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SHAPESHIFTING NATURE

Ambivalent Ways of Seeing the Non-Human World within
Swedish National Park Tourism and its Visual Culture

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Summary

National parks have traditionally been approached as self-evident institutions of environmentalism that seek to preserve valuable pieces of the non-human world. Generally, this world has come to be mentioned as nature, which in turn has become taken for granted, meaning that it seldomly is critically reflected upon nor problematized. This has assigned nature a self-identical role as a realm separated from the human world, thus existing beyond our understandings of it. What seems to be forgotten, or made invisible, is that our ways of seeing the non-human contribute to constructing it and our relation to it. This becomes visible concerning national parks. Besides functioning as institutions of environmentalism, they also serve as nature-based tourism destinations attracting millions of tourists each year. Through different mediations for tourists, which often have a visual focus, the national park tourism and its visual culture contribute to constructing people's ways of seeing the non-human world. Research that problematizes such ways of seeing has traditionally had a Northern American focus, implying that their empirical scope is geographically narrow and needs to be broadened.

One country that is suitable and interesting for such widening is Sweden. It has a long tradition of being presented as a 'nature nation' and has national parks with a different history than parks in many other places of the world. In contrast to the northern American parks, for example, the Swedish ones have had sparse traditions of hosting tourism and have instead centered solely around nature conservation interests. At least until recently. After almost a century of sparse tourism, the parks have gradually moved into the midpoint of the country's experience industry and are today approached as tourism destinations focusing on visual experiences. Thus, they are currently facing intensifying tourism, in which visual culture plays an essential role. This intensification is also mirrored within national research. Several Swedish studies have documented the intensifying times but have not paid attention to its features. Among such studies, it has been emphasized that nature is used to create a touristic demand and attract tourists to the parks, but despite this, no studies have focused on how the Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture construct ways of seeing the world we call nature.

Grounded in this research gap, I have centered this dissertation around exploring human ways of seeing the non-human world and the human relation to it by unraveling, making visible, and problematizing how such ways of seeing get enabled by the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture. To answer this, I have focused on how the non-human world has been represented and what characteristics it has been assigned, what ontological and epistemological stances that can be identified therein, but also what productive effects and implications all of this can have for how humans' see and relate to the non-human world. Through a reflexive-explorative discourse analysis focusing on tracing representations in four sub-studies before dealing with the discourse on national park nature, I have analyzed empirical materials produced by nature conservation actors, tourism actors, and tourists. Working with empirical materials produced by different actors has enabled me to trace similarities and dissimilarities between different contexts connected to the Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture. My analysis has predominantly had a contemporary context, to focus on ways of seeing sprung from the intensifying times. To understand how and where those ways of seeing originated, I have also scrutinized materials reaching back until the end of the 1800s. By bringing together the identified representations from the

different sub-studies, their ontological and epistemological stances, and productive effects, I have identified four ways of seeing the non-human world.

First, nature is seen as a commodified edutainment arena for environmentally conscious tourists to be educated and entertained by. In this, tourism is considered a contributor to nature conservation, through which tourists become environmental activists. Second, it is seen as an elitist national heritage and trademark closely linked to Sweden's national identity. Third, it is seen as a sublime vista of beautiful and grand characteristics (with a slight touch of danger) that foremost shall be consumed in visual terms, almost as a painting. Fourth, it is seen as a pristine and original wilderness that stands in sharp contrast to the human world and shall be consumed in solitude, far from other humans. Within and among those ways of seeing and their representations, there exists not only coherences but also ambivalences that render the non-human world a shapeshifter that can assume different and even contradictory forms. I have identified eight such prominent ambivalences. Altogether, these portray the non-human world as inviting and open but simultaneously inaccessible and only reachable by a small elite; as sublime wilderness located far away from humanity but also as accessible for tourists to consume; as an untouched place in need of protection from human exploitation but also as a place for tourist to escape humanity and explore both 'real' nature and evidence of environmentalism.

The non-human world is also depicted as a foreign place where humans do not belong and as a learning arena where humans can get in touch with and be educated about nature; as a natural scientific laboratory and also as a tourism arena; as untouchable and out of this world simultaneously as a ready-made world that becomes illuminated through educational investments; and as something aesthetic that should be consumed in romantic ways and concurrently as a rational encyclopedia that should enlighten tourists. Lastly, there is an ambivalence between portrayals of tourism as an activity that could harm the non-human world and depictions of it as an environmental act contributing to nature conservation. All these ambivalences have in common their involvement in the tension between the two opposing interests of using and saving nature, which have a long tradition of functioning as nemeses but are presented as compatible within the discourse on national park nature. These are glued together by a third interest – knowing nature. Ambivalences and tensions like these are essential to shed light on in problematizing analyses on ways of seeing the non-human world, as they can provide us with new insights and understandings that would remain invisible if the focus only was directed towards coherences.

Keywords: Nature-Based Tourism, Discourse Analysis, Nature/Culture, Representation, Problematization.

Sammanfattning

Nationalparker har traditionellt sett tillskrivits en roll som beskyddare av värdefulla delar av den icke-mänskliga världen, i vardagligt tal omnämnd som natur. Samtidigt har naturen kommit att tas för givet, vilket innebär att den sällan problematiseras eller reflekteras kring från en kritisk infallsvinkel. Detta har tilldelat naturen en obestridd roll som en värld långt bortom mänskligheten. En värld som vi inte bara är separerade från utan som också existerar bortom våra förståelser av den. Vad som verkar glömmas bort och osynliggöras är att våra sätt att se på naturen bidrar till att konstruera den men också vår relation till den. Detta blir synligt i förhållande till nationalparker. Förutom att fungera som miljöinstitutioner är många parker också populära naturturismdestinationer som lockar miljontals besökare varje år. Genom att erbjuda turister olika medieringar, som ofta har ett visuellt fokus, påverkar nationalparksturismen och dess visuella kultur hur människor ser på och relaterar till den icke-mänskliga världen. Forskning som har intresserat sig för sådana sätt att se har hittills fokuserat på parker i Nordamerika. Detta innebär att deras empiriska spridning är geografiskt begränsad och därmed behöver breddas.

