

THEMATIC SECTION:
ART EXPRESSIONS
AND CONTEMPORARY
SUBJECTIVITIES



Education of Senses in Free Time: seeing as entertainment

Verônica Werle¹
Alexandre Fernandez Vaz^{II}

¹Universidade Federal do Paraná (UFPR), Curitiba/PR – Brazil

^{II}Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC), Florianópolis/SC – Brazil

ABSTRACT – Education of Senses in Free Time: seeing as entertainment¹. Nowadays we are increasingly subordinated by the excesses of stimuli that result in the (de)formation of our senses, including during our *free time*. In this article, we questioned the production of the sight and its role in the tourism context. Based on the follow-up of 4 excursions in the Southern Region of Brazil and 15 interviews, we observed that previous images and the constant orientation of the tourist's sight determine an experience devoid of perceptibility, requiring photographic record as a resource for memory. We conclude that vision stimuli and the act of looking consist in entertainment, which results in the strengthening of the process of sensory alienation.

Keywords: Education of the Senses. Subjectivity. Free Time. Tourism.

RESUMO – Educação dos Sentidos no Tempo Livre: o olhar como entretenimento. No contemporâneo, estamos cada vez mais subordinados aos excessos de estímulos que acarretam na (en)formação dos nossos sentidos, inclusive no *tempo livre*. Neste texto, perguntamos sobre a produção do olhar e seu papel no contexto do turismo. A partir do acompanhamento de 4 excursões realizadas na Região Sul do Brasil e de 15 entrevistas, observamos que as imagens prévias e a orientação constante do olhar do turista determinam uma experiência desprovida de perceptibilidade, exigindo o registro fotográfico como recurso para a memória. Concluímos que os estímulos à visão e o ato de olhar constituem-se em entretenimento, ao que decorre o fortalecimento do processo de alienação sensorial.

Palavras-chave: Educação dos Sentidos. Subjetividade. Tempo Livre. Turismo.

Introduction

As we know, modernity is a period marked by unprecedented technical advances due to the accelerated process of urbanization and the emergence of the capacity, which seems limitless, for producing goods and services. According to the diagnosis of Walter Benjamin (1994), social conditions generated by the technical development and the evolution of capitalist production forces assisted in transforming the subjective structures of our perception, to the extent much of this takes place under the pace of industrial production. Some examples mentioned by the author are the new optical and tactile experiences. The first emerges because of the flow of people and goods in large cities, demanding an increasingly fast pace that is attentive to traffic, lights, and crowds, whereas the second emerges with automation, when countless activities of everyday life carried out by a set of movements are being replaced with a single “click”, for instance, capturing an image with the camera as a way of producing a souvenir (Benjamin, 1994).

It is in the experience of the great cities, between the late XIX century and early XX century, that modern subjectivity becomes clearer. These cities consist in the stage where we intensify technical and sociocultural transformations, demanding from modern subjects “[...] the apprehension of a new temporality, of new forms of speed [...]. It is in the city that our senses are educated, where body, mimesis, and technique are compatible in order to constitute a memory that might strive to survive facing the shocks of modern life” (Bassani; Richter Vaz, 2013, p. 77)².

Within this context of changes, of new paces for living in large cities, and the predominance of the technical-instrumental dimension, leisure practices and the so-called “free time” emerge, important parts of the experience of being modern, reinforcing and constituting transformation processes in the perception and sensitivity. Boulevards and cafés created new public spaces and experiences, the city tours provided a new mode of visual perception due to the wide and lined streets (Urry, 1996). Much of this is also observed in the practice of traveling, initially of bourgeois character and expressed by the *Grand Tour*, and subsequently broadened to less wealthy social strata, with the improvement and popularization of modes of transport.

