse technique of power that he labels governmentality (Foucault 1991). As Colin Gordon explains, the most general definition of governmentality is the “conduct of conduct” (1991: 2). In other words, governmentality is a practice that aims to “shape, guide, or affect the conduct of some person or persons” (1991: 2). Foucault suggests that there are many forms of governance at work within the state. He gives the example of the patriarchal father who rules his family, or the superior who rules the covenant (1991: 91). Most relevant to the present discussion, however, is Foucault’s concern with the “art of self-government” or the “government of oneself” (1991: 87, 91). While references to self-governance may summon ideas of autonomy over one’s body and one’s conduct, governmentality is but another form of power. As Rux Martin explains, governmentality is the “contact between the technologies of the domination of others and those of the self” (1991: 19). Similar to the self-disciplinary technique of the
panopticon, forms of governmentality coerce populations into enacting hegemonic forms of governance upon their own thoughts, souls, and bodies.

The concepts of habitus, discipline, and governmentality help reveal the forms of power that give shape to one’s psychological disposition, bodily conduct, and behavior. While these models meaningfully explore the relationship between the body and power, they may not engage as productively with the possibilities of agency, individuality, or lived experience. Although Foucault does suggest that “where there is power there is resistance,” it is difficult to imagine resistance in a world where we become the “principles of our own subjection” (1979: 203). This omission suggests that post-structuralists and phenomenologists may learn quite a bit from one another. Recall that in the same way that Bourdieu and Foucault overlook subjectivity, Csordas neglects to consider the effects of power upon the body. It appears that what a theory of self-formation may need, then, is a framework that can account for both subjectivity and power, both agency and structure.

I propose that Hollan’s model of the selfscape may be best-equipped to account for these two, seemingly oppositional concerns. In his model the self is informed simultaneously through embodied memory, society, culture, and politics. Hollan describes it in this way:

A selfscape…is the self system’s implicit moment by moment mapping of its own representations of its own past embodied experiences onto the space and time of the contemporary culturally constituted world. The “-scape” part of the term refers to both the intraself and extraself terrains that the self system simultaneously maps and represents during the course of a day and night…and from which a contingent and dynamic sense of self emerges moment by moment. It gives due weight to the influence of embodied emotion and memory on an emerging sense of self-awareness
but also due weight to the varieties and contingencies of the social, cultural, and political scapes (cf. Appadurai 1996) within which the body and self-system are deeply embedded and which are constantly perturbing and influencing aspects of self-organization. (Hollan 2014: 182)

The selfscape recognizes that a person is shaped both by “embodied emotion and memory” and by the “contingencies of social, cultural, and political scapes.” This formulation allows for individuality and subjectivity, but recognizes the structures within which these internal processes are formed. The concept of the selfscape is further productive because it moves away from a reified, objectified notion of the self and offers a spectrum of possibility in its place. Because the self is constituted through its responses to a particular “intraself” and “extraself” interaction in a particular place and time, it is always immanent, and always able to reveal new dimensions. Such a conceptualization recognizes that the selfscape is fluid, and is not predetermined by a rigorous imagining of constraint.

The fluidity of the selfscape also sheds light on the interconnections between embodiment, memory, society, culture, and politics. Because these dimensions converge within the selfscape in unique and shifting ways, it becomes difficult to localize a center of any of these “scapes” within the self experience. While this ambiguity may be especially pronounced within the selfscape, I suggest this is not a distortion of reality so much as it is a reflection of the complex and complicated nature of social life. Therefore, I wish to clarify that while the terms: memory, body, society, culture, and politics may provide an analytical starting point, I do not believe that these words capture distinct dimensions of existence. In fact, the limitations of previous theories of the self may be explained by these common separations. It may be impossible to unearth the “true nature” of the self
(if there is such a thing) by looking only at embodiment, psychology, social relations, or structuring structures. I agree with Hollan that a study of this flexible, fleeting, fluid mode of existence called the “self” will warrant attention to both “intraself” and “extraself” terrain, in recognition that the interior and exterior are not as bounded and separate as these very terminologies may imply.

Tourism, Embodiment, and the Selfscape

The selfscape may be a useful theoretical model, but how can it be utilized as a productive methodology for research? I believe that the selfscape enables a researcher to think in terms of fluidity—the selfscape allows one to observe how the “interior” the “cultural” the “social” or the “political” blend and blur within an individual’s self-experience. Nevertheless, in order to ultimately rupture the boundaries between the interior and the exterior, some preliminary separations must be drawn. I therefore suggest that analytical divisions, artificial as they may be, are a productive starting place for research on the selfscape. In this section, I will argue that embodied practice can be studied to understand how the intraself terrain (subjective experience, embodied memory, or psychological disposition) converges with the extraself terrain (culture, society, and power). I propose that Foucault’s concept of discourse lies at the center of these configurations, as a collective sociopolitical configuration that shapes and is shaped by individual perceptions, modes of consciousness, and embodied practices.
Csordas explains that “embodied experience” can be the “starting point for analyzing human participation in the world” (Csordas 1993: 135). Attention to embodiment may be the most logical place to begin any ethnographic study, for it begins quite simply with observation. One can ask: how are bodies being positioned, mobilized, and used? How are they dressed, decorated, or employed in the production of symbols? A classic phenomenological approach would move beyond the body-as-object to encounter the body as a subject (Csordas 1990; Csordas 1994a). This approach would try to understand the ways that bodily perceptions become objects to the self. This method would examine the role of culture in making bodily sensations intelligible and meaningful, rejecting the proposition that shared vocabularies⁠¹ are reflective of shared existential experiences.

An exploration of embodiment should also recall Bourdieu, and his suggestion that the *habitus* may vary according to social status. An exploration of embodiment may move away from the individual to assess how multiple bodies are oriented and mobilized across time and space. This perspective may reveal that embodied practices are shaped not only by class, but also by complex intersections of gender, race, religion, sexuality, and physical (dis)ability. As Bourdieu demonstrated in his discussion of the gendered habitus, embodied practices are likely to be accompanied by social meanings and values, often working in the favor of a dominant social group (1990: 71). A comparison of various modes of embodiment is therefore significant not only for its ability to illuminate so-

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¹ For example, a phenomenological methodology would separate “feeling” from “emotion” in recognition that “sadness” or “happiness” can be embodied in various ways.
cial stratification, but also for its capacity to denaturalize differences that are made visible in the body.

Narrative analysis provides another methodology for analyzing embodied practice. Anthropologists have long recognized the value of interviews, which serve to gather information about individuals and to provide insight into the social webs in which they are enmeshed. While interviews are one technique for discovering an individual’s values, thoughts, and memories, another productive approach is to simply listen to daily speech. Anthropologists can pay particular attention to the stories that people tell and can use these stories to assess the ways in which the self is positioned both within the story and in its retelling. This double perspective recognizes that the self is both embodied through memory and actively constructed through performance.

I suggest that Foucault’s concept of discourse offers a pathway for examining the links between culture, power, and embodiment. Foucault’s conceptualization of discourse emerges from the notion that there is no singular, objective truth but rather many “regimes of truth” produced through specific configurations of socially constructed knowledge and power (Foucault [1975] 1979). Discourses help create “regimes of truth” by constructing particular “ways of talking, thinking, or representing a particular subject” (Hall 1996: 205). While discourses are typically associated with thoughts, words, and representations, they also “enter into and influence all social practices” (Hall 1996: 202). This conceptualization recognizes that the discursive realm is not separated from other
forms of embodiment. Thoughts, beliefs, and representations can have tangible effects in
the world by guiding the practices of individual bodies as well as institutional systems.

Significantly, discourses are forged through the mutually constituting interplay of
knowledge and power (Foucault 1978: 100). Although power always forms and is formed
by discourses, this does not mean that discourses are controlled by a single social group.
Foucault explains that discourses are not “divided between the dominant discourse and
the dominated one; but [represent] a multiplicity of discursive elements that come into
play in various strategies” (1978: 100). This characterization has important consequences
for agency and subjectivity. While discourses may help “constitute the ‘nature’ of the
body, unconscious and conscious mind, and [the] emotional life of subjects,” (Weedon
1987: 108) the ways these discourses are deployed and experienced may vary. A dis-
course analysis, then, may shift its gaze from the collective to the individual, to under-
stand how discourses converge with the intraself terrain.

Below I have included an original diagram (Figure 1.1) that visually represents
the connections between discourses and embodiment. Although Foucault does not write
extensively about culture, I consider the cultural dimension to be inherent to Foucault’s
concept of discourse for two reasons. First, systems of knowledge must be culturally in-
telligible. This has been recognized by linguistic anthropologists for quite some time,
perhaps best encapsulated in Boas’s infamous discussion of the multiple Inuit words for
“snow” (Boas 1911). Second, discourses are circulated, mediated, and contested through
the deployment of cultural forms, such as speech, art, and imagery. This deployment can
be further applied to the practices of the body. If we wish to accept the arguments put forth by Mauss and Bourdieu, then we know that embodied experience is always mediated by culture. This implies that discourse will converge with culture within the body, and that the two forces will be present throughout the various stages of human perception and practice. The diagram outlines this trajectory, showing how discourses (conceived as configurations of culturally mediated forms of knowledge with arrangements of power) mediate perceptions and practices, creating a self-sustaining cycle.