Ett intressant fall för en sådan breddning är Sverige, som både har en lång tradition av att definieras som en naturnation och dessutom har nationalparker vars historia är annorlunda än parker i många andra delar av världen. Till skillnad från de nordamerikanska parkerna, till exempel, har de svenska ingen stark tradition av att fungera som turismdestinationer utan har i stället främst setts som drivna av naturskyddsmotiv. Åtminstone fram tills nyligen. Efter nästan ett helt århundrade av sparsam turism har parkerna gradvis tagit plats inom den svenska upplevelseindustrin och ses idag som väletablerade turismdestinationer med fokus på visuella upplevelser. Med andra ord befinner sig parkerna just nu under ett intensivt turistiskt skifte, inom vilket visuell kultur har en central roll. Detta skifte syns även inom den svenska turismforskningen. Flera studier har dokumenterat att skiftet finns men inte lagt fokus vid hur det tar sig uttryck. Bland sådana studier har det till exempel uppmärksamats att det är naturen som lockar turister till nationalparkerna och skapar en turistisk efterfrågan, men trots detta har inga studier fokuserat på hur den svenska nationalparksturismen och dess visuella kultur formar våra sätt att se på den värld vi kallar för natur.

Med grund i denna forskningslucka syftar jag, via denna avhandling, till att vidga insikterna i mänskliga sätt att se den icke-mänskliga världen och människors relation till den. Detta gör jag genom att reda ut, synliggöra och problematisera hur sätt att se den icke-mänskliga världen blir möjliga genom den svenska nationalparksturismen och dess visuella kultur. Via en reflexiv-explorativ diskursanalys som fokuserat på att först påvisa representationer genom fyra olika delstudier för att sedan identifiera sätt att se och belysa diskursen kring nationalparksnatur. De empiriska material som jag har analyserat har producerats av naturskyddsaktörer, turismaktörer och turister, vilket har bidragit till att jag kunnat fånga likheter och skiftningar mellan olika kontexter kopplade till den svenska nationalparksturismen och dess visuella kultur. Min analys har främst haft ett nutida fokus för att fokusera på sätt att se sprungna från det turistiska skiftet, men för att förstå representationernas ursprung har jag även analyserat material från artonhundratalets slut och framåt. Genom analysen har jag identifierat representationer av den icke-mänskliga världen och karaktärsdrag som den tilldelats genom representationerna, men också de ontologiska och epistemologiska ståndpunkter som

de vilar på. Dessutom har jag lyft fram deras produktiva effekter och konsekvenser för hur människor ser på och relaterar sig själva till den icke-mänskliga världen. Genom att sammanföra de identifierade representationerna från delstudierna, deras ontologiska och epistemologiska ståndpunkter, samt deras produktiva effekter och konsekvenser har jag identifierat fyra olika sätt att se den icke-mänskliga världen.

För det första ses den som en kommodifierad nöjes- och utbildningsarena för miljömedvetna turister, inom vilken turism anses bidra till naturskydd samtidigt som turister tilldelas en roll som viktiga miljöaktivister. För det andra ses den som ett elitistiskt och nationellt naturarv och varumärke som är tätt sammanlänkat med Sveriges nationella identitet. För det tredje ses den som ett sublimt sceneri av vacker och storslagen karaktär med en gnuttat farlighet, som främst ska konsumeras visuellt, likt en tavla. För det fjärde ses den som en orörd och originell vildmark som står i stark kontrast till den mänskliga världen och helst ska upplevas i ensamhet, långt ifrån andra människor. Inom och mellan dessa sätt att se och deras representationer finns det inte bara samstämmigheter utan även mångtydigheter, som framställer den icke-mänskliga världen som en "shapeshifter" (på svenska ungefär "formskiftare") med förmågan att inta olika men också motstridiga former. Detta innebär att de fyra sätten att se är ambivalenta och genom min analys har jag identifierat åtta framträdande mångtydigheter inom dem. Sammantaget framställer dessa den icke-mänskliga världen som öppen och inbjudande men samtidigt otillgänglig och bara nåbar för en liten elit; som en sublim vildmark lokaliserad långt bortom mänskligheten men samtidigt som en värld för turister att konsumera; som en orörd plats i behov av skydd från mänsklig exploatering men samtidigt som en plats för människor att fly till för att undkomma mänskligheten och uppleva både "riklig" natur och prov på miljömedvetenhet.

Den icke-mänskliga världen framställs också som en främmande plats där människor inte hör hemma men samtidigt som en lärandearena där människor kan lära känna naturen och utöka sin kunskap om den; som ett naturvetenskapligt laboratorium och en turismarena; som en orörd värld bortom den mänskliga och samtidigt som en färdigtolkad värld som görs begriplig genom upplysande investeringar; som något estetiskt som ska konsumeras enligt romantiska principer och en rationell encyklopedi som ska upplysa turister. Slutligen finns det också en mångtydighet mellan framställningar av turism som en aktivitet som kan skada den icke-mänskliga världen och skildringar av turism som en miljömedveten handling som bidrar till naturskydd. Vad alla mångtydigheter har gemensamt är att de har sin grund i spänningen mellan två motsatta intressen: att rädda och använda naturen. Dessa har traditionellt stått i stark kontrast till varandra men presenteras som förenliga inom diskursen kring nationalparksnatur. Vad som sammanlänkar dem är involveringen av ett tredje intresse som får dem att framstå som enade. Nämligen intresset att lära känna naturen. Mångtydigheter och spänningar som dessa är viktiga att lyfta fram i forskningen kring sätt att se den icke-mänskliga världen, eftersom detta kan ge nya insikter och ökad förståelse för perspektiv som annars skulle förbli osynliga om fokus enbart riktades mot samstämmigheter.

Nyckelord: naturturism, diskursanalys, natur/kultur, representation, problematisering.

