Docile bodies in the park? A post-Foucauldian perspective on effective visitor management in natural parks.

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In this paper we will introduce a post-Foucauldian approach to questions concerning the management of visitor behaviour in natural parks. We aim to make explicit the more covert power mechanisms that influence people's behaviour in time and space. Inspired by Hägerstrand's (1970) theory of time space behaviour and based on Foucault's (and his successors') theories on discipline, control and regulation, we will provide a conceptual framework that takes into account both material and non-material (social / symbolic) types of powers that constrain and enable behaviour of people. We will use the results of five visitor-monitoring studies conducted between 2003 and 2009 to underpin our argumentation with concrete examples that illustrate the mechanisms of power we aim to make explicit. The methods used in these studies include quantitative and qualitative visitor surveys, spatial analyses of various areas, and semi-structured interviews with the responsible site managers.

Our argumentation starts with the premise that the central question behind every attempt to manage visitors is: What is it that governs the behaviour of people? Attempts to answer this question emphasise various factors, including the motives and intentions of people, their experiences and expectations, and the opportunity to engage in certain activities (Marwijk 2009, Beunen, Regnerus and Jaarsma 2008). Other authors, especially from the field of geography, have scrutinized factors that enable and constrain certain behaviour (Yu and Shaw 2007). For instance, the time-space model of Hägerstrand (1970) has been quite influential. According to this model, human spatial activity is affected by constraints that are outside of the realm of 'autonomous' choices and decisions. Hägerstrand distinguished between three types of such constraints that can provide insight to the actual and possible time-space behaviour of people: 1. Capability constraints: embodied and spatial capabilities, 2. Authority constraints, and 3. Coupling constraints.

Although Hägerstrand's model is compelling, it does not sufficiently take into account the more covert material and social power mechanisms that affect, regulate and control people's behaviour. Foucault's influential book 'Discipline and Punish' (1979) as well as post-Foucauldian literature may contain inspiring contributions to understanding covert power mechanisms that are rarely made explicit within conventional visitor management research. In line with Foucault's conceptualisation of power, insights from cultural geography and science and technology studies, we elaborate on the following interwoven power mechanisms:

- *Panopticism and the mutual gaze*: people's behaviour is affected by the real or perceived mechanisms of control exercised through observation by others, as well as cameras and other monitoring equipment (Koskela 2000, Maoz 2006).
- *Normalization and internalization*: commonly shared expectations and socially dominant definitions of 'normal' and 'abnormal' or deviant behaviour in a park (unconsciously) govern the way people behave. Normality is internalized and reinforces normalized behaviour, while at the same time, abnormality is externalized as an institutionalized phenomenon within the normalized space (i.e. gay meeting places within a natural park in a hereto normative society (Bulkens 2009)).
- *Performative materiality*: Implicit and explicit definitions of how to behave 'normally' in a park are embedded in many instruments, objects, places and spaces to ensure certain behaviour. People's behaviour is governed or disciplined by means of material configurations that enable and constrain;for example the presence of a concrete wall, a 'STOP' sign, or a tree blocking

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the road. Though many of the disciplining material powers are not real capability constrains (often they can easily trespassed) they do form scripts that govern peoples' behaviour (Winner 1980, Latour 1992, Law and Mol 1995).

Many of the power mechanisms we elaborate on in this paper can be interpreted as a 'moralization of objects, which means that norms or morality or politics are intentionally or unintentionally incorporated in material configurations (i.e. the design of a park, the kind of road, the layout of routes and the locations of various facilities). Though these material configurations do not guarantee a certain behaviour, they often govern visitors in the absence of human authority (Adam 2008, Verbeek 2006).

While previous scientific investigations in the field of visitor management mainly show that specific measures show effects on visitor behaviour (e.g. Beunen et al., 2006, 2008), our analysis of more covert power mechanisms offers the possibility to explain why these effects come about. Hence, our analysis provides additional insights to the relationships between park management and visitor behaviour. By making covert mechanisms of power explicit in concrete cases, lessons can be learned about the management of visitors through park or landscape design that intentionally incorporates morality. Furthermore, our analysis contributes to questioning the limits and possibilities of steering visitor behaviour. Lastly, our argument can stimulate park managers to critically consider the often non-intentional forces that may enable or constrain certain behaviour.

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