Figure 1.1: Discourse and Embodiment
This diagram is meant to represent the interconnections between perception, consciousness, and practice. There is no defined starting point, for all of these modes of embodiment feed into one another, shaping the way the individual can “be” in the world. The lines are meant to connect discourses with the modes of embodiment, leading to a short textual explanation of the interrelationship between embodiment, knowledge, and power. I used lines instead of arrows to indicate that the “structuring” can go both ways — discourses shape perception, consciousness, and practice, while perception, consciousness, and practice in turn shape future discourses.
I have argued that a critical phenomenological paradigm that connects embodiment with power can help illuminate the selfscape’s dynamic intersectionality. However, one may still question the paradigm’s relevance for tourism research. Ideally, the notion of the selfscape can help move beyond the categories of tourist, backpacker, pilgrim, local, native, host, and guest by illuminating the complexity that exists within any given category. The selfscape may shed light on the similarities and differences between subjective experiences of many selves, and may offer new points of comparison that may be obscured within a rigid tourist vs pilgrim or tourist vs local dichotomy. A critical phenomenological framework may also help illuminate how people actively construct and negotiate their sense of self within a complex interrelationship of social, cultural, and political scapes. This attention to practice can reveal the specific ways that travel mediates self-formation. As I have demonstrated in the brief literature review, this specificity has been sorely lacking in tourism research.

Of course, the contributions of a critical methodological perspective will be more tangible when they are demonstrated through analysis. Therefore, in the section that follows I will use my critical phenomenological framework to explore the scapes of the touristic self. I will consider two case studies that touch on the theme of self-transformation in two divergent contexts. The first case study is Ayana Shira Haviv’s “Next Year in Kathmandu: Israeli Backpackers and the Formation of a New Israeli Identity” (Haviv 2005). This chapter from Chaim and Noy’s edited collection investigates how young Israeli travelers constitute a new Israeli identity during their time backpacking in the Far
East. The second case study is from Nancy Frey’s book, “Pilgrim Stories: On and Off the Road to Santiago” (Frey 1998). This book focuses on experiences of self-transformation, healing, and spiritual renewal by exploring the changing subjectivities of multinational pilgrims who walk and cycle the pilgrimage route to Santiago, Spain. My intention with the following analyses is two-fold. First, I will explore how a critical phenomenological paradigm may complement or contradict the arguments that are currently being circulated within the anthropology of tourism. Second, I wish to use the arguments of these authors to flesh out the selfscape as potential theoretical tool: How may these case studies illuminate this concept, both as an ethnographic object and as a paradigm for theory?
Overview

Chaim Noy and Erik Cohen’s edited collection, “Israeli Backpackers: From Tourism to Rite of Passage,” examines the extended backing trip that an estimated 30,000 Israeli youths and young adults embark on every year (Noy and Cohen 2005). Their book is meant to counter the vagueness of previous backpacker studies, which fail to consider the “context of the society of origin from which backpackers depart” (2005: 3). The authors work to link the motives, content, and outcomes of the backpacking experience to the “problems and tensions” experienced by Israelis in their home country (2005: 3). Though the six contributions of the book engage with the phenomenon uniquely, they all approach the long trip abroad as a contemporary rite of passage. As Noy and Cohen write in their introduction: “We suggest that these youths pass through a moratoria phase, typically after completing their military service, entering a liminal period in which they undergo personal change, form or consolidate their identity, and eventually reorient themselves to Israeli society” (2005: 6). The more theoretical of the case studies are concerned with the outcomes of these rites of passage: How are identities reconfigured through the liminality of being abroad? How does the backpacking experience influence the young adults’ position within their local communities and the nation-state?

The case study I wish to analyze is from the first chapter of the book, “Next Year in Kathmandu: Israeli Backpackers and the Formation of a New Israeli Identity,” written...
by Ayana Shira Haviv. Haviv draws on six months of participant observation, as well as formal and informal interviews, conducted during backpacking trips to Nepal, Thailand, Vietnam, Laos, and China between 2000 and 2001 (2005: 48). Her primary argument is that the backpacking experience offers an “extranational setting” for “youth subculture” to contest the “state’s top-down-propagation of national identity” (2005: 47). This revolutionary identity balances a sense of collectivity with a newfound appreciation for personal freedom, individuality, and experimentation. Haviv suggests that this identity is definitively Israeli, but nonetheless relies on the appropriation of “Western” practices of leisure and consumption.

Haviv suggests that the shift towards a new Israeli identity is evidenced through the backpackers very motives for traveling abroad. Many of the backpackers frame their trip abroad as an escape from the “pressure cooker” of Israeli politics and society (2005: 56). In contrast with the older generation, who have viewed mandatory military service as one’s morally-laden civic duty, the new generation of Israelis are increasingly critical of the state’s military involvements (2005: 58). They resent being forced into the military after many years of schooling, suggesting these years of “slavery” have essentially stolen their youth (2005: 59). In this context, the long trip abroad represents an avenue for reclaiming one’s right to leisure, and provides a “well-deserved break from [the] responsibilities forced on them” (58). Haviv suggests that these motives are looked down upon by the older generation, who prioritize work ethic and the good of the Israeli community over relaxation, leisure, and “hedonistic” self-gratification (2005: 50).
The backpackers escape from the “pressure cooker” not only through the mobility of their bodies, but also by bodily practice. Haviv explains that the backpackers refuse to give into rigid arrangements of time. They reject plans, schedules, and travel itineraries, choosing instead to “float around like a cork” without a specific destination (2005: 59). This declaration of one’s freedom is further asserted through the appropriation of 1960s hippie culture, associated most strongly with the United States. Many Israeli backpackers can be seen wearing batiks, peasant-style dresses, or clothing decorated with peace signs and psychedelic colors (2005: 60-61). The trip abroad is also a time when many backpackers experiment with drugs, most commonly at the “full-moon parties” where marijuana, hashish, LSD, and psychedelic trance music is prevalent (2005: 61-62).

While the “hippie” culture of the 1960s hinged on the idea of non-conformity, Haviv suggests that conformity is actually quite important to the Israeli youths within their backpacking communities. The initial desire to go abroad is often a result of subtle social pressures to do what everyone else is doing. As one backpacker explained, “All my friends came back with pictures. I wanted to see what everyone was talking about and not be out of the loop” (2005: 63). Much of the Israeli backpacking experience consists of emulating the practices of others. Israeli backpackers tend to follow the same travel routes, hike the same trails, eat in the same restaurants, and sleep in the same hostels. These patterns have become so widespread that they have spawned an entire backpacker infrastructure that caters exclusively to Israelis (2005: 64). Haviv suggests that these
practices of cohesion contribute to a sense of collective Israeli identity. As one backpacker asserted, “Only Israelis feel this kind of community” (2005: 66).

Haviv suggests that this sense of “community” and “collectivity” is still open to individualism and self-expression. This is especially apparent within narratives of drug use. Some drug experiences may be described as a moment of collective unity, while others may be claimed as an intensely personal, individual experience. For example, one male backpacker explained: “Of course the drugs were a part of [it]…they make you see everything in a totally different way…And those parties! Everyone holding hands together, dancing in the middle of nature—it’s an unbelievable experience…You feel together with other people around you” (2005: 73). While this narrative suggests a collective experience, Haviv points out that other backpackers may feel more individualistic. She quotes a female backpacker who explains: “Everyone is around you but you kind of sink back into yourself, close your eyes and just dance” (2005: 75). Individualism is further indicated through the recurring trope of self-discovery. As one backpacker explained: “Drugs make you feel you’ve discovered something about yourself” (2005: 74).

This balance between collectivity and individualism is seen once again in the popular Jewish religious services that are offered in Israeli backpacking enclaves. Haviv suggests that these religious services are highly politicized within Israeli, and are often seen as “indicative of membership in a conservative religious community” (2005: 70). When the services are offered in East Asia, however, they become a grounds for reuniting, socializing, eating Israeli foods, and most significantly, for constructing “a feeling of
community” (2005: 70). This community allows for variation in the beliefs and motives of its participants. While one Israeli may be devoted to Orthodox Judaism, another may be interested in exploring an individualized spirituality, while another may see the Shabbath services as a way to experience togetherness with other Israelis (2005: 68). These services make space for everyone, regardless of their motives, allowing for the backpackers to experience their shared Jewish heritage in individual ways.

While the backpackers view their trip as an escape from politics and social pressures, Haviv suggests that the backpackers are always enmeshed in a web of political relations. These political relationships may be evidenced by negotiations with the state, which occur most often when drug-consuming backpackers pay bribes to local police (2005: 76). It can also be seen in the negotiations with local vendors. Haviv suggests these interactions highlight the backpackers “positionality as tourists from a relatively rich country spending money in a much poorer country” (2005: 76). Even “spiritual destinations” such as India and Thailand “really function as little more than exotic backdrops to high-tech raving, with the added advantages of cheap drugs and cheap living” (2005: 76). Although these dynamics are ever-present throughout the backpackers’ trips, Haviv suggests that they surface very rarely. Backpackers may express “feelings of guilt at obvious disparities in income” or make “sporadic gifts of charity” while traveling (2005: 76). Far more common, however, are aggressive bargaining practices and a desire to find the best deal (2005: 77).
Haviv suggests that politics are also present through the Israeli’s consumption of the Far East. She suggests that the backpackers embrace an Orientalist view of these destinations, viewing them as inherently spiritual and authentic (2005: 78-80). They “Other” the East by consuming its “cultural products,” such as “courses in kung fu, statues of Krishna, and visits to Lhasa” (2005: 79). Because these orientalist associations rely on a binary between the exotic East and the ordinary West, the backpackers, as consumers, are aligning themselves with Western culture (2005: 78). Haviv suggests these practices resonate with hegemonic global representations, which may frame Israel as a “Judeo-Christian ‘West’ defending itself against a predatory, savage, monolithic ‘Moslem civilization’” (2005: 79). The politics of Orientalist consumption, therefore, transcend its local manifestations in the Far East, and may hold significant meanings for Israelis who return home.