List of Attached Papers

- Paper I. Fälton, Emelie & Mels, Tom. (forthcoming) Historical Boundary Struggles in the Construction of the Non-Human World: Nature Conservation and Tourism in Swedish National Parks [To be submitted]
- Paper II. Fälton, Emelie & Hedrén, Johan. (2020) The Neverlands of Nature: Exploring Representations of the Non-Human in Visitor Information Publication Material on Swedish National Parks. *Journal of Northern Studies*, 14(1): 7–34.
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- Paper III. Fälton, Emelie. (2021) Descendants of the Modernist Museum: Tracing the Musealisation of Swedish National Parks. *Visual Studies*, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1472586X.2021.1884501>: 1–20.
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- Paper IV. Fälton, Emelie. (2021) The Romantic Tourist Gaze of Swedish National Parks: Tracing Ways of Seeing the Non-Human World through Representations in Tourists' Instagram Posts. *Tourism Recreation Research*, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2021.1984692>: 1–24.
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Contribution to Attached Papers

- Paper I. Gathering and organizing empirical material, E.F. and T.M.; Analyzing empirical material, E.F. and T.M.; Structuring and processing analysis, E.F. and T.M.; Analytical conceptualization, E.F. and T.M.; Writing manuscript, E.F. and T.M.; Revision, (To be continued)
- Paper II. Gathering and organizing empirical material, E.F.; Analyzing empirical material, E.F. and J.H.; Structuring and processing analysis, E.F.; Analytical conceptualization, E.F. and J.H.; Writing manuscript, E.F.; Revision, E.F.
- Paper III. Analyzing empirical material; E.F.; Structuring and processing analysis, E.F.; Analytical conceptualization, E.F.; Writing manuscript; E.F.; Revision, E.F.
- Paper IV. Gathering and organizing empirical material, E.F.; Analyzing empirical material, E.F.; Analytical conceptualization, E.F.; Structuring and processing analysis, E.F.; Writing manuscript, E.F.; Revision, E.F.

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Norrköping, on a rainy autumn day in October 2021.

To the world we call nature.
Both within and outside the Swedish national park borders.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1. Thinking Otherwise: Problematizing Nature and Paying Attention to National Parks, Tourism, Visual Culture, and Ways of Seeing

I challenge the notion that ‘nature’ is a self-identical quality, and that the creation of national parks involves establishing a boundary and declaring that inside that boundary is ‘nature,’ while outside of that boundary is something else, say ‘culture’ or some other non-natural quality or essence. (Grusin, 2004, p. 3)

National Park Nature is a way of seeing that shifts according to the landscape under consideration. It is not a static or easily identifiable entity but a system of visual organization predicated on dominant cultural values regarding nature, non-human animals, and ‘the environment.’ (Cronin, 2011, p. 4)

The examinations of visual rhetoric [...] position national parks [...] as discursive apparatuses that have produced, limited, and shaped discourses on nature, including human nature, and have justified particular social policies and cultural preferences as natural and necessary. The ultimate interest is in locating the influence that these visual rhetorical devices have had upon our relationship with the world. (Patin, 2012b, p. xiii)

Thinking otherwise than we are used to can be daunting, but it can also contribute to new perspectives on issues that we usually take for granted. It can make us aware of our common stances and notions, but also what implications they might have for different beings, contexts, or phenomena. What the authors of the above quotations have in common is that they think otherwise in relation to how nature is usually approached within Western contexts. They also share an interest in problematizing this approach in relation to national parks, tourism, and visual culture, but they also have an appetite for exploring ways of seeing nature that are produced in that way. Taking inspiration from their approach, I focus this dissertation on human ways of seeing the non-human world and the human relation to it that become enabled through the practice of national park tourism and its visual culture. Before outlining the aim of this dissertation in more detail, and the context of study, I will start by explaining its importance.

1.1.1. Thinking Otherwise and Problematizing Nature

To understand what it means to think otherwise in relation to nature, we need to look at how nature is usually approached within modern Western contexts. In such, nature has become a keyword that is used both widely and frequently (Descola, 2013a; Jameson, 1994; Williams, 1976). It is part of many people’s lives and is something with which they have a relation. Simultaneously, it has a self-evident character, which means that it is seldom problematized or reflected upon, but is rather

approached as something static (Castree, 2014; Cronon, 1995; Descola, 2013b; Soper, 1995). Hence, nature has come to represent those parts of the world that are considered to be untouched or barely affected by humans – the non-human world. But the concept is also used to refer to the natural quality of something – for example, that it is natural for sharks to swim, cranes to fly, or humans to walk on two legs. Furthermore, it is used when referring to the forces that govern the living things on earth – such as gravity (Castree, 2005, 2014). Attached to these uses, there are depictions of nature as natural and ‘original’, while its counterpart – the human world – is portrayed as unnatural and ‘artificial’ (Soper, 1995). This has led to an ontological separation between culture (the human) and nature (the non-human) (e.g., Braun & Castree, 1998; Castree, 2001; Eder, 1996; Wöbse, 2012), which is often referred to as the *nature–culture dichotomy* (Fletcher, 2016).

In contrast to approaching nature as something static and self-evident that exists beyond the borders of human societies, researchers taking critical and social constructivist perspectives (such as the authors of the initial quotations) have worked for centuries to problematize the concept of nature (e.g., Bird, 1987; Cronon, 1996; Demeritt, 2001; Descola, 2013a; Gordon-Walker, 2019; Grusin, 2004; Hedrén, 1994; Jameson, 1994; Macnaghten & Urry, 1998; Patin, 2012b; Williams, 1976; Wilson, 2019). Their shared argument is that the self-evident approach to nature that currently exists in many Western contexts overlooks nature’s social construction and the fact that it comes into being through how humans understand and make sense of it. This indicates that all the values that are considered to be natural in the ‘environment are given not by physical nature, but by society’ (Olwig, 1995, p. 4). Thus, the concept of nature and the attributes attached to it are created by our own understandings of what nature is and how it behaves (Castree, 2014; Gordon-Walker, 2019; Grusin, 2004; Mels, 1999; Wilson, 2019). This implies that all the things presented as ‘known’ concerning nature say as much about ourselves as human beings as they do about the non-human (Castree, 2014; Chaloupka & Cawley, 1993; Cronon, 1995; Tschida, 2012). From this perspective, nature becomes a socially constructed phenomenon grounded in time, connected to ontology and epistemology (Harvey, 1996). By focusing on how nature is made, remade, represented, and acted towards, it becomes possible to provide insightful reflections (upon these epistemological and ontological issues), but also upon the implications that follow, which:

demonstrate how things which appear most evident are in fact fragile, and that they rest upon particular circumstances, and are often attributable to historical conjunctures which have absolutely nothing necessary or definitive. (Foucault in interview with Mort & Peters, 2005, p. 19)

In other words, the ways in which nature is seen are constantly changing. The approaches to nature among humans who lived two hundred or one hundred years ago are probably different from the understandings upon which we build our approach to nature today, but there are always also variations and dissimilarities between different concurrent contexts (Descola, 2013a; Olwig, 1995; Soper, 1995).