According to Salgueiro (2002), the *Tour* practice has enabled, to a large extent, the taste and appreciation for natural landscapes, because experiences of long-distance travels allowed the visualization and appreciation of landscapes totally different from those of the traveler’s home locations. The low speed of the modes of transport used in the *Tour*, such as wagons, horses, and sailing boats, in addition to providing a slow visual appreciation of the landscape, little interfered in the auditory perception, in such a way that sound and silence could still be *clearly* perceived, unlike when travels started being carried out by noisy locomotives (Salgueiro, 2002). Advances in modes of transport were decisive for the production of an unprecedented synesthetic experience,

to the extent they allowed the development of a new spatial perception related to the notions of proximity and distance. Furthermore, traveling in the modern modes of transport provided both comfort and a sense of speed at unimaginable levels to travelers used to the difficult traditional journeys. With greater possibilities of having an automobile and/or access to bus lines in the second half of the XX century, transformations in tactile perception have significantly increased and adapted to modes of visualization and apprehension of the increasingly rapid landscape (Salgueiro, 2002).

Nowadays, tourism takes place under other conditions, but, as we aim at discussing next, among countless options of free time, it remains an important intensifying and modelling practice in our subjective formation. In this text, we question the production of the sight and its role in the context of tourism of excursions, considering the preponderant place that vision holds when traveling and in all aspects of modern life as a whole (Urry, 1996; Sontag, 1981; Türcke, 2010).

To do so, we relied on empirical data produced from the follow-up and registration of 4 excursions that departed from Florianópolis (Santa Catarina state) towards cities in the Southern region of Brazil. The excursions are part of the *Programa de Turismo Social do Serviço Social do Comércio* [Social Tourism Program of the Social Service of Commerce] (SESC) of Santa Catarina. About 30 tourists take part in each of these excursions, which are made by bus, based on a previously defined itinerary, and lasting from 2 to 4 days. We recorded our data in field journals, gathering speeches, body expressions, as well as notes from researchers themselves. We also conducted 15 interviews (recorded, transcribed, and analyzed) with tourists, overall aging over 60 years. Frequently, some of the interviews relied on photographs the interviewees have brought with themselves³.

Following the text, results are presented in three categories of analysis. We begin by exposing how the sight is trained even before the trips, with previous images to which the travelers are submitted, and in their course, through strategies that indicate and demand how and what should be seen, corroborating both the proposal of distraction of senses when in contact with market-related cultural practices and what people are expected to do in their free time. Then, we present some mechanisms of tourism dynamics that, together with the tensioned subjectivity of tourists, consist in the creation of a certain temporality in which it is only possible, and also craved, to relate to the objects and landscapes by visualization, exclusively and in an abbreviated way. This demands the constant renewal of the sight, careful attention, and a clear conscious, which characterize a perception conditioned to the experience of the shock, if we rely on Walter Benjamin's contributions.

Closing the cycle of tensioning the sight, initiated by the crystallization of previous images and maintained by the constant orientation of what should be seen in the journey, in the third item we emphasize the weakening of the ability to recall, showing that the photographic re-

cord has been used for storing information, a resource needed to memory, attempting to activate something that the senses seem no longer being able to perceive and register. We conclude the text emphasizing that in the researched practice of leisure, the stimuli provided to the vision and the act of looking consist in entertainment themselves and, as such, in goods aimed at producing sensations, of which the process of sensory alienation takes place, present in the most diverse contexts of the contemporary society.

Orienting the sight: previous images and market resources for its orientation

The first contact with tourist destinations and places, overall, occurs by images disseminated about them, being decisive for the choice of the destinations, but also for creating expectations and even memories of the journey. This is well expressed when Arthur⁴ promptly responds to the question of why he chose Gramado as a destination: “Oh, it was out of curiosity to visit the place. ‘Cause our entire lives we see on television that Gramado is the city of tourism and of famous Brazilian artists” (Arthur – 69 years old, married. Interviewed on March 27, 2015), probably referring to the Gramado Film Festival⁵.

Even though the previous images are not concretely visualized (in this case, the artists, the Festival...), what they represent, or the imaginary scenario they refer to, participate in the creation of the tourists’ experience. This is also applicable to pictures in the travel promotional material itself. In the case of the *Gramado and Canela cities* excursion, for example, there is a photograph of one of Gramado’s gateways. Although this was not a tourist destination, and neither referenced by the tour guide or by another tourist during the trip, a set of other symbols related to Gramado was already imprinted on the tourists’ minds, as expressed by Arthur’s speech, and the specific photo of the gateway made him to get in touch with them. What emerges in the memory as a result from our contact with the imagery excess technically reproduced lacks depth and spiritual richness, as noted by Proust, due to the world of images that came up to him with the mere mention of the word “Venice,” this still at the beginning of the last century (Benjamin, 1994, p. 137). Archived and available in the voluntary memory (*mémoire volontaire*), as noted by the author, our relation to these images would be devoid of perceptibility and “auratic” dimension.