Discussion

Haviv’s primary theoretical contributions are not to tourism studies at large, but rather to studies of national identity, transnationalism, and consumption. As Haviv explains in the introduction, her work shifts the academic gaze from identity at the national level to national identities as they are configured and experienced by individuals on-the-ground (2005: 47). Because Haviv is interested in the existential experience of identity, I suggest her study can be a useful starting place for a critical phenomenological exploration of the touristic selfscape. First, Haviv pays attention to practice. Her ethnography
examines the ways that Israeli bodies are moved, utilized, and oriented in space, allowing the reader to visualize the various ways the long trip abroad is embodied. Second, Haviv relies on narrative as an important window into perception and meaning. She includes a number of quotations that reveal the backpackers’ perceptions, motives, and feelings. This attention to embodied practice works to probe the self in its objectified form, as either object mobilized in space or as subject expressed and performed through narrative.

While these ethnographic engagements may take a step towards the touristic self-scape, the utility of Haviv’s analysis is nonetheless compromised by an inadequate analysis of the “intraself terrain.” Haviv argues throughout the text that Israeli identity can be at once collective and individual; for her, this is the key that separates national identity built from the bottom up from the national identity that trickles down from the older generation and the state. However, Haviv never critically interrogates collectivity nor individualism as phenomenological, experiential states. Because she doesn’t explore what individuality may look or feel like, it is difficult to discern whether it is in fact any different from the model of collectivity proposed by the older generation and the state. Indeed, in the conclusion to this section I will suggest that the binary between collectivity and individualism may represent an analytical fallacy. It may be more productive to question how the emphasis on the individual is derived from collective, moral values, than to question how it exists in opposition to the Israeli whole. This perspective may point towards a new trend in neoliberal governmentality, in which knowing one self becomes synonymous with consumption.
I would like to begin my analysis where Haviv herself begins: with the movement of Israeli backpacking bodies. It appears that the movement beyond Israeli borders is the first step in creating a sense of collectivity. First, this is because the backpacking experience has become so widespread, that it is now an expected “rite of passage” for Israeli youths (2005: 51). To leave Israel and to travel to the Far East is to follow in the footsteps of others; it is to both symbolically and physically align oneself with the hegemonic youth culture within Israel. As Haviv suggests, moving one’s body abroad is the first of many steps that signal one’s conformity to the dominant youth culture in Israel (2005: 63).

Second, by leaving Israeli borders, the backpackers may be entering a realm of liminality that allows for new forms of social relationality. According to Victor Turner’s structural analysis of the rites of passage, significant life transitions occur within the liminal realm, defined as “a time and place of withdrawal from normal modes of social action” (Turner 1969: 167). The liminal is a space where the usual structures of tradition, law, or custom begin to break down and fade away, allowing people to “elude or slip through [the] networks of classifications” that typically organize social life (1969: 95). This breakdown of social structures, status, and cultural roles allows of the creation of communitas, a “communion of equal individuals” (1969: 96). As Turner explains, communitas is often filled with “affects” and “pleasure,” at times taking on a “magical,” mystical, or spiritual quality (1969: 139). While Turner ultimately suggests that liminality and communitas are always only temporary states of existence, he nonetheless proposes that
the “dialectical process” between structure and communitas is a necessity for human life (1969: 203).

Haviv’s descriptions of the Israeli experience certainly seem to fit Turner’s structural model of the rites of passage. As Haviv argues throughout the text, the Israelis feel they are outside of politics, outside of societal regulations, and outside of the usual religious vs secular divisions that separate the Israeli nation. The sudden absence of these structures allows the backpackers to forge new modes of relating to one another that may have been complicated or contentious back home. As one backpacker explained, “Here, suddenly every Israeli is the same to everyone” (2005: 69). This quote points to the lack of social differentiation, as well as the apparent spontaneity with which this structural breakdown seems to have occurred.

If Turner’s structural analysis is accepted at face-value, then communitas may be a natural consequence of entering the liminal realm. It appears that one must simply move their body, pass the threshold of the everyday, and enter into a space of liminality where social structures will naturally and spontaneously fade away. However, Haviv’s own ethnography challenges this idyllic portrayal. As she argues throughout the text, the supposedly liminal spaces of Indian or Thai beaches are filled with their own politics and hierarchies. The Israeli communitas is not liberated from social structures, but is thoroughly enmeshed in webs of capitalism, consumption, and the corruption of local officials. Similarly, Eade and Sallnow in their study of pilgrimage have found that communitas rarely exists without contestation (Eade and Sallnow 1991). Indeed, this idea is visible
within Haviv’s own work, when the Israelis grapple with the various subcultures within their own backpacking communities. As Haviv suggests, this coming-to-terms is often laden with judgements and “disparaging” name-calling and stereotyping (2005: 61).

While these counter-arguments suggest that Turner’s universal structural theory may be overly simplistic, that does not mean that liminality and communitas are not helpful concepts to think through. On the contrary, when liminality is reconfigured not as a pre-existing space or time, but as a space produced through practice, it becomes possible to argue that the liminal may be synonymous with resistance. Specifically, I suggest that the liminality of the “long trip abroad” works as a means of resisting surveillance, and consequently, a means of resisting the techniques of discipline that have been enforced upon young, Israeli bodies within the home, the school, and the army. I will argue that this resistance against the “political scape” temporarily “frees” young Israeli bodies, allowing for new forms of practice that can radically reconfigure modes of relating to other Israeli youths.

The backpackers’ primary motive for traveling abroad is most often represented as a form of “escape” from obligations, duties, and bodily control. Consider the following quotation from a backpacker who recently completed their mandatory military service:

After three years of the army…you want to do something different after a long period when they tell you all the time what to do, how to behave, what to wear and how to cut your hair; you feel like tearing away…and that’s why you decide: to fly to the Far East! And we’re talking here about a vast freedom, no more waking up at 6:00 in the morning, no more stressing out from being late to the base, and no more listening to the annoying officers… [emphasis added] (2005: 58)
The backpacker’s primary issue with their years in the army is the loss of bodily autonomy. They cite the control of their behavior, their dress, and their hygiene practices as a stifling form of discipline that needs to be escaped. Later in the quotation, the Far East is constructed as a space of “vast freedom” where typical techniques of discipline, such as time-tables, control of space, and institutional hierarchy no longer apply. It is doubtful that the Far East is imagined as this “free space” for everyone; this escape is unique to the Israeli backpackers, for it is a space where their ordinary forms of surveillance no longer apply.

The need to physically remove oneself from Israel in order to escape these techniques of discipline suggests that modes of surveillance are not unique to the military. Indeed, another backpackers reveals that she traveled to China in “large part” because of her religious parents (2005: 60). Not surprisingly, her immediate actions upon arriving in China were acts of resistance against her family’s forms of disciplining her body. As she explains: “I came here and cut all my hair off, bought my first pair of jeans, ate shrimp, everything, all in the first week. I even had a little affair” (2005: 60). Both for this backpacker, and the backpacker who recently left the military, travel is a means of escaping the surveilling gaze of institutions and elders. Once surveillance is no longer a threat, they can engage in bodily practices that explicitly resist the techniques of discipline that have been imposed upon them by their families or by state institutions. The Far East can therefore be imaged as liminal so far is it represents an avenue for rejecting the traditional “structuring structures” that have shaped the body’s postures and practices.
Ironically, these forms of resistance may substitute one set of structures for another. It is not insignificant that the backpackers assert their autonomy through shared and collective practices. These practices appear to revolve first and foremost around specific modes of consumption. The backpackers consume drugs, alcohol, and music to open their minds and to explore “unknown” aspects of the self (2005: 74-75). They consume U.S. hippie-style clothing to challenge ideals of militarism and monogamous sexuality (2005: 60-61). Last, they consume East Asian spirituality, commodified into expensive retreats and classes (2005: 79-81). These subtle yet coercive strategies of rebellion, freedom, and self-discovery may indicate forms of governmentality that extend beyond the reach of authority figures and state institutions.

Haviv continually suggests that the Israeli backpackers are appropriating “Western” values of travel, leisure, and consumption (2005: 71, 72, 78, 81). I reject this vague Western vs Eastern dichotomy, which quickly falls apart when actual countries in the global “West” and “East” are considered. I propose, instead, that the backpackers’ practices indicate a new form of governmentality governed not by the Israeli state, but by neoliberal discourses. The backpackers’ practices can be linked with neoliberal discourses in two ways. First, I suggest that the obsession with the “self”—with exploring oneself, finding oneself, transforming oneself—may be reflective of the neoliberal prioritization of individuals over communities. Second, neoliberal discourses may be at work because the market provides the pathway for the backpackers’ work upon the self. This apparent reliance on the market indicates a belief in the market’s trustworthiness. Neoliberal dis-
courses posit the market as bearing the solutions to social problems—it doesn’t require any hands-on management or regulation for the market simply “knows the way.” Similarly, the backpackers are forging their self-identities through patterned modes of consumption. Neoliberal discourses converge with cultural depictions of freedom and experimentation (ie: the “hippie” lifestyle, trance music, and drug use) to produce specific mechanisms of self-governance. Perhaps ironically, this distinctively neoliberal-flavored governmentality is experienced as its exact opposite: a realm of liminality, autonomy, and freedom.