1.1.2. National Parks, Tourism, Ways of Seeing, and Visual Culture

One of the institutions that currently centers around nature within Western contexts is the national park. Since the label was first coined in the United States during the 1800s, nature has been a central part of national parks' organization (Ford, 2012; Gissibl, Höhler, & Kupper, 2012; Grusin, 1995; Harper & White, 2012; Jones, 2012), not least through their stated role as protectors of valuable pieces of nature (Grusin, 2004; C. M. Hall & Frost, 2009; Mels, 2002) and their position as self-evident environmental institutions (Grusin, 2004; Mels, 1999; Patin, 1999, 2012b; Wall-Reinius, 2009). Many parks also function as hosts for nature-based tourism, through which they have become popular tourism destinations (C. M. Hall & Frost, 2009; Puhakka & Saarinen, 2013). The relationship between tourism and nature conservation is 'as old as the history of institutionally established conservation areas' (Saarinen, 2016, p. 411). This indicates that the parks are products not only of environmentalism but also of tourism (Grusin, 2004; Jamal & Everett, 2010; Patin, 2012b; Rutherford, 2011).

Since the early establishment of many national parks around the globe during the late 1800s and early 1900s, tourism has been considered an intrinsic part of their organizations (Frost & Hall, 2009a; Mels, 1999; Runte, 1997). For example, parks in the United States and Russia have solid traditions of functioning as tourism destinations, which they have held ever since the first national parks were established in those countries (Grusin, 2004; Roe, 2020). Through this orientation, nature-based tourism has become a central element of many national parks of the present time (C. M. Hall & Frost, 2009; Puhakka & Saarinen, 2013). By constructing and communicating different mediations concerning nature, which often have a visual focus, the practice of national park tourism contributes to shaping people's understandings of the non-human world (Bednar, 2012; Cronin, 2011; Rutherford, 2011). Traditionally, national parks and their tourism have constructed nature as something that is primarily material, static, and non-cultural for tourists to experience (Gössling & Hultman, 2006; Holden, 2015; Lund, 2013). Thus, the concept of nature has come to be approached as a representative of *the non-human world* – signifying everything that is not a product of humans (Cronin, 2011; Grusin, 2004; Patin, 2012b; Rutherford, 2011). In other words, the practice of national park tourism con-

structs meanings of nature that are of a cultural, social, and political character (Grusin, 2004; Jamal & Everett, 2010; Patin, 2012b; Rutherford, 2011).

Figure 1. Brochures, visitor centers, signs, websites about the national parks, trails, and outlooks are all examples of national park tourism mediations that shape our ways of seeing the non-human.

Through mediations such as the ones in Figure 1, the practice of national park tourism shapes our *ways of seeing* the non-human world (Bednar, 2012; Cronin, 2011; Grusin, 1995, 2004; Lippard, 1999; Patin, 1999, 2012b; Rutherford, 2011; Tschida, 2012), which are connected to our understandings and worldviews but also to what we know and think we know (Mirzoeff, 2015). Ways of seeing produced through the national parks and their tourism construct and are also part of a *visual culture* – the ‘visual construct of the social field’ (Mitchell, 2005, p. 345). In other words, visual culture concerns how the visual is part of social life, how social life is part of the visual, and also how visual experiences and ways of seeing are produced through the visual (Rose, 2016). When national parks are approached as touristic institutions from a visual cultural perspective, they are not simply reduced to environmental protagonists but are rather seen as mediated touristic spaces that construct ways of seeing the non-human and thereby shape notions of nature (Benson, 2012; Cronin, 2011; Grusin, 2004; Lippard, 1999; Mels, 1999; Patin, 2012b; Rutherford, 2011; Wöbse, 2012). By applying an approach that pays attention not only to contemporary ways of seeing, but also to those of the past, it is also possible to see how they

have travelled through time, which in turn can help us to understand our own contemporary ways of seeing and where they originated (Burke, 2019; Foucault, 1994, 1998). Studies focusing on visual culture and how national park tourism constructs ways of seeing the non-human world need more research attention (Patin, 2012b).

This is the case not only because nature-based tourism defines spaces of environmental character (such as national parks) through visual reasoning rather than only ecological approaches (Braun, 2002b), but also because tourism studies have a long history of approaching visual dimensions as less valid or interesting than, for example, verbal ones (Balomenou & Garrod, 2019). This is a tendency that can be found within several research fields (Burke, 2019; Mirzoeff, 2009) and Mirzoeff (2009) has argued that there is a gap between ‘the wealth of visual experience in postmodern culture and the ability to analyze that observation’ (p. 3). Furthermore, even though tourism involves various different senses and dimensions apart from visual ones, the industry pays massive attention to using the visual to create both tourism destinations and interest in them (Burns, Lester, & Bibbings, 2010; Burns, Palmer, & Lester, 2010; Crouch & Lübbren, 2003). This implies a need for studies that take visual culture into consideration when analyzing national parks, tourism, and the construction of the non-human world, including studies that focus not only on the present but also on the past. By problematizing the construction of the non-human through the lens of national parks, their tourism, visual culture, and ways of seeing it, insights into how humans understand and relate to the non-human world can be provided. Through this, the normative preferences and social policies that shape those understandings can also be comprehended (Patin, 2012b).

One factor that increases the importance of such a focus is the contemporary understanding of environmental change and human influence on the non-human world. As representatives of the nature of natures – of untouched waters and lands constituting the ‘real’ version of the natural world – national parks are involved in several of the present discussions about policies concerning land-use and environmental change (Patin, 2012b). Human activities such as logging, mining, the damming of watercourses, or the extraction of oil are frequently considered to be some of the most environmentally damaging procedures available today. These are problematized and critiqued because they turn the non-human world into a mere resource for human needs and exploitation, while other human activities, such as exploring national parks as tourists, are not being problematized in the same manner (Saarinen, 2016; Tschida, 2012). Even though this kind of activity is not as physically damaging to the non-human world as, for example, logging or mining (Tschida, 2012), it has the opportunity to affect how we see the world that we call nature, and also how we act upon questions relating to climate and environmental

change (Rutherford, 2011). Thus, it is important to scrutinize national park tourism and its visual culture, because it can provide insights into human understanding of the non-human, and also into our understood relation to and ways of seeing it (see Fletcher, 2014; Harvey, 1996; Saarinen, 2016; Tschida, 2012). Such scrutiny can make us aware of the productive effects of our ways of seeing, which means that it could make their implications visible. This is essential, because the awareness of these implications could open doors to new courses of action that provide us with opportunities to think and act differently.