In another excursion, called *Colheita da Maçã* [Apple Harvest], held in the cities of Lages and São Joaquim (SC), the promotion was made with a very zoomed photograph of a set of polished and red apples, giving the impression of abundance and freshness of the fruit associated with a romanticized idea of nature. Not by chance, it is from this association that Mrs. Valéria explains why she has visited Lages:

I love nature, fruits, plants [...]. We’ve been there many times [Lages] and also in São Joaquim. I’ve been to the *Festa da Maçã* [Appel Feast] many

times before, but I had never gone to the harvest. I was longing to go to the harvest, to get the feeling of catching the fruit from its tree, it's so cute, right? (Valéria – Retired civil servant, 76 years old, married. Interviewed on March 31, 2015).

The activity of the Apple Harvest, key in the tour itinerary, was held on the second day of the trip and in a very euphoric and paced way, ending about fifteen minutes after arriving in a plantation containing the last fruits of the season in the harvest stage. Despite the brevity of the activity and the sight of the orchards did not showing them as *red* and abundant as expected based on the promotional material of the trip, Mrs. Valéria's expectations seem to have been met, since she says she loved to see a beautiful orchard, but she also complains: "I wished someone had taken a picture of me picking an apple, but it was a total mess, who would I ask for?" (Valéria – Retired civil servant, 76 years old, married. Interviewed on March 31, 2015).

Despite illustrations always representing something very specific to each trip, with which we relate to for an extremely small period of time (and there are cases in which we cannot even actually visit the illustrated locations), we tend to agree with Urry (1996, p. 122-123), according to whom even in the face of some landscape or tourist spot, tourists appreciate the representation of these places due to the images with which they had contact more than the actual experienced reality, in such a way that

What people 'contemplate' are ideal representations of the sight in question and of what they internalize from postcards, travel guides, and, increasingly, television programs. Even when they fail to actually see the natural wonder in question, they can still feel it and see it in their minds. Even if the object ceases to correspond to its representation, it is the latter that will remain in people's minds as what they really 'saw'.

The fact we remember produced images of some place more frequently than our direct visual contact with it denotes a process in which reality increasingly resembles the image once recorded (Sontag, 1981). It is known that the human sight has changed with the advent of photography and the possibility of its infinite reproduction⁶. In addition to the creation of expectations and previous symbolic representations of tourist destinations, the landscape fragment selected by the photographer's lens implies the selection and framing of a portion of what is real, producing idealized images often assimilated as a factual totality.

Being carried away by an image that is known to not necessarily correspond to reality is the response evoked by agents who design cultural products within a capitalist society, as proposed by Horkheimer and Adorno (2015). The authors argue that through mechanisms of *unconscious domination of man*, there are certain prior paces, spaces, and senses that must be attributed to the products, in such a way that the consumer's reaction is automatically and effortlessly produced. Thus, illustrations in the promotional material of the itineraries must correspond lesser to the reality than lead to an easy association with feelings

that are intended to be sold as merchandise, even if they are provisional or deceptive.

The production and orientation of tourists' sights are intensified with the imagery excess to which they are subjected and with the sensations their sights continually provide, even more with the physical and verbal orientations of the tour guides, as it occurred on a train ride at Curitiba:

Positioned facing tourists, inside the wagon, the train guide warns about on which of the sides (right or left) will be the next tourist spot she shall comment about. She explains that she does it so there is time for tourists to move to the windows and take pictures. And so she goes on, she warns the passengers that they will pass by a certain tourist object to their left and everybody get up in search of a spot to see through the windows at the left side of the wagons (Field Journal 2 – *Natal Encantado em Curitiba* [Enchanted Christmas in Curitiba] Excursion).