While neoliberal governmentality may be coercive and persuasive, that does not imply that it is an inherently negative phenomenon. To the contrary, Haviv’s ethnography suggests that these shared forms of self-governance facilitate deeply meaningful, affective bonds between the Israeli backpackers. At this point I wish to move from how the Israeli backpacker body is produced, to the question of what it produces—that is, how does embodied practice forge a sense of collectivity? I suggest that the continual physical closeness of the Israeli backpackers has important consequences for the selfscape. Haviv argues that Israeli bodies tend to share the same social space. Israelis are drawn to the enclaves that boast “Hebrew signs, Hebrew menus…[and] special organized trips for Israelis” (2005: 64). Because Israeli backpackers tend to be prevalent within these social spaces, they come to dominate the body’s perceptual field. If the selfscape is understood to be both immanent and interdependent, then it can be expected that continued exposure to Israeli others will have an impact on one’s sense of self. That is, one’s sense of being
Israeli may grow stronger when they continually view themselves enmeshed within a community of other Israelis. To put this in Hollan’s terms, the Israeli backpackers form a significant portion of the daily selfscape, and thus are likely to be “mapped” into the self system, thereby creating a sense of Israeli others within the sense of self.

While physical closeness is certainly an important factor in the formation of national identity within the sense of self, a close look at the positioning and posturing of the body may reveal the specific mechanisms whereby a sensation of Israeli identity becomes objectified and incorporated into the selfscape. I noted that Haviv’s informants tend to emphasize their perceptions of closeness, togetherness, and unity in those moments that the backpackers engage in patterned bodily symmetry. This is first evident in Haviv’s exploration of the full-moon parties, where bodies altered by drugs are brought together and set in motion by the continual beats of psychedelic trance music. While there is certainly a sense of unity in the shared experience of bodily movement, the most significant moment of togetherness seems to occur when the backpackers transcend bodily boundaries and engage in direct physical contact. As Haviv’s informant explains: “Everyone holding hands together, dancing in the middle of nature—it’s an unbelievable experience. You feel together with the people around you” (2005: 73). This sense of togetherness is forged through the conformity of the bodily motions, as well as the holding of hands. Csordas has argued in his analysis of Charismatic Christians that touch can transcend “an interpersonal barrier, a barrier culturally constructed on the premise of the person as a discrete, independent entity” (1994a: 55). Bodily touch works in this case to diminish the sepa-
rateness between the backpackers, leading to a sense of collectivity that is experienced directly through the body.

Bodily symmetry seems to be important once again during the Jewish religious services attended by both secular and religious backpackers. Three of the four quotations that Haviv includes in this section mention the music and songs as a highlight of the services. As one backpacker stated: “And you do feel good when you sing…because here we are, and we’re all together, singing” (2005: 67). For this backpacker, the act of singing is intimately linked with the act of participation in a shared activity with other Israelis. I would like to suggest that similar to touch, the act of singing may be a process that works to transcend the perception of a bounded, individualized self-entity. Csordas argues “speech is an act or phonetic gesture in which one takes up an existential position in the world” (1990: 25). Singing, which is also a phonetic gesture, can be regarded as one’s embodied extension of the self into the perceptual field of the social world. When one’s song is joined by a myriad of other voices, one’s extension of self becomes less distinct as it blends with other human-powered sounds. I suggest that such an act may have immanent consequences for the sense of self. As one’s phonetic gesture transcends its embodied enactment to blend with other voices, the sense of self may similarly transcend its individual embodiment and become blurred with other selves. Such an embodied blurring of the self would explain why the Israelis regard the religious services as a significant site of unity.
This exploration of Israeli bodies, how they are mobilized, oriented, and patterned in space, suggest that abstract feelings of collectivity are grounded in the embodied experiences of physical contact and closeness. These findings suggest that a paradigm of embodiment can quite productively contribute to explorations of self-other relationships within the selvescape. It is more difficult, however, to apply a phenomenological perspective to Haviv’s second point: that this sense of collectivity creates space for individuality. Haviv’s evidence of individuality is drawn from vague claims of “self-discovery,” divorced from any description of existential experience or phenomenological meaning.

Take the following quotation, which for Haviv represents the relationship between individuality and drug culture: “Drugs make you feel like you’ve discovered something about yourself” (2005: 74). While this quotation certainly suggests self-awareness, and an experience that may be unique to the drug-altered self, that does not imply that it is individualistic. Indeed, in this same paragraph Haviv quotes another drug user who links her consumption of drugs to the formation of social relationships: “Smoking [marijuana] makes you get into much deeper conversations with people” (2005: 74). Thus while drug use may lead to an increased self-awareness, that does not imply that this experience of self is divorced from other selves, and thus distinct from collectivity.

Consider another quotation that Haviv uses to argue that collectivity and individuality are balanced among the Israeli backpacking community: “I didn’t know this was going to happen to me, that I would end up doing all these crazy things. It just happened, but so naturally, when I met all the other Israelis here. It was like my real self coming out,
which I never even knew was there” (2005: 71). This quotation is followed by a single line of analysis, in which Haviv suggests that the experience of “bonding” with other Israeli backpackers is “precisely the trigger” needed for the backpacker’s “real self” to emerge (2005: 72). Haviv reads the “bonding” between Israelis as a sign of collectivity and the claims of a “real self” as a sign of individualism. However, Haviv never questions the contents of this “real self” nor explains the mechanisms by which this discovery is made. It is therefore impossible to know whether this “real self” is highly individualistic and distinct from Israeli others.

Part of the issue with Haviv’s arguments for an individualized collectivity may rest in the conceptual models that she utilizes in the analysis. She evokes the categories of “collectivity” and “individualism” without ever explicitly stating the relationship between these categories and one’s experience of the self. It can be interpreted from her analysis, however, that collectivity is being conceived in terms of social unity or wholeness that does not leave space for individual differentiation. This conceptualization of collectivity becomes clear when Haviv suggests that the individuality within the backpackers’ collectivity is revolutionary for Israeli society, signifying a large shift from the collectivity of the past (2005: 83). Her conceptualization of individuality, on the other hand, appears to derive from one’s sense of being a distinct self. This is clear when Haviv diagnoses the discussion of “self-discovery” as a symptom of an emergent individualism divorced from Israeli others (2005: 74).
This use of categories suggests that Haviv is embracing analytical cultural models in place of a phenomenological understanding of the self and its self-other relations. As Hollan argues in “Cross-cultural Differences in the Self,” cultural models of the self do not always neatly align with the subjective self (Hollan 1992). For example, although the United States is typically regarded as highly individualistic, American citizens nonetheless experience a great deal of interdependence in their experience of the self (1992: 290). Experiences of selfhood are equally complex among Toraja in Sulawesi, Indonesia. Although Toraja are “sociocentric” and tend to view the self in terms of the larger community, they nonetheless express autonomy through their words and behaviors (1992: 292, 293). These findings suggest that a collective society will still recognize the boundaries between individuals, while an individualized society will recognize that the individual is intimately connected with other selves. Therefore, the categories of “collectivity” and “individualism” help to characterize a general societal tendency to view the self autonomously or interwoven in relations with others, but these categories are not necessarily reflective of the phenomenological experiences of the selfscape.

In fact, when the apparent interest in the self is considered in terms of embodied practice, it becomes apparent that the obsession with self-discovery is shared and collective. Wanting to know oneself, then, does not necessarily mean prioritizing the individual over the community—on the contrary, it can represent a desire to mimic the actions of others, to insert oneself inside of a community by conforming to its hegemonic practices. The willfulness of these actions, however, is still open to debate. Do the Israeli backpack-
ers seek to know themselves because they are subject to governance by neoliberal discourses? In this case, does structure triumph over agency? Or, do they engage in these practices because they wish to signal their allegiance to the norms of other Israeli youths? That is, are the backpackers consciously and freely deciding to participate in patterns of consumption and experimentation? I cannot offer a confident answer to these questions, which is surely a limitation of applying analysis to someone else’s ethnographic writing. However, I can suggest that the answers to these questions is likely to be more complex than a simple yes and no. Hollan’s notion of the selfscape explains that shared “extraself terrains” will encounter unique variables within the “intraself terrain.” This suggests that collective patterns, such as an interest in self-discovery, can not be given a one-size-fits-all explanation; diversity and complexity are far more likely than any universal framework.

This critique of Haviv’s analysis points to the broader significance of the “intraself terrain” for tourism researchers and anthropology at large. While attention to the “extraself terrain” may produce interesting theoretical explanations for social behavior, this one-sided perspective is bound to sacrifice a level of complexity in favor of a neat and orderly analysis. For example, I have theorized that embodied practices may impact the selfscape, by suggesting that physical proximity, bodily symmetry, and self-other contact through touch and song can forge a sense of unity and collectivity. While I believe this analysis is compelling, and can help illuminate the mechanisms that produce affective responses, I recognize that this explanation is inherently partial. This theorization
does not account for the specificity of individual memories, experiences, and interpretations, and thus risks glossing over tensions and ruptures that may complicate this idyllic portrayal.