1.2. Zooming in: Ways of Seeing the Non-Human Enabled by the Practice of Swedish National Park Tourism and its Visual Culture

Inspired by the researchers who have problematized the self-evident notion of nature as something separate from humankind, I focus this dissertation on how the non-human world comes into being through the ways of seeing it that are enabled by the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture. When I use the concept of *practice*, I refer to organized ways of doing or actions:

where what is said and what is done, rules imposed and reasons given, the planned and the taken for granted meet and interconnect. To analyze ‘regimes of practices’ means to analyze programmes of conduct which have both prescriptive effects regarding what is to be done [...], and codifying effects regarding what is to be known. (Foucault, 1991d, p. 75)

There are several reasons why it is both timely and significant to focus on the practice of Swedish national park tourism. I will present them briefly here, while extending my arguments in the upcoming chapters of this dissertation. Firstly, there is an overrepresentation of Northern American perspectives in the existing studies on national parks, tourism, visual culture, and ways of seeing the non-human (e.g., Cronin, 2011; Patin, 1999, 2012b). This underlines the importance of broadening the geographical orientation. Sweden is interesting as a case, because it has a long tradition of being a nation centered around nature (Löfgren 1989; Mels 1999; Ödmann, Bucht, and Nordström 1982; Olwig 1995) and also a history that differs from those in many other countries in terms of tourism in national parks (Lundgren, 2009; Mels, 1999). In contrast to other nations, Swedish national parks have had little tradition of tourism since they were established (Fredman & Sandell, 2014; Zachrisson, Sandell, Fredman and Eckerberg 2006). Rather, they have developed an orientation centered solely around nature conservation. However, over the last few decades, this has changed significantly as their tourism orientation has become the focus of strategic branding (Carlgren, 2009; Lundmark & Stjernström, 2009). Furthermore,

many of the initiatives that are part of these intensifying times have focused on visual dimensions, which have not been explored within research.

1.2.1. The Rise of Swedish National Parks: A National Love of Nature and a Tug-of-War between Nature Conservation and Tourism

The first nine Swedish national parks were established in 1909, as a result of intense lobbying by the Swedish nature conservation movement during the late 1800s (Lundgren, 2009). Back then, the times were influenced by an emphasis on the importance of national identity, natural science, recreation, and outdoor education for public health, but also a desire to nurture the country's youth (Fredman & Sandell, 2014; Sandell, 2009; Wall-Reinius, 2009). The national parks mirrored these interests by focusing on protecting and preserving pieces of nature considered to be important for the country's national identity, and also for natural science studies (Lundgren, 2009, 2011). The areas that became national parks were chosen based on romantic ideals (The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (hereafter SEPA), 2021d), which were very much influenced by the nature conservation movement and the tourism movement (Lundgren, 2009; Sandell, 2009). In this context, the Swedish nature conservation movement emphasized a strong connection between 'nature', 'love', and 'nation', in which it was strongly argued that Sweden was a nature-loving country (Löfgren, 1989; Mels, 1999; Olwig, 1995; Ödmann, Bucht, & Nordström, 1982).

Figure 2. The national parks have always been central to natural scientists and their studies, which also influenced the Swedish nature conservation movement and its interest in preserving valuable pieces of nature. Here, three members of a geological expedition can be seen taking a break in Abisko National Park in 1910, one year after the establishment of the park. Photograph collected from Moderna Museet via www.digitaltmuseum.se. Photographer unknown.

Sweden's focus on nature was considered to be in contrast with other parts of Europe, which were focused on culture (Mels, 1999). Thus, nature became part of Sweden's national identity (Jönses, 2005; Mels, 1999; Ödmann et al., 1982) and the nationalist emphasis was also part of the country's tourism movement, which focused its actions on nature-based tourism (Erlandson-Hammargren, 2006; Mels, 1999; Nordlund, 2000; Ödmann et al., 1982). Since its establishment in 1886, one of the Swedish Tourist Association's pillars has been a focus on tourists' experiences of the non-human world and encouraging Swedes to become more interested in the nature that their country has to offer (Erlandson-Hammargren, 2006; Kvarnström, 2013; Nordlund, 2000; Ödmann et al., 1982). In other words, around the time when the first parks were being established, both the tourism movement and the nature conservation movement enjoyed major influence in Sweden, which resulted in nature conservation and tourism becoming important components of the country's transformation into a modern, urbanized, and industrialized country (Sandell, 2009).

Figure 3. The early Swedish tourism movement focused on nature-based tourism. Here, board members of the Swedish Tourist Association are on a field trip in Stora Sjöfallet/Stuor Muorkke National Park in 1916. Photograph collected from Moderna Museet via www.digitaltmuseum.se. Photographer unknown.

One mechanism that has been closely interlinked with early Swedish nature-based tourism is *the Right of Public Access* [Swe: *Allemansrätten*]. This is an institutional custom that has been part of Swedish identity since long before the first national parks were established (Sandell & Svenning, 2011). Easily described, it gives everyone who dwells in Sweden the right to roam freely across the countryside and even on private land. The only condition is that those who roam cannot disturb or destroy (SEPA, 2020c). This custom constituted the praxis and education of citizens around roaming for the whole of the twentieth century. However it took until 1994 for it to become part of the Swedish Constitution, which states that ‘everyone shall have access to nature in accordance with the right of public access’ [my transl.] (The Swedish Government, 2014, p. 5). The modern version of this idea emerged during the late 1800s and early 1900s – at the same time as the Swedish nature conservation movement, the tourism movement, and the national parks. All of these were characterized by Romantic ideals and a focus on leisure, which have contributed to setting the tone for the Swedish relationship between the human and the non-human (Sandell & Svenning, 2011).

Figure 4. Two men sitting in front of the waterfalls in the area that later became Storfjället National Park in 1909. Thanks to the Right of Public Access, they were able to roam freely around the waterfalls. Photograph collected from Moderna Museet via www.digitaltmuseum.se. ©Nina Heins (year 1900).