Tour guides do not only indicate and determine the sight, but also tourist spots, which are increasingly signaled in order to orient and restrict visual experiences. Similar to most tourist spots, the *Parque Mini Mundo* [Mini World Park] in Gramado has several indicative and explanatory signs of its attractions, but also a small newspaper containing a map of the park is handed out, with precise indications of details, objects, and scenarios that are usually unnoticed to the quick and superficial looks of tourists, but which *cannot fail* to be seen such as the reproductions of scenes of a rescue of a resident from a burning building and that of a car accident⁷. These details, which are deemed important tourist attractions of the place, are also pointed out by some employees who circulate in the park and approach the tourists, under the condition of a last resort to call their attention and, at the same time, to monitor their distraction.

These strategies belong to a structure in which the sights “cannot be left to chance. People must learn how, when, and where to look” (Urry, 1996, p. 26). At the same time it reinforces the demand for senses being constantly distracted so that subjects do not feel bored, which leisure activities go against – activities that, paradoxically, serve to *kill time*, as Adorno stated (2015) –, the permanent orientation of the sight also illustrates the effort to meet the performance required by the “free time.” After all, going to Gramado and not visiting the Park, or going to the Park and not seeing a particular attraction would correspond to the *misuse* of free time, the frustration of the wonderful holidays, the ideal tour, which only become indispensable by the fetishist character of the merchandise (Adorno, 2015) involving the tourist activity.-

The time for looking: predominance of vision, tensioning the look

If the sight is the predominant sense at least since the beginning of modernity, in the investigated leisure practice this is determined and stressed by the temporal organization of excursions. When describing

the itinerary followed on one day of the *Magia de Natal em Blumenau* [Christmas Magic Tour in Blumenau] excursion, the small period available for each visited location is evident:

Chart 1 – Example of the itinerary followed on December 06, 2014 during the *Christmas Magic Tour in Blumenau* excursion

09:10 a.m. – 09:50 a.m. Travel from Blumenau to Pomerode
09:50 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Visit to the Pomerode gateway, square, and handicraft shops.
10:30 a.m. – 10:40 a.m. Displacement
10:40 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Visit to Porcelas Schmidt Shop
11:10 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Travel from Pomerode to the hotel
12:00 p.m. – 14:00 p.m. Lunch and Rest
14:15 p.m. – 15:11 p.m. Blumenau Panoramic City Tour
15:11 p.m. – 15:29 p.m. Visit to Floriano Peixoto Square and the Beer Museum
15:30 p.m. – 15:49 p.m. Blumenau Cultural Foundation and Dr. Blumenau Mausoleum
16:00 p.m. – 16:06 p.m. Stop at Blumenau City Hall to take photos
16:23 p.m. – 18:30 p.m. – Return to the hotel and Afternoon Tea

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Considering the few minutes available at each location, we cannot fail to rely on the sight, the fastest among all the senses, able to encompass even distant things with extraordinary speed, as Greek philosophers already pointed out in the past (Chauí, 1988). Despite the short time, many people returned to the bus even before the scheduled time, reducing even more the length of stay in the tourist spots, suggesting that tourists have seen enough in order to feel *satisfied*, or that they have seen “what is supposed to be seen”: When asked about the time available in the visited locations, Edson replied that: “[...] there was enough time, ‘cause in many places there wasn’t much to see. So, if we had stayed longer, it would make no sense” (Edson – Student, 24 years, single. Interviewed on December 19, 2014). It is clear that the period tourists remain at one place cannot be too short to the point of them not being able to glimpse everything, and nor too long to the point of tiring their eyes. On the other hand, the time for tourism, as well as most of contemporary “free time” practices⁸, is the time for visual apprehension.

The predominance of the sight is also evident by the tourists’ difficulty in establishing relations to spaces and objects with other senses, as illustrated in the situation experienced at *Jardim das Sensações* [Garden of Sensations], inside the Botanical Garden, at Curitiba.

16:30 p.m. – Visitors can be blindfolded to get in touch with the plants by the touch and smell. Some tourists say aloud that there is no time for this activity, because there is much to see, and the others agree. The tour guide insists that there is time, then, the few tourists who have not dispersed yet quickly go along the route delimited by the Garden of Sensations, shortening the path. Without being blindfolded, they touch a few

plants and bow so they can smell a few others (Field Journal 2 – Enchanted Christmas in Curitiba).