The next case study I wish to analyze moves much closer to the intraself terrain, by exploring embodied practices, memory, narrative, and subjective experiences of internal change. While Nancy Frey’s “Pilgrim Stories: On and Off the Road to Santiago,” is therefore more phenomenological than the analysis offered by Haviv, it nevertheless focuses more on phenomenological descriptions than on phenomenological theory (1988). Consequently, I will seek to elucidate how Frey’s interpretations support, and are supported by, Hollan’s conceptualization of the selfscape.
Overview

Nancy Frey’s “Pilgrim Stories: On and Off the Road to Santiago” analyzes the participants who walk and cycle the Camino de Compostela pilgrimage route to Santiago, Spain (1998). In a given year the pilgrimage route attracts up to 30,000 pilgrims who choose to travel the “authentic” way, either by foot or bicycle (1998: 29). The pilgrims come from all over the world, but nonetheless tend to be European, white, middle-class, urban dwellers with high levels of education (1998: 7). While some of the pilgrims are motivated by Catholic devotion, far more common is an open-ended journey in the name of spirituality, self-discovery, or the healing of existential wounds (1998: 33). The Camino is a site of both exertion and renewal—the pilgrims often walk away from the experience claiming a profound transformation of the self.

Frey conducted her research intermittently between 1993 and 1996 by walking the pilgrimage, examining letters and journals sent to her by former pilgrims, and working in the refuges situated along the Camino and in the pilgrimage center in Santiago, Spain. Her primary interest is the subjective dimensions of the pilgrimage—how is the pilgrimage experienced, given meaning, and made to endure once the pilgrim returns home? She argues that by walking many hours for several days, weeks, or months, the pilgrims “learn new rhythms” that impact their perceptions, their relationships with God and nature, and their sense of self. While the pilgrims undergo shared experiences of spiritual
renewal and self-discovery, Frey ultimately suggests that the meanings of these experiences depends on each individual person’s “life-world” (1998: 78).

Frey argues that pilgrim-hood is primarily acquired through an established hierarchy of mobilities. Travelers who journey the Camino by bus or by car are pegged as mere “tourists” while travelers who opt to complete the journey at “human speed” are considered to be proper “pilgrims” (1998: 18). These social divisions derive from the “expressive and communicative” nature of mobilities. (1998: 27). Walking indicates one’s values, such as: “an appreciation of nature and physical effort, a rejection of materialism, an interest or a nostalgia for the past (especially the medieval), a search for inner meaning, an attraction to meaningful human relationships, and solitude” (1998: 27). In the Camino context, the authenticity of a pilgrim is determined more by adherence to historical values than religious ones. The “proper pilgrim” is a traveler who places herself in the past through her rejection of motorized technologies and her desire for closeness to nature (1998: 51). While contemporary pilgrims categorize themselves in this way, Frey points out that these ideas about the “proper pilgrim” are not always historically accurate. For example, contemporary pilgrims stress the importance of the completing the entire Camino to complete a proper pilgrimage. However, pilgrims in the past would simply start from whichever point of the Camino was most accessible and most convenient (1998: 53).

A sense of being a pilgrim is further established through the use of symbols and social interactions. The pilgrim is often pressured to wear a scallop shell, which evokes
ideas of salvation and rebirth according to Catholic and Greek mythologies (1998: 56).
The backpack that the pilgrims wear is regarded as a metaphor for the weight’s of one’s existential burdens. Pilgrims try to make these backpacks as light as possible, reflecting the spiritual goals of their journeys (1998: 62). These symbols help transform the travelers into pilgrims, both for themselves and others. Villagers will often warmly welcome pilgrims into their homes, offer beverages and food, and thank them for the “sacrifice” of their journey (1998: 63). Tourists may approach pilgrims as an object of fascination, either by purchasing the scallop shells as souvenirs, or by taking pictures of pilgrims en route to Santiago (1998: 23). Frey suggests that this special treatment may ultimately produce a sense of entitlement. Many pilgrims feel that they deserve recognition upon arrival in Santiago, and are disappointed to be treated as “one of many” (1998: 163). Frey writes that one pilgrim, dismayed by the long line of tourists waiting to hug the statue of San Gabriel, “impulsively…went to the front of the line, feeling that she deserved to be there” (1998: 158). These anecdotes indicate that the pilgrim-identity can have tangible effects on social interactions, by setting the pilgrims apart from non-human-powered others.

In “Learning New Rhythms” Frey explores the interrelationship between subjective experience and the Camino’s varied terrain. She argues that the rhythm of “human speed,” which requires that pilgrims move deliberately and slowly, allows the pilgrims to view the landscapes, and consequently themselves, in new and profound ways (1998: 74). Pilgrims may experience an “out of body” sensation, where their bodies blend and blur
with the landscapes that surround them. As one pilgrim commented: “I was part of the earth…I couldn’t distinguish between what was me and what was the nature around me. I was one with all parts of creation, no knowing in moments if I was God or only part of God. Was I the tree or the tree me?” (1998: 79). Frey suggests that for the religiously minded, these perceptions are often interpreted as the recognition of the “hand of God” in all creation (1998: 79). For other pilgrims, these experiences may be viewed as “mystical,” regarded as the “here and now” or “well-being with nature” (1998: 81).

Pilgrims also report feeling “out of time” as their usual routines, obligations, and constraints begin to break down and fade away (1998: 72). Sometimes this transformation of time is experienced as the “blending” and “folding” of time (1998: 82). Frey writes that some pilgrims strongly perceive the past within the present, in the form of lost loved ones or pilgrims who once walked the Way. The past can also surface in the form of “long-forgotten memories…of family members and friends, childhood places, [or] secrets of painful circumstances” (1998: 82). The recalling of these memories can transport the pilgrims to “internal places not before visited” (1998: 83). Sometimes these journeys are accompanied by the inexplicable flow of tears, which may be regarded as a mysterious, yet cathartic experience.

Frey writes that the physical demands of the journey often prompt the pilgrims to feel and view their body in distinct ways (1998: 112). The most common bodily experience along the Camino is that of physical suffering. Frey remarks: “Nearly all pilgrims contend with pain and fatigue but they interpret these aspects of the journey
differently” (1998: 109). Physical suffering may be interpreted as a link to the past, as a
sacrifice for God, or as a symbol of the body’s resiliency. Other times physical suffering
is viewed as the reflection of one’s psychological and spiritual state. Frey writes, “It is
commonly believed among pilgrims that the body somaticizes its psychic problems,
compelling the pilgrim to slow down and possibly attend to conditions of both mind and
body” (1998: 113). Frey suggests that these experiences of pain, suffering, and triumph
ultimately yield positive psychological effects: “Overcoming pain when it seems impos-
sible to continue leads to a great feeling of accomplishment and satisfaction, a better
knowledge of and respect for one’s body, and a way of feeling alive” (1998: 111).

Pain also plays an important role in the formation of solidarity among the pil-
grims. Pilgrims often discuss their aches and pains and offer one another cures and reme-
dies. These conversations often result in physical contact, as pilgrims give and receive
massages, treat blisters, and bathe one another’s feet. Frey writes that the latter of these
practices is quite symbolic of Christian values of “humility” and “equality” (1998: 111).
It is also indicative of the Camino’s positionality “out of normal time and place” for feet,
which are “normally impure and low”, are “elevated” to a level of high visibility within

Frey suggests that the liminality of the Camino has further social effects. Interac-
tions along the Camino are felt to be more simple, more genuine, and a contrast to the
community” free of the “politics and hypocrisy many claim to find in organized religious
practice” (1998: 122). Frey suggests that friendships are easily forged “across cultural,
national, class, and age lines” (1998: 93). The intimacy and authenticity that is felt within
these social bonds can impact how the pilgrims view themselves. Frey writes: “Walking
with a group of generally like-minded individuals, heading towards the same goal, and
sharing similar pains, joys, and trials provide… new visions of the self as socially adept
and likable” (1998: 101). However, Frey also writes that the feelings of “solidarity” are

In Frey’s final ethnographic chapter, “Conclusions,” she describes the experiences
of the pilgrims who have returned home. She asks: “How may one bring together two dis-
tinct realities, life on and off the road?” (1998: 224). Frey writes that some pilgrims use
the confidence provided by the Camino to make "radical decisions”— “to quit a job, to
change careers, to move, or to alter a relationship” (1998: 221). Some live out in the
Camino in smaller ways, “such as learning not to waste water or trying to live more in the
here and now” (1998: 225). Other pilgrims, however, struggle to integrate the lessons of
the Camino into their daily lives. They may experience depression after falling back on
old habits, or may be disappointed by the apparent transiency of their Camino-forged
friendships (1998: 189). Frey suggests that these pilgrims at least harbor the memory of
“having lived another reality, [having] known themselves and society in another way, and
[having] experienced other rhythms” (1998: 189). In this way, the pilgrimage “appears to
be a continuous process, at least on the level of memory, if not of action” (1998: 224).
Frey also utilizes the concluding chapter to revisit some of the major claims and contributions of her work. First, her book proves that movement has meaning. This is evident through the pilgrim’s decisions to walk and cycle for these mobilities express, implicitly or explicitly, a rejection and critique of modern society (1998: 219). It is also evident in the mysterious “contacts” and “transformations” that pilgrims may gain through “the body and its movement through time and space” (1998: 219). Frey suggests that while these movements are entrenched in meanings, they should not be reduced to a single interpretation. For example, she explains that that the desert-like stretch of the Camino, “affects each person uniquely—as an experience forgotten to modern people, silence, frustration…a site of intense physical pleasure, freedom, [or] an encounter with God” (1998: 220). In this way, the meanings of mobility are ultimately grounded in the uniqueness of each person’s interpretive framework (1998: 220).