This indicates that during the late 1800s and early 1900s, nature conservation, outdoor life, and tourism were interlinked. However, this was not without opposition (Sandell, 2009). In relation to establishment of the first national parks, tourism was considered a valid aspect because it could encourage Swedes to become interested in exploring the most precious pieces of Swedish nature. For several years, the tourism movement and the nature conservation movement worked together in the process of enabling the early park establishment, but it soon became apparent that the two had different understandings of what the national parks were for (Lundgren, 2009, 2011). Tourism enthusiasts wanted to make tourism an essential part of the national parks and argued that nature conservation¹ and tourism could be united. Their stance was to make the national parks available (Lundgren, 2009, 2011) to national and international tourists interested in exploring beautiful places that could offer them unusual and extraordinary experiences of nature (Ödman et al., 1982).

Concurrently, the growing nature conservation movement wanted to protect these areas from humans (Sandell, 2009) and approached tourism with skepticism because it was considered to intrude upon such protection. Consequently, the collaboration between the two movements encountered several conflicts concerning the exploitation of nature. For example, one of these conflicts concerned the establishment of a boat service in Stora Sjöfallet/Stuor Muorkke national park. The tourism movement wanted to establish boat traffic to attract more tourists, but this was considered to damage nature according to the nature conservation movement (Lundgren, 2009, 2011). Despite the tourism movement's intense efforts to reconcile these interests, the Swedish national parks, in contrast to national parks in many other countries (Frost & Hall, 2009a; Grusin, 2004; Roe, 2020), did not develop any strong traditions of tourism, but have rather been approached mainly as institutions of nature conservation (Fredman & Sandell, 2014; Zachrisson et al., 2006). At least, this was the case until recently.

1.2.2. The Swedish National Parks Now: Facing Intensifying Tourism

Today, a little more than 110 years after the first Swedish national parks were established, there are 30 of them spread across the country. The national park label is the strongest kind of protection an area can be allocated in Sweden, and the status is assigned to places that are described as 'unspoiled by commercialism or industry and as close to its natural state as possible' (SEPA, 2020a). This formulation relates

¹ In this dissertation, I use the term 'nature conservation' when referring to initiatives aimed at preserving and protecting the non-human world from human exploitation. I am aware that, in some contexts, distinctions are made between the terms 'conservation' and 'preservation,' but in the Swedish context, this is not the case. Official authorities, such as SEPA, use the term 'nature conservation', therefore, I have decided to do the same in order to match the context I am studying.

to the traditionally grounded approach to nature within national parks, where it becomes seen as representing the non-human world (e.g., Cronin, 2011; Grusin, 2004; Patin, 2012b; Rutherford, 2011). SEPA (2020a) states that ‘National parks are small fragments of the nature that once covered all of Sweden, and that makes them worthy of protection.’ Each national park has different characteristics and they are often approached as representatives of one or several of Sweden’s six major habitat types: 1) lakes and watercourses; 2) mountains; 3) coast and sea; 4) broad-leaved deciduous forest; 5) wetland; and 6) coniferous forest (SEPA, 2021c).

Figure 5. This map, designed by SEPA, illustrates where the Swedish national parks are located ©SEPA.

Färnebofjärden National Park (number 26 on the map in Figure 5) is located on *Limes Norrlandicus*, which is the biological border of Norrland (the northern parts of Sweden) (The County Administrative Board of Gävleborg, 2021). There, the flora and fauna of the north and south of Sweden meet. The border almost stretches up to Fulufjället National Park (number 28 on the map), which means that 15 national parks are located to the south of the border, while 14 are located to the north, and one is on the border itself. While SEPA is the agency responsible for Swedish nature conservation and the national parks, the lands and waters in the national parks are owned by the Swedish state and it is the Government, together with Parliament, that decide which areas will become national parks (SEPA, 2020a). In contrast to when the first nine national parks were established, SEPA underlines that in contemporary times, the ‘selection is based on international, scientific criteria for what nature merits in terms of protection and interesting attractions,’ but also that today’s establishments emphasize protecting large untouched areas of typical Swedish landscapes (SEPA, 2021d). In other words, at first sight, it could seem as though the Swedish national parks are still approached solely as institutions of nature conservation, while tourism is relegated to the shadows. However, this is not the case.

During the last three decades, interest in nature-based tourism in Sweden’s national parks has risen (Carlgren, 2009; Lundmark & Stjernström, 2009). This aligns with an increase in global interest in nature-based tourism and national park tourism that has taken place during the last four decades (Holden, 2015; Puhakka & Saarinen, 2013). This interest has gradually moved Swedish national park tourism from the shadows of nature conservation motifs to the center of Sweden’s nature-based experience economy (Carlgren, 2009; Lundmark & Stjernström, 2009). In 1999, when SEPA celebrated Swedish nature conservation’s 100th anniversary, tourism was described as one of the country’s new primary industries, and protected areas were particularly highlighted as important for the brand of Sweden (SEPA, 1999). This underlined the parks’ transformation into touristic spaces, and there followed an intense period that saw several investments aimed at increasing tourism in the Swedish national parks, initiated by SEPA and The Swedish Government. Making the parks better known to the public (SEPA, 2011a, 2017, 2020b), improving their availability (SEPA, 2015a, 2015b, 2017; The Swedish Government, 2012), incorporating them as an important resource for Swedish outdoor life and tourism (SEPA, 2015a, 2017; The Swedish Government, 2009), designing a cohesive brand with a visual identity (SEPA, 2011b, 2012, 2014), and clarifying their environmental stance (SEPA, 2011b) were some aspects of this.

Before this period of intense initiatives, the parks did not have anything that united them apart from a long list of criteria for the characteristics and status as being national parks. Now, however, a strong desire to establish and enact a collective identity among them has emerged and their role as spaces for tourism is facing substantial changes, as the ways in which they are approached and understood within a touristic context is shifting.² These changes are also mirrored in the increasing number of tourist organizations and companies producing information about the parks and arranging travel there. The parks are visible in the international marketing of Sweden (Visit Sweden, 2021) and play an important role in the products supplied by the Swedish Tourist Association (The Swedish Tourist Association, 2021), as well as in the offerings of small-scale tourism companies (for three examples, see Bosmina Skärgårdsturer, 2021; Jokkmokkguiderna, 2021; Wild Sweden, 2021). The increased focus on tourism is also mirrored in the number of visitors, which has increased steadily during the last seven years. The numbers of visiting tourists have not always been counted, but SEPA has presented regular counting from 2013 onwards. Back then, the parks received 2.3 million visitors (SEPA, 2021b) and in 2020, SEPA (2021a) reported that 3.1 million visitors had traveled to the parks. Covid-19 led to fewer international tourists but more national ones, increasing the total number of visitors by 300 000 compared to 2019.