Even when there is the possibility of visiting new places by other senses, as illustrated in the aforementioned situation, such is refused beforehand by the supreme predominance of the sight. By refusing to not rely on the sense with which they quickly get in touch with the outside environment, tourists reject those which seem too time-consuming or require greater effort on their part.

Orienting and leading the senses according to the tourists' tensioned subjectivity does not only determine that sight is the hegemonic sense, but also that this situation is created by a single pathway, which is that of the sensation provided by the vision. The sensation corresponds to body-related manifestations and the satisfaction of immediate needs, as tourists experience in relation to the objects that attract their look, that draw their attention, without actually knowing anything about them. Costa (2005) enlightens that experiences based on sensations depend on the physical presence of objects as stimuli for the permanence of the satisfaction promoted by them; hence, when no longer seeing the tourist object, the same occurs with the possibility of relating to it. This can only be retrieved by resuming the visualization or replacing it with another object to see.

The exclusive demand for visualization can also be observed in the behavior of tourists in front of the museums, in which only images seem able to be "read." Externally, the facades and the names of the places are valued, worthy of taking photographs. In the inner space are the bulky figures or objects that receive attention and retention of the sight for a few seconds, always when the panoramic view of the spaces is not enough. The so-called "panoramic" city tours are frequent, which consist in the circulation of the excursion bus between sights indicated by the tour guides, including or not some quick stops, aiming at taking some photographs. One of these situations happened in Blumenau, when

[...] we passed by the old German building that houses the City Hall, the tour guide asks the bus driver to stop right in front of the building and remembers that this will be a quick stop, just to take pictures, and reinforces "now everybody must be quick on the trigger, huh?", referring to the agility tourists must have to get off the bus, photograph, and return to their seats. On this occasion, few people get off [the bus] and take pictures, most remain on the bus, and some say that it is not necessary to get off, because they can see the City Hall 'from where we are' (Field Journal 1 – Christmas Magic Tour in Blumenau).

Besides illustrating that, in tourism, knowledge depends, and is often limited to, on the visual apprehension, the panoramic city tour is also the maximum experience of temporal perception measured by vision, that is, of a time determined by the interval between a blink of an eye and another, in which there is always a new object to be seen. The way tourists react in this situation is very similar to that of the passerby amidst the crowd of large cities and the spectator in a movie theater:

perception in the form of *shocks* is imposed to both of them (Benjamin, 1994). To the man of the crowd, “moving through this traffic [of a big city] involves the individual in a series of shocks and collisions [...]. At dangerous intersections, nervous impulses flow through him in rapid succession, like the energy from a battery”; To the movie theater spectator, it implies the distracted reception of a sequence of images⁹ (Benjamin, 1994, p. 124)¹⁰; to tourists, there is the numbness by the uninterrupted succession of objects to be seen, which is disclosed by Arthur’s speech, when he dazzlingly describes the tour by Gramado city: “Everything we saw was a sight for sore eyes, everything was beautiful, the buildings, houses, hotels, everything. We have seen one and then there was another, we didn’t even know where to look at.” (Arthur – 69 years old, married. Interviewed on March 27, 2015).

The stimuli received in these situations require careful attention and clear conscious in order to disintegrate and resist to constant shocks. Based on theories by Freud and Valéry, Benjamin (1994, p. 110) explains that “the reception of shock is attenuated by a kind of training for controlling stimuli,” which is carried out at the level of a clear conscious.

The fact shock is disintegrated and interrupted by the conscious would attribute to the event that provokes it the character of the mere experience in a strict sense. And, immediately incorporating this event into the collection of conscious memories, it would make it barren for the poetic experience (Benjamin, 1994, p. 110).