Frey also offers advice for scholars working in pilgrimage and tourism. She echoes recent scholars who have rejected the division of these two fields of study: “The study of the Camino’s contemporary reanimation illustrates that there is no simple way to mark the difference between these two complex phenomena” (1998: 228). Consequently, she suggests that tourism and pilgrimage theorists would be better served by analyzing the “meanings of movement” and “participants’ categories—how they are used, who is excluded and included, and why” (1998: 228). As her study demonstrates, the “pilgrim” is not a simple, faith-based category. Rather it is a category that derives from a specific orientation to modern society, namely a desire for “an inner way or alternative” to “over-
whelming social and personal problems” or the “alienation of daily life” (1998: 228).

While these meanings are relevant to the pilgrims to Santiago, they do not necessarily translate to pilgrimage in other contexts. This insight suggests that scholars of tourism and pilgrimage should focus on the usage of categories in a specific time and place rather than assuming universal meanings.

**Discussion**

Nancy Frey’s “Pilgrim Stories: On and Off the Road to Santiago” explores many of the concerns that are relevant to phenomenology. She is primarily focused on the self and subjectivity, as evidenced through her continual attention to the pilgrims’ inner states and feelings of self-transformation. She pays close attention to the body, and how the body interacts with the natural environment to influence consciousness and the sense of self. Although these concerns are clearly quite similar to the concerns of phenomenology, Frey’s work is notably divorced from any explicit use of psychological or phenomenological theory. Consider, for example, that Frey only places her work within the literatures of tourism and pilgrimage (1998: 228). She does not frame her work as utilizing, or contributing to, phenomenology, psychology, embodiment, or studies on the self. Despite these omissions, I feel that Frey’s work is actually quite relevant for scholars engaged in these fields of study. When phenomenological theory is applied to Frey’s analysis, it becomes clear that her case study demonstrates the importance of embodiment as well as
the selfscape’s ability to capture the many “contingent” and “dynamic” terrains of the self.

I wish to begin my critical phenomenological analysis where Frey herself begins—with the construction of the pilgrim. It is apparent that the “pilgrim” is a subject-identity that is constituted through embodied practice. The traveler becomes a pilgrim when the body is mobilized into a slow and intentional “human-speed” and is set along the Camino’s pathway. One is able to assert their pilgrim authenticity in the form of bodily decoration through the use of scallop shells, a light and weathered backpack, or an intricately carved walking stick (1998: 56-60). These insights suggest that the pilgrim is an embodied subject. Frey suggests that the body is “expressive” and “communicative” but I suggest that embodiment implies an ability to be productive (1998: 27). Embodiment plays an important role in producing the pilgrim, both in the pilgrim’s own subjectivity and in the subjectivity of others. Consider the following example: “When I asked an Englishman when he first felt like a pilgrim, he replied that as he stepped off the boat…to begin his journey, a man on the dock, recognizing him as a pilgrim for his backpack, crossed himself” [emphasis added] (1998: 61). In this encounter the constitution of the pilgrim identity is produced through varying embodies practices. First, the man becomes a pilgrim to society through the transformation of his body; namely by carrying a large and notable pack. Second, the onlooker communicates his recognition of this transformation through a symbolic gesture, making the sign of the cross in reference to something that is holy or sacred. This symbolic gesture constitutes the sense of being a pilgrim with-
in the traveler’s own subjectivity, ultimately causing the interaction to become embodied as a significant memory of the pilgrimage.

The anecdote I have just discussed is important because it reveals the productive power of embodied practice, as well as the relationship between embodiment and social interactions. Hollan explains that the selfscape incorporates both “embodied emotion and memory” and the “varieties and contingencies of the social, cultural, and political scapes within which the body and the self-system are deeply embedded” (2014: 182). Embodiment, as a factor of the selfscape, is relational and interdependent, always co-constituted through one’s interactions with the social world. Of course, these interactions can be probed even further to consider how discourses may work to establish particular forms of perception, consciousness, and practice. I suggest the pilgrim is a subject produced by socially structured practices, drawn from the preexisting “archives of knowledge” that dictate what a pilgrim is supposed to be and do (Said [1978] 1979). Consider Frey’s following statement:

The authentic pilgrim is implicitly understood to be the one who most closely represents the iconographic image of the medieval pilgrim who walked to Santiago with staff, cloak, [and] scallop shells…The set of values attributed to the image include self-sufficiency, humility…and respect for nature, oneself, and others. One can be an authentic pilgrim in the present by emulating the image through behavior, mode of travel, and attitude (1998: 125).

This emulation that Frey discusses is the subject’s response to a hegemonic discourse of pilgrimage, which links the subject-category of the pilgrim with a specific set of images, associations, and representations. As the pilgrim subject is first and foremost known
through the appearance and practices of the body, this is the space where pilgrims work to express their subject-identities. Consider one male pilgrim who decided to grow out his beard simply because it felt like “the pilgrim thing to do” (1998: 51). Although this bodily practice may feel natural and spontaneous to the pilgrim, it is nonetheless mediated by representations that posit a historically specific image of the simple and unshaven (masculine) pilgrim subject.

Furthermore, it could be argued that these pilgrimage discourses produce forms of governmentality that are exercised upon the pilgrim body. This governmentality exists at the institutional level, exercised by the Catholic Church in its attempts to control the practices of the pilgrimage. For example, travelers can only receive an official certificate of completion if they travel the pilgrimage by foot or by bicycle and if they claim that the journey was made “in the spirit of faith” (1998: 29, 127). However, governmentality is also performed throughout the pilgrimage route and refuges by pilgrims who embrace a particular vision of the “proper pilgrim.” For example, one pilgrim asserted: “A proper pilgrim…should eat in simple and unpretentious bars or restaurants…No motorized transport; one should carry one’s own rucksack the whole way” (1998: 51). These ideas have real effects on the pilgrims’ embodied practices and their evaluations of others. Of course, this structuring form of power is not physically imposed upon the body—travelers are free to use cars and indulge in luxurious meals if they so desire. Nevertheless, many of the pilgrims reject these alternative forms of practice, choosing instead to govern
oneself according to established norms and values. As the bearded pilgrim stated, it felt like the “pilgrim thing to do” (1998: 51).

In addition to discourses, the natural environment can be regarded as another “exterior” structure that profoundly shapes the pilgrims' subjectivities. Frey explains that the experience of walking through natural landscapes introduces the pilgrims to new ways of being embodied, which in turn impacts the ways the pilgrims engage with their selves. Consider one pilgrim’s experience, captured in the following quotation:

After several hours, I begin to feel something new, something never before experienced. I strongly sense, with my whole self, that I am moving from one place to another...I am not passing through space, as one does in a car or airplane...I am not in an undifferentiated space—what one feels in many modern places that, really, are non-places...It's as if I'm plowing through infinitely different perceptions, for with every step I am in a different place, and each place has its own unique character (1998: 74-75).

It is apparent from this account that the pilgrim is conscious of a shifting relationality between the self and the external world with which it engages. Space is no longer an undifferentiated backdrop for the one’s own activity, but is transformed into many unique, perceptible places that offer their own mode of relationality. Frey suggests that this newfound recognition of place shifts the pilgrims whole mode of “being” in the world: “He feels each step, is aware of himself in the new places and how he affects and is affected by those steps” (1998: 75). This dialectic between the body and the natural environment helps to constitute a new vision of the selfscape, for the selfscape is no longer divorced from natural environments, but is significantly grounded within each interaction with the natural world.
This newfound relationality with the natural environment has a more explicit impact on the selfscape in those moments that the pilgrims claim to be “out of body.” Pilgrims describe these experiences as moments of transcendence, in which they are liberated from the constraints of their bodies and allowed to experience a blurring and expansion of the self. This sensation is frequently described as unity or “oneness” with God, nature, or all of creation. Frey quotes a pilgrim who captures the essence of this phenomenon: “I was part of the earth…I couldn’t distinguish between what was me and what was the nature around me. I was one with all part of creation, not knowing in moments if I was God or only part of God. Was I the tree or the tree me?” (1998: 79). It is clear in this quotation that the pilgrim is experiencing a marked shift in the boundaries between the body and the natural and supernatural worlds. The ambiguity of where the body ends and where the landscape begins leads to a diminution of the sense of self: “Was I the tree or the tree me?”

While this inquiry may suggest a liberation from the selfscape, or a liberation from one’s “own past embodied experiences,” it is important to note that “intraself terrains” are never able to fully fade away (2014: 182). It is the very body that pilgrims claim to escape that has enabled their sensations of transcendence. It is through the body’s slow mobility and the sights and sensations that it affords that one is able to feel freed from their bodily constraints. Similarly, although pilgrims feel that they can no longer identify the boundaries between the self and the natural and supernatural worlds, this does not suggest that they inhabit a space of pure, undifferentiated perception. The
object distinctions never disappear completely, for the pilgrim still differentiates their perceptions through the use of proper names. A tree cannot constitute an unfiltered perception when it only becomes a tree through a subsequent process of reflection. The self system is therefore present in these moments when the self is felt to dissolve and blur with other entities. Hollan would suggest that this finding is consistent with the selfscape, for the fluidity of the selfscape does not imply that the self does not have its own unique distinctions (2014: 182).