Figure 6. The opening ceremony of Åsnen national park in May 2018 attracted many visitors.

² Another country currently facing similar changes in tourism is Sweden's neighbor – Finland. To read about that, see Puhakka and Saarinen (2013).

SEPA's vision is that, by 2030, Swedish national parks will have become the most popular nature-based tourism destinations in Europe, illustrating the future of the parks as oriented towards nature-based tourism. SEPA explains that, by about that time, the intention is that the national parks will attract large numbers of tourists interested in nature and gain competitiveness compared with other nature-based tourism destinations by offering a world-leading education in nature (SEPA, 2011b). To achieve this vision, SEPA describes how visual dimensions play a key role, as the parks' visual identity and graphical design are highlighted as important to make the visual components of the parks both inspirational and educational (SEPA, 2012). In other words, there is an emphasis on displaying the non-human and providing visual experiences of it to tourists. In its design platform, for example, SEPA (2012) provides an explanation of the parks' visual identity and advises that they and their nature need to be framed visually. This focus on making the national parks more touristic through visual incentives fits well with today's global tourism industry (Burns, Lester, et al., 2010; Burns, Palmer, et al., 2010; Crouch & Lübbren, 2003; Urry & Larsen, 2011), and in particular the branch of nature-based tourism, which focuses on allowing tourists to experience the visual and aesthetic characteristics of nature (Jamal & Everett, 2010). Furthermore, it also corresponds to society at large, where visual experiences play a greater role in the lives of humans than ever before (Aiello & Parry, 2020; Bal, 2003; J. Evans & Hall, 1999; Mirzoeff, 2009, 2013, 2015; Mitchell, 2005; Rose, 2016).

These shifting times, as tourism becomes a primary interest in relation to the national parks, are also mirrored in the many Swedish research studies that focus on them from a touristic point of view. Several studies have highlighted the national parks as important nature-based tourism destinations that supply outdoor recreation (Carlgren, 2009; Fredman & Wikström, 2018; Fredman & Yuan, 2011; Lundmark & Stjernström, 2009). Others have emphasized the importance of researching national park tourism, since it has the opportunity to increase the Swedish tourism industry, attract tourists interested in nature (Fredman, Friberg Hörnsten, & Emmelin, 2007) and could thus result in economic and regional developments (Fredman & Yuan, 2011; Lundmark & Stjernström, 2009). To make such developments a reality, it is stated that the parks need to be better promoted (Fredman & Sandell, 2014), tourist infrastructures need to be incorporated, accessibility prioritized, and suitable products offered to the tourists (Lundmark & Müller, 2010; Lundmark & Stjernström, 2009).

Another focus has been on demands from tourists, and studies have investigated their experiences of nature-based tourism and national parks. As part of this, how tourists express their experiences via social media (Conti & Heldt Cassel, 2019;

Conti & Lexhagen, 2020), their travel motifs (Garms, Fredman, & Mose, 2017), and their recreational experience preferences (Raadik, Cottrell, Fredman, Ritter, & Newman, 2010) have been researched. In other words, several studies within this line of research have focused on the impacts that tourism has in the parks, but also on developing it further. Within this field, nature is framed as the primary phenomenon used to create tourist demand and attract tourists. This corresponds to how nature-based tourism is usually oriented (Holden, 2015). Despite this centrality of nature in these intensifying times for Swedish national parks, no studies have focused on how the non-human world becomes constructed through the practice of tourism or what ways of seeing the non-human are generated by this practice and its visual culture. As described earlier, it is important to trace such insights, because tourism in national parks makes a significant contribution to how humans understand and see the world that we refer to as nature (see Fletcher, 2014; Harvey, 1996; Saarinen, 2016; Tschida, 2012), as well as to questions related to climate and the environment (Rutherford, 2011).

1.3. Specified Aim

The aim of this dissertation is anchored in the approach to nature as socially constructed and the Swedish national parks as spaces that are currently facing an intensification of tourist activity, in which the visual elements are emphasized. Consequently, the aim of this dissertation is to extend insights into human ways of seeing the non-human world and the human relation to it by unraveling, making visible, and problematizing how such ways of seeing are enabled by the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture. One way of grasping ways of seeing is to focus on representations (Berger, 1972; Castree, 2014; S. Hall, 2013; Mirzoeff, 2015), which are part of the practice of tourism and its visual culture (Urry & Larsen, 2011). Representation can be seen both as the process of representing and making sense of something and also as the products generated by such a process (Castree, 2014; Grusin, 2004; S. Hall, 2013). Grounded in this, my first research question is: *how has the non-human world been represented within the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture, and what characteristics has it been assigned?* Thus, this question will enable me to engage with both contemporary ways of seeing and also how they have traveled through time. This enables me to gain insights into the origins of contemporary ways of seeing and will provide an understanding of where these intensifying times have emerged and developed from.

Through their visual culture and its representations, national parks shape ways of seeing nature, and thus, its opposite – culture (Cronin, 2011). Since ways of seeing, the constructions they enable, and the representations they are built upon are

closely connected to people's worldviews, and how they position themselves in this world (Berger, 1972; Mirzoeff, 2015), my second research question is: *what ontological and epistemological stances have been visible in the representations of the non-human world within the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture and how have these been justified?* This question can provide insights into the knowledge and conditions of existence that the ways of seeing and the constructions of the non-human world they enable rest upon (Jamal & Everett, 2010). Furthermore, ways of seeing and representations have productive effects, which means that they produce the terms and conditions for what the non-human is and how it is perceived, but also how it should be approached and treated. This can result in consequences for the relation between the human and the non-human and leads us to my third and final research question: *what productive effects and implications might the identified representations of the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture have for how humans approach, understand, and relate themselves to the non-human world?* This will enable me to reflect upon the consequences of the first two research questions for how we as humans position ourselves in relation to the world that we call nature.