Thus, there are few chances for the *shock experiences*¹¹ being integrated into the life and memory of the subject, and although the training to which the body and the senses undergo is important as a form of protection against shocks, the fact that contemporary social conditions are characterized by its excess subjects much of our gestures, sensations, and senses to automatic and uniform responses. Used to the disperse and discontinuous perception, subjects need constant renewal of stimuli, including through entertainment, as a guarantee to distract the emptiness in which they would find themselves without it. Unless you can extract poetry from the shock, resisting to it, as Charles-Pierre Baudelaire¹² (Benjamin, 1994) did, the conditioning sensory system – initially adapted to the rhythm of the machines of industrial production and, currently, to the speed of images and information disseminated by the media and the Internet – results in the weakening of our spiritual forces, particularly the mnemonic (for retaining information in the memory) and mimetic (for producing and recognizing similarities) ones, and in the broadening of a content-free existence, but full of distraction.

Besides visual reception, at the same time attentive and dispersed, required by the change in images during the panoramic city tour, the mere experience of shock is felt by tourists when they automatically direct their body and attention to what the tour guide points and speaks

of, through a reflex-like mechanism, as they also do because of the signs in the thematic parks. The excesses of guidance and information, and the need for almost instantaneous visual apprehension of the tourist objects, are intensifiers of a social dynamics permeated by a profusion of stimuli “of which consciousness should be dodging” (Buck-Morss, 1996, p. 22).

Recording and remembering/forgetting

In addition to looking at the landscape or object, visualizing it and capturing it through camera lenses is also important to the tourist. In a home interview, Vilson indicates and tells us, very excited, that “that computer is full [of photographs]. Now [that] it goes straight to the computer, we don’t even print it anymore. I was once in Bolivia and bought a professional camera. But it’s nice, sometimes we go there [to the computer] and see again what we’ve been through” (Vilson – Retired technician in nursing and radiology, 64 years old, married. Interviewed on December 22, 2014). Suzana also emphasizes her taste for photos and storage on the computer, explaining that “[...] I took about 200 pictures of the city of Torres. On the computer I have separate folders with each location that I have been to and the dates” (Suzana – Secretary, retired librarian, 51 years old, single. Interviewed on March 26, 2015).

Photograph was recurrent in group journeys, a practice that nowadays reach levels unimaginable no longer ago, with the advance of digital photography, the almost endless possibility of storage, in addition to the instant exchange of images by smartphones and social networks. In this universe, neither the aesthetic criteria nor those of personal significance can be identified as a parameter, it is about photographing everything and anything, following the logic of consumption, as noted by Sontag (1981): photographing, consuming – using/looking, discarding – and (re)photographing. This is observed even with the predominance of digital cameras among most tourists, who were older adults, different from what we can identify among the youngest, whose smartphones are mistaken by their own hands.

If the time of the tourist is that of the visual apprehension, it is also, to some extent, the time of the photograph:

I accompany a lady through the Bosque Papa João Paulo II [Pope John Paul II Woods], her steps are quick. Then, she asks me if I want to go to the Oscar Niemeyer Museum. We look at the clock and see that we only have five minutes, yet, we run there. We look at the architecture of the museum on the outside and walk through the entrance hall, where there are some sculptures. She asks me what is the name of that and seeks some identification of the museum to take a picture, otherwise she would forget where it was and could not tell [stories] about her pictures. I take a photo of her next to the sign indicating the name of the museum and we hastily go to the bus (Field Journal 2 – Enchanted Christmas in Curitiba Excursion).

Replacing the experience, photography plays the role of storing information, therefore the concern with recording the location that indicates the name of the Oscar Niemeyer Museum, as previously described. The same happens with most tourists, when they photograph signs with details of buildings, titles of monuments, facades with names of the visited places. Photographs of a trip become an information system for tourists themselves (Sontag, 1981), they provide the data (places, people, monuments, dates, climate, relief, geographic condition) through which tourists will tell other people about the trip or show it somehow. The content of the narrative is determined by data stored in the image, and they only differ from those widely known and provided by the travel agency by adding the traveler's own figure to the picture and by the inferior quality of the image.

Within a context in which every perceptual universe (which involves expectations, temporality, and knowledge) depends on visual apprehension, the memories could not be tied to anything other than the taken pictures. As Vilson says, "The good thing about taking pictures is to have the memory of the place. And, for example, Chile is a long journey, and we wonder, when will we be here again? So, we always use some of our time to take pictures" (Vilson – Retired technician in nursing and radiology, 64 years old, married. Interviewed on December 22, 2014). Photography is, at the same time, an attempt to own objects and landscapes, and an attempt to own the memory itself.