Indeed, the “integrity” of the selfscape is rather important in Frey’s chapter “Landscapes of Discovery.” In this chapter Frey explains that the body’s perceptions, sensations, aches, and pains may appear to the pilgrims as the material manifestations of the self’s emotional well-being or spiritual state. Consequently, the pilgrim is able to monitor their progress towards their desired inner goals by paying close attention to the sensations and transformations of the body (1998: 112-113). Although the pilgrims are generally found to practice somatic modes of attention throughout their human-powered journeys, the ways they objectify their physical sensations and assess them for existential meanings is highly dependent on the individual’s intraself terrains. For example, a devout Catholic may objectify the pains of the suffering body into a symbol of one’s penitence and regard pain as a sign of the body’s successful cleansing of sin. Another pilgrim may interpret these same pains as an important lesson in humility, and see their suffering as a step towards becoming a more empathetic person. For others, the suffering may not take on a spiritual or moral meaning, but may be viewed as an effective way of pushing one’s
physical limits (1998: 109). Although the cultural and social scapes may be similar here—all the pilgrims seem to read their bodies as a sign of evaluating the self or the soul—these readings are ultimately divergent, according to the pilgrims’ interpretive frameworks accumulated through self-experience (1998: 182).

While these intraself terrains may be most clearly seen in “Landscapes of Discovery,” Frey shows that embodied memories and emotions strongly shape the meanings that are forged along the Way. Although many pilgrims may experience a newfound embodiment grounded within the natural landscapes of the Way, the interpretations of this relationality differ profoundly according to the person. As Frey explains: “There is no single way to interpret any one place along the Camino because each person’s life-world differs. Pilgrims may experience the same places as particularly meaningful, yet the experiences therein or the personal meanings or stories attached to them vary from person to person” (78). This explanation helps highlights the “integrity” of the selfscape, and its ability to differ profoundly from other selfscapes in a shared place and time.

This insight is also relevant to pilgrimage and tourism studies, for it may reveal an important new direction in pilgrimage and tourism theory. It may be impossible to produce an explanatory framework that can accurately capture the motives and meanings of one’s travels, if one does not take into consideration the importance of the travelers’ past embodied experiences and the influence of these memories on one’s interpretations of the self in a given place and time. As Frey explains, “In the case of the Camino, the ‘source of power’ is not the sacred place (Santiago) per se but how the pilgrim relates to the land-
scapes of the Camino and the meanings that emerge as a result of this process” (1998: 178). If pilgrimage and tourism theory wishes to work towards meanings, then it will be necessary to consider the “intraself terrain” for the pilgrims’ modes of interpretation are dependent upon a number of overlapping scapes that produce the sense of self in any given moment.

However, as I have argued throughout this thesis, the “intraself terrain” is a necessary consideration that can never be divorced from the “extraself terrain” that gives it shape and meaning. I have suggested that discourses of pilgrimage and exercises of governmentality may play an important role in producing the “pilgrim” as an identity-category and as a standard for embodied practice. At this point I wish to further develop the interplay of politics, power, embodiment, and subjectivity, to question how the political scape may co-constitute the pilgrims’ self experiences. Politics and power are present throughout Frey’s ethnography, however the bulk of these discussions is limited to the Appendix. The separation of these concerns from the primary chapters of the book suggests that politics and power may somehow be separate from discussions of subjectivity, memory, and meaning. Politics are therefore treated as a necessary historical background for contextualizing the Camino, but are neglected as a terrain of the pilgrims’ self experience. To remedy this oversight, I will review Frey’s exploration of politics and will probe the ways these dynamics may impact the pilgrims’ selfscape. I will suggest that politics may impact the selfscape by way of discourses, which allow the pilgrims to see themselves as engaged in a humble and altruistic practice of “sacrifice.”
First, I wish to explore the various entities that have moved to gain political power or prestige from the popularity of the pilgrimage. Frey points out that the Camino is a route that serves not only soul-searching pilgrims, but also the intersecting interests of the Catholic Church, the Spanish state, and the European Union. For the Church, the Camino is seen as a way to increase faith among existing members and to convert new believers from the spiritually minded masses. The Church subtly promotes these interests throughout the pilgrimage experience, seen most clearly in its move to bureaucratize the Camino with an infrastructure of check-in points and certifications of completion. These maneuvers maintain the visibility of the Church throughout the journey, ensuring that the Camino never loses its Catholic connections. These interferences also work to frame the pilgrims as religious travelers who share a common faith-based motivation. The certifications of completion, which are highly valued pieces of memorabilia for many pilgrims, claim that the journeys were made “in the spirit of faith” (1998: 127). Although the Church cannot control the motives that pilgrims bring to the Camino, it can control (to some extent) how these motives are articulated and circulated, especially within cherished memorabilia and official material documents.

The Spanish state has also been involved in the manipulation of meanings. Frey writes that the reanimation of the pilgrimage in the 1980s was in large part a result of Spain’s developing tourism industry. The state marketed the Camino as an “alternative” to mass tourism and an escape from the “superficiality” of the leisure-oriented touristic destinations along the coast (1998: 244). The state’s marketing strategies pushed the “cul-
tural and historical heritage” of the pilgrimage route as an attraction for those seeking authenticity (1998: 244). In the 1990s, when the pilgrims began to walk and cycle in place of traveling in their cars, the state capitalized on this transition, marketing the pilgrimage as a responsible form of “ecological-cultural-tourism” (1998: 244). Walking and cycling were promoted as ways of adopting Spanish authenticity: “el modo de ser y vivir español (the way to be Spanish and live like a Spaniard)” (1998: 244). The push for the authenticity of the Camino, then, worked to draw an important source of revenue into the Spanish state and also worked to frame the Camino as a way to enact one’s Spanish identity.

The European Union has taken note of these state-led strategies that work to employ the Camino as an important site of cultural and historical heritage, and has responded with its own interventions. The European Union has identified the Camino as a potential “cultural base” for “European Identity” and has employed a number of “experts” in the hunt for “historical evidence to link the routes and [its] peoples” (1998: 227). Frey suggests that this move to identify a shared European heritage upholds historical race-based exclusions:

It is…important to remember that the idea of a common European identity is largely an ethnically white movement by a politically white society, possibly threatened economically and socially…by immigrants from the south (largely Islamic countries) who may be nationals but who do not share ‘European cultural roots.’ Thus one reading of the pilgrimage of the ‘past’ is that of a white, Christian Europe—a place to which some would like to return. (1998: 228)
The promotion of the pilgrimage route as the site of European ancestry is therefore entrenched in contemporary political concerns, and reflects an implicit racial ideology that accepts white Christians as Europe and casts non-white Muslims as Other.

The Catholic Church, the Spanish State, and the European Union have all engaged with the Camino as a space to push forward their own political interests. These interests have included increased visibility, economic gain, and the symbolic creation of a white Christian Europe. These insights suggest that the Camino is not a “neutral” space nor an “anti-structure” within society. Rather, it is a route shaped by the visions of influential political actors, who mobilize existing social structures to expand or legitimize their visibility and power. While these institutional interventions thus constitute a significant portion of the “political scape,” politics are by no means limited to the Church, the Spanish State, and the European Union. As I will demonstrate in the following paragraphs, the pilgrims’ modes of participation in the pilgrimage bear their own political implications.

First, I wish to challenge Frey’s characterization of the pilgrim communities as a Turnerian *communitas*. I suggest that Frey’s focus on friendships, commonalities, and unity works to obscure the social exclusions at play within the pilgrim communities. Frey writes, “The formation of friendships…cut across normal divisions such as gender, age, class, nationality, and marital status” (1998: 91). However, it is unclear how Frey characterizes the pilgrims as stemming from different class backgrounds, as she never provides information on the economic backgrounds of the pilgrims. While the refuges typically provide free food and shelter, there are still a considerable number of costs that make the
pilgrimage possible, including but not limited to: the price of airfare or ground transportation, the cost of the necessary gear and supplies, the cost of food and shelter in Santiago, and the cost of waiving income for several weeks or several months. These economic costs become even more complicated if gendered labor such as childcare or care for the elderly is taken into consideration. A pilgrim must have the ability to either travel with their family or to provide for their family when they are no longer at home. These factors imply that “becoming a pilgrim” may require a certain level of social and economic privilege.

Additionally, Frey reports that the large majority of pilgrims are white, middle-class, highly educated Europeans who live in urban areas (1998: 7). She writes that in five years of researching the Camino, she had only come across a few “people of color”: “a Catholic missionary from Tanzania in residence in Spain, and several Japanese men” (1998: 29). The *communitas* of the pilgrimage, then, is composed of primarily male, white, middle-class, highly educated, able-bodied, urban Europeans who come together to represent the “common good” of humanity. The discourse of *communitas* emphasizes unity and inclusion, but these figures suggest that the pilgrimage may be a social phenomenon that continues existing social exclusions. Therefore, when Frey characterizes the “formation of friendships” along the Camino as transcendence from typical social divisions, she erases the divisions among race, class, and physical disability that are upheld by the homogenous composition of the pilgrims (1998: 91).
Frey's text does not elucidate whether the pilgrims are aware of the privilege that make their pilgrim-hood possible. However, the prevalence of the theme of “sacrifice” may suggest that this political dynamic is excluded from the pilgrims subjectivities. Pilgrimage discourses draw on the historical pilgrim figure associated with asceticism, altruism, and humility (1998: 125). These discursive links are upheld and circulated by many of the villagers, travelers, and volunteers that engage the pilgrims throughout their journey. Frey explains that it is not uncommon for pilgrims to be stopped and thanked for their “sacrifice” (1998: 64). Not surprisingly, these discursive formations are often internalized by the pilgrims, who may develop a sense of superiority as a result. As one pilgrim stated: “Why are we pilgrims so great?…For the simple reason that one needs a great deal of humility to walk thirty days and arrive a new person in Santiago” (1998: 167).