According to Agamben (2007), possession, or property, is peculiar to the objects of consumption, those of which we could not necessarily make use. If to remember visited places we must have the photograph or, if we depend on it to remember them, then memory itself becomes an object of consumption that represents the act of destruction of the object (Agamben, 2007). In the inability of establishing a direct relationship with the object due to our perceptive limitations (for example, attentively contemplating a landscape, a building, or a cultural manifestation), what we have left is taking the tourist object home as a souvenir or a photograph, in an attempt to possess it, even away from these places.

Without intending to misrepresent the act of photographing or the photographic image, which at first could awaken our consciousness (Sontag, 1981), and consist in another way "to see the world," we should emphasize that its use has been the sovereign substitute of all forms of seeing, as John Ruskin¹³ (De Botton, 2003) points out. In addition to mentioning places and scenarios and evidencing them with photography, these authors propose the development of a greater attention or an attention aware of the landscapes, which would allow us to better know them, by seeking to understand them. The desire for possession, which nowadays we seek to satisfy by photography, could only be satisfied by this understanding, as concluded by De Botton (2003), based on Ruskin, which would allow the apprehension of the object through memory.

Final considerations

If objective conditions (urban structure, development of modes of transport, technologies for capturing and displaying images, etc.) have contributed to the sight becoming the central sense for apprehending reality in modernity, we could say that tourism has transformed it into a form of leisure and distraction, transforming looking into an activity with a purpose in itself. More than understanding that tourism consists in the creation and in the historical and social development of a sight directed at an image (landscape, scenarios...), as proposed by Urry (1996), we suggest that the creation and development of this sight is directed towards its use almost solely as an entertainment.

By following the dynamic of the organized fun that entertainment implies, tourism prepares and leads the sight, as well as the other senses, in such a way there is no effort to undergo a certain experience – that defined and elected by the tourist market. A single route of relationship with the object is made available and established, familiarizing the senses in such a way that neither imagination nor thought are required. As a consequence, there is the production of highly tensioned and standardized senses and experiences, different from behaviors/actions that could favor the diversity of ways of seeing, acting, feeling, and interpreting the world.

If, on the one hand, the tourist model contributes to the overvaluation and tensioning of the sight, on the other, the investigated situation shows that it also meets the demand for constant visualization. Updating what Benjamin mentioned in the first half of the XX century, on the abundance of encouragement and excitement to which modern man would be subjected, Christoph Türcke (2010) argues that the situation is radicalized nowadays especially due to the space taken by the media, audiovisual resources, and the conversion of every event into a spectacle. Within a context of permanent submission to imagery shocks, which leisure times cannot fail to be subjected, as we have seen, all sensory apparatus tends to become oversaturated and numb, leading to the reduction of our reflection and comprehension capacities. Our perception would be increasingly subordinated to stimuli that provoke sensations, to the point that the search for what fascinates and charms us would have become a kind of addiction in the contemporary social dynamics (Türcke, 2010).

Tourism has presented itself as another phenomenon of sensations, initially because it is intended to present objects that draw attention, especially of the sight, in addition to maintaining an incessant pace of production of new destinations or attractions in known itineraries, with the promise of getting in touch with “rare,” “unique,” and “exciting” objects and experiences. Within its dynamic, everything seems to acquire the logic of sensationalism; the objects and elements of history, culture, and nature lose their value and meaning to become a spectacle, that is, to provoke sensations. But, in order to call attention, they must be of easy assimilation and, therefore, to visually outstand.

Preferably, they should be perceived by a single glimpse or being “self-explanatory,” such as the images (pictures, photographs, sculptures) of museums, or any other object (monuments, buildings, cultural manifestations...), provided that they are appreciated and perceived solely by the visual sensation they provoke, and, when such ceases, the relationship with the object ceases as well.

The social dynamics here apprehended from the analysis of a “free time” practice seems to reinforce the passage from an experience marked by what we are able to record, because it touches, amazes, and provokes us (as subjects), to what we only respond to (as an organism). This is not the privilege of tourism, nor of the labor environment, when our senses are, to a large extent, too busy and trained in the name of a multiple and refined productivity, but it also resonates throughout the period devoted to leisure¹⁴.