The above quote is representative of the irony of humility found throughout the Camino. As Frey suggests, “the ideal of the authentic pilgrim—humble, patient, grateful, accepting, sharing, uncomplaining, simple—is inverted and used to demand more and better” (1998: 167). Indeed, the “sense of feeling special” can lead pilgrims to develop ideas of what the Camino may “owe” them (1998: 63). This is reflected by two pilgrims who complain about the quality of free meals offered in Santiago (1998: 168). It is also reflected by a pilgrim who refuses to wait in line with “tourists” in order to participate in the ritual hugging of the apostle. Frey explains that the pilgrim “impulsively” went to the front of the line, “feeling that she deserved to be there” (1998: 158). These practices point
to a sense of entitlement that is intimately linked with the discourse of sacrifice. Because the pilgrims view themselves as moral and altruistic subjects, they feel that they have earned special privileges that are not afforded to the common traveler.

The focus upon the pilgrims’ sacrifice, however, erases the many sacrifices made by the local villagers. Frey explains that there are many “helpers” along the Way who offer their hospitality, food, and drinks to the pilgrims who pass by their villages. This phenomenon ensures that being a pilgrim is actually an “advantageous” position, for it ensures the receipt of free gifts as well as status and respect (1998: 63). Even if the villagers opt not to participate in the giving of goods to the pilgrims, they are nevertheless subject to the sacrifice of their lands. Frey explains that small villages can literally be “overrun” by pilgrims in the summer months (1998: 230). These sacrifices appear to go unnoticed, subsumed by the hegemonic portrayal of the pilgrim as the sacrificial subject. As Frey describes, “Villagers, passing from field to field with their tractors, noticed that pilgrims often looked indignantly at them for somehow having disturbed their peace without realizing that these roads have been in use by them their whole lives, and they, the pilgrims, are the visitors” (1998: 148). The pilgrims’ indignant reactions points to the privileges produced by the discourse of “sacrifice” throughout the journey. Because the pilgrims have been entitled to free food, drinks, and refuge, they may feel they are entitled to the solace, tranquility, and authenticity that they seek along the Way. Tractors, as signs of technology, industry, and economies, are seen to be in conflict with the sacrificial values the pilgrims embrace throughout their journeys.
These examples suggest that the discourses circulating around the Camino may shield the pilgrims from the realities of their political involvements. It appears that one is only able to become a pilgrim once they have acquired a certain level of privilege that allows them to take a recess from the responsibilities of everyday life. This privilege is exacerbated once one begins their journeys along the Way, as they often receive free goods and services that are out-of-reach to non-human-powered travelers. Although this may suggest that the pilgrims are built through, and contribute to, unequal structures of privilege, the pilgrims nonetheless view themselves as making “sacrifices” throughout their journeys. This contradiction may be reflective of the distorting powers of discourse. The discourse of the humble pilgrim allows the pilgrims to take part in practices of hierarchy and inequality, while at the same time provoking them to view themselves as inherently democratic, cooperative, and interested in the common good.

This contradiction between the pilgrim as object of discourse and pilgrim as subject engaging with the world helps to emphasize the importance of examining one’s mode of “being.” It is a reminder that one’s auto-representation of self, embodied in thought and memory, may not neatly align with the immanently constructed self that emerges through one’s daily engagements. My point is not that the pilgrims are incorrect in framing their journeys in terms of sacrifice, unity, or inclusion. I do not doubt that pilgrims experienced intense bonds with other pilgrims, nor that they suffered throughout their human-powered journeys along the Way. These perceptions help shape the pilgrims understandings of their own journeys as well as the experience of the self within it, and as
such should be taken seriously as legitimate dimensions of the selfscape. While first-person perceptions are thus important, I don’t think the anthropologist interested in phenomenology should have to limit herself to an exploration of experience and meaning. As I have shown throughout this section, politics contribute to one’s selfscape, even if one is not aware of their positionality within configurations of privilege and power.
There are several important points to take away from the critical phenomenological analysis of the two case studies. First, the case studies explored within this thesis indicate that travel practices can be intensely personal and meaningful, while simultaneously subject to the influences of discourse and governmentality. For example, the “long trip abroad” is a significant form of escape for the Israeli backpackers. By fleeing the surveillance of authority figures, the backpackers are able to explore new relationships with other backpackers, their bodies, and their subjectivities. This time of experimentation allows the backpackers to experience “freedom,” with arguably profound consequences on their identities and their collective bonds. Nevertheless, the “long trip abroad” is also subject to the work of neoliberal discourses, which dictate modes of consumption as appropriate modes of governing the self. This form of governmentality enacts a new type of discipline, based on “rebellious” bodily practice and the appropriation of U.S. hippie culture.

Additionally, the pilgrimage route to Santiago is a space where many people come to terms with years of emotional and spiritual pains. Pilgrims are able to develop a sense of belonging, a sense of direction, and a sense of the changes they need to pursue in their daily lives. At the same time, the pilgrimage route is a space where discourses of authenticity, humility, and sacrifice circulate, shielding the pilgrims’ from the political implica
tions of their actions. For example, the resurgence of interest in the pilgrimage has yielded negative effects for the villagers who live among the Camino. It has also contributed to a vision of a white Christian Europe, as the Catholic Church, the Spanish State, and the European Union seek to harness the image of the Camino as the symbol of shared regional heritage. Although these consequences demonstrate that the Camino is a political space, the pilgrims nevertheless experience an idealized communitas, torn away from the rules, regulations, and hypocrisy of ordinary social life.

The existence of governmentality and discourses within incredibly meaningful and transformative experiences may challenge overly fatalistic readings of Foucault. Technologies of domination need not imply devastation and a total manipulation of subjectivity. Rather, the reality of the human experience is far more complex. What Foucault may characterize as “domination” may not be perceived as such by its subjects. For instance, the patterned bodily behaviors of the Israeli backpacking youth points to a form a governmentality that disciplines the body. Yet this new form of discipline is perceived as liberation—and thus this “domination” of the body is a desirable and pleasurable experience.

Second, the analyses I have offered indicate that a focus on the individual does not necessarily exclude further social theorization. Because the selfscape integrates intraself and extraself terrains, analysis of many selfscapes can identify patterns while also accounting for diversity. Frey’s analysis is especially successful in this regard. For example, she demonstrates that the pilgrims interpret their bodily aches and pains as indica-
tions of mental and spiritual states. While this observation points to a shared social practice, she nevertheless accounts for diversity within this practice by accounting for the divergent interpretations and meanings the pilgrims may take away. Likewise, while the divergent landscapes of the Camino evoke emotive responses from the pilgrims, these responses can include a sense of wonder, frustration, happiness, or fear. This range of responses indicates that a shared social practice can point to a variety of phenomenological experiences. Therefore, an examination of bodies engaged in practice needs to look beyond observation, to probe the consequences of individual interiority upon existential experience.

Finally, a critical phenomenological paradigm indicates that power cannot, and should not be, separated from the concerns of phenomenological experience. Haviv’s ethnography emphasizes that the meanings forged throughout the “long trip abroad” are explained by the political dynamics of Israeli society. Sleeping in, traveling without a schedule, consuming drugs, and attending Full Moon parties are significant practices in self-formation because they represent a break from the forms of discipline enacted by authority figures in Israel. Similarly, the Jewish religious services offered throughout Asia are a significant site of solidarity and collectivity, in large part because they manage to overcome the secular-religious divisions that are typical in the Israeli country. While Haviv thus demonstrates that politics affect the backpackers’ practices and subjectivities, she also indicates the ways that power can evade conscious detection. For example, the Israelis’ own political positionality within Asian countries doesn’t seem to be a prevalent
topic of reflection or consideration. Although this positionality may go unnoticed, it nevertheless shapes their experiences, allowing particular forms of practice (such as consumption of goods and services) while restricting others (such as being held accountable for illegal activity, such as drug use).

In light of these contributions, I suggest that a critical phenomenological framework has much to offer tourism studies, as well as anthropology at large. By paying attention to embodied practices and the relationality of the selfscape, it may become possible to explain how and why a traveler’s sense of self may change. These insights help build our knowledge of how tourism works and why tourism matters. A critical phenomenological paradigm also allows researchers to explore the intimate spaces of memory, emotion, affect, and subjectivity. At the same time, it pushes researchers to think through the relationships between these “interior” dimensions and the “exterior” structures of politics, power, and hegemony. When this holistic perspective is utilized, it becomes apparent that the interior and exterior are not dualistically opposed, but rather are integrated in unique and fluid ways within the individual’s subjective experience. Such an insight is as critical as it is productive, for at the heart of anthropology is a concern with the complexity of human life.
References