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- 2 All citations unless otherwise noted were free translated by the translator of the article.
- 3 The research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Universidade do Sul de Santa Catarina – UNISUL, according to Opinion no. 1,017,249. An Informed Consent Form was signed by the informants who freely accepted to participate in the study.
- 4 We used fictitious names to preserve the identity of the participants.
- 5 The Gramado Film Festival takes place since 1973, it is the main uninterrupted event of the genre in the country, and since 1992 it also includes cinematographic productions from other Latin American countries. Although the Festival is not broadcasted on the main free television channels, news about the winners, among other information, are widely disclosed by the media.
- 6 Regarding the devices of cameras and other equipment for producing and displaying images, Benjamin investigates both their role in enhancing the sight, with maximization, minutuarization, and perspectives of different angles of the image that would be “inaccessible to the human sight” (Benjamin, 2012, p. 182), and in atrophying it, since the devices “guide reception in a predetermined sense” (Benjamin, 2012, p. 189), highlighting that the excess of images “reduces the scope of imagination” (Benjamin, 1994, p. 138).
- 7 The *Notícias do Mini Mundo* newspaper, Year 6, Issue 14, 2nd semester of 2014, is available for full reading from the Park’s website: <<http://www.minimundo.com.br>>.

- 8 Here, we bear in mind the countless forms of audiovisual entertainment, such as television shows, programs, and movies, but also fairs, exhibitions, musical shows and performances, visits to shopping malls, among many other leisure activities in which sight is the preponderant sense and marker of temporality.
- 9 The optical universe of cinema also possesses a tactile dominant, as Benjamin (2012) explained, because the movement of images is based on changes in angles and positions, impacting our spatial perception.
- 10 This translation is of Rutsky (2007).
- 11 The mere experience (*Erlebnis*) is here mentioned as a kind of qualitatively different perception from the ongoing experience (*Erfahrung*) due to the participation of consciousness. If the first consists in events that require careful attention to produce immediate responses, the latter consists in what is *experienced* and accumulated in a slow and prolonged way, requiring, instead of the intervention of consciousness, a state of psychic distension. “The greater the participation of shock in each of the impressions, the more constant should be the presence of conscious aiming at protecting [it] against stimuli; the greater the success with which it operates, the lesser these impressions will be incorporated into the experience, and the more they will correspond to the concept of experience” (Benjamin, 1994, p. 111). The border between ongoing experience and mere experience is not always clear.
- 12 In Benjamin’s interpretation, Baudelaire managed to turn the experience of shock into the basis of his poetic production, he used awe as the substance for his creations and, as in a duel, as the image of a fencer, Baudelaire was able to resist and free himself of such shock. This becomes clearer when Benjamin analyzes the sonnet *À une passante*. Benjamin states that this sonnet “[...] presents a picture of shock, almost that of a catastrophe. However, by capturing the subject, this picture also affected the core of the subject’s feelings” (Benjamin, 1994, p. 118).
- 13 John Ruskin was a XIX century English writer, designer, and art critic. According to De Botton (2003, p. 231), in an important part of his work he addressed “the question of how we can appropriate the beauty of the places,” electing drawing as one of the main tools. To do so, he published two books, *The Elements of Drawing*, in 1857, and *The elements of Perspective*, in 1859, aiming at teaching people to draw, not with the purpose of educating artists, or “transforming a carpenter into a painter, but making him happier as a carpenter,” as he stated.
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Verônica Werle holds a PhD degree in education. Professor at the Department of Theory and Practice of Teaching (DTPEN), Education Sector at the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR).

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-5419-2859>

E-mail: vwewerle@yahoo.com.br

Alexandre Fernandez Vaz holds a PhD degree in Human Sciences from Leibniz Universität Hannover – Hannover, Germany. Professor at the Fed-

eral University of Santa Catarina (UFSC), Florianópolis/SC – Brazil Research Productivity Scholarship 1C.

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4194-3876>

E-mail: alexfvaz@uol.com.br

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