1.3.1. Overview of Papers

In my pursuit of the aim and research questions, I have designed and conducted four sub-studies that are presented in the four papers included at the end of this dissertation. Together, these create a joint understanding of my specified aim. They are not tied to any specific research question, but rather embrace them all. This indicates that I deal with all four research questions in each of the papers (even though this is not always expressed directly and is achieved in different ways). The reason for this approach is the character of my methodological stance, whereby I have designed a discourse analysis that focuses on identifying representations in the sub-studies before talking about identified ways of seeing and the characteristics of the discourse on national park nature in the findings section of this dissertation. For each paper, I have also formulated and worked with individual aims and sets of research questions that have been adjusted depending upon their focuses and empirical contexts.

With that said, in **Paper I** (sub-study three),³ I scrutinize how the non-human world in Swedish national parks comes into being through the histories of Swedish conservation policies and tourism. The timespan that I focus on is 1870–2021, and in this paper, I look at past representations as a way of diagnosing, tracing, and understanding contemporary representations of the non-human. Thus, this paper

³ The papers are the outcomes of the four sub-studies that I have conducted. The orders in which the sub-studies were carried out and the papers are presented in this dissertation differ, which explains why their numberings do not match.

provides an understanding of how constructions of the non-human and ways of seeing it enabled by the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture have traveled through time. In *Paper II* (sub-study one), I analyze how the non-human world comes into being through representations in contemporary visitor information publications produced by tourism actors and nature conservation actors. The paper focuses on empirical material produced during the period 2008–2018 and thus touches upon a contemporary context, but also offers a look into the recent past. Moreover, its timespan is located during the intensifying times that the parks are currently facing. This provides a glimpse into what those entail, and also the constructions and ways of seeing the non-human that the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture have enabled.

In *Paper III* (sub-study two), I examine new instructive installations in the national parks to identify how the non-human world comes into being and is displayed to tourists through representations in these installations. They have sprung from the intensifying times that the parks are currently facing and it has been stated that they play an essential role in the parks' appeal to tourists. The analysis was conducted during the years 2018–2019, and thus, this paper has a contemporary context and offers an understanding of what the intensifying times entail. Like the second paper, this one provides a glimpse into the constructions of the non-human and ways of seeing it that the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture have enabled in modern times. Finally, in *Paper IV* (sub-study four), I study how the non-human world comes into being through contemporary representations in Swedish national park tourists' Instagram posts, in order to grasp how the people who visit and explore the parks construct ways of seeing the non-human. This paper also has an up-to-date context, given that I have analyzed posts uploaded during the years 2018–2020. Thus, it also provides an understanding of contemporary constructions of the non-human world, ways of seeing it, and the intensifying times.

1.4. Disposition

After this introductory chapter, **Chapter 2** deals with some components that have greatly influenced this dissertation – my ontological and epistemological stances. Here, I start by explaining what is implied by an interest in ways of seeing and visual culture. I then address how I conduct problematizing and critical research in which I approach nature from a social constructivist perspective. Then, I close the chapter by reflecting upon how and why I use the concepts of the non-human world and nature in preference to the more-than-human world. In **Chapter 3**, I present previous research that has been conducted in relation to national parks, ways of seeing

the non-human world, the practice of national park tourism, and visual culture. I identify three different themes within these previous studies and thus present a palette of different studies and perspectives that have set the foundations for the research path I am following today.

After this follows one of the massive bricks of this dissertation – **Chapter 4**. Here, I start by explaining two of the main characteristics of my methodological approach – exploration and reflexivity. I continue by describing the explorative process that has made the dissertation what it is today. Here, I explain how one thing has led to another and how I have tried to let the empirical material lead me in particular discursive directions. I also present how my sub-studies were undertaken and transformed into papers. Then, I tie all the ends together to identify the essential aspects of my ways of conducting a discourse analysis. I end the chapter by reflecting upon additional experiences that have shaped my understanding and analysis. The methodological chapter is followed by **Chapter 5**, where I present short summaries from each paper before presenting four identified ways of seeing in **Chapter 6**. There, I synthesize the insights drawn in my four papers and present the following ways of seeing the non-human world: 1) seeing the non-human world as an edutainment arena for environmentally conscious tourists; 2) seeing the non-human world as a nationalist heritage and trademark; 3) seeing the non-human world as a sublime vista of grandeur and beauty; and 4) seeing the non-human world as a pristine and original wilderness. Finally, I bring all the various pieces of this dissertation together in the concluding remarks of **Chapter 7**, where I reflect upon what it means to claim that nature in the Swedish national parks is shapeshifting. After that, you will find the bibliography and then my four papers.

CHAPTER TWO

Ontological and Epistemological Stances

2.1. An Ontological and Epistemological Reflection

Through the course of this dissertation, I intend to unravel, make visible, and problematize how the non-human world is constructed through the ways of seeing it enabled by the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture. I also strive to make my own ways of seeing visible because, as a researcher, I am not a blank page who investigates the world that I am studying from an objective angle. Instead, I am a product of my previous experience and how I understand and interact with the surrounding world and the phenomena under study (see Jamal & Everett, 2010; Mirzoeff, 2015). Thus, my view of what research is, and also how it can and should be done, influences how the studies I conduct turn out. This is what lays the foundations for this dissertation, and because of this, it becomes important to reflect upon my ontological and epistemological stances in an attempt to be reflexive and transparent (Pink, 2013; Rose, 2017). The ontological aspects concern how I see the world and the phenomena within it, while the epistemological ones concern the ways in which I consider it possible to explain and study that world with the phenomena that belong to it (Harvey, 1996). Or, as Jamal and Everett (2010) describe it: ‘epistemology is [...] having to do with the nature and conditions of knowledge,’ while ‘ontology is concerned with the nature of existence’ (p. 2). Grounded in this, I want to reflect upon my own ways of seeing as a researcher, through which I look upon and come to know the world that surrounds me.

2.1.1. What does an Interest in Ways of Seeing (and Visual Culture) Imply?

A central concept in this dissertation is *ways of seeing*. To me, directing interest towards ways of seeing means being interested in worldviews and the possibilities they offer in terms of understanding and ‘seeing’ different phenomena (Berger, 1972). Or, as H. Foster (1998) expressed the idea, it concerns an interest in ‘how we see, how we are able, allowed, or made to see, and how we see this seeing and the unseeing therein’ (p. ix). However, this is not how seeing has traditionally been approached within research. In contrast, various research fields have approached and used the concept of seeing to describe how we physically see with our eyes. Within such contexts, our seeing is understood as something objective and inborn, which is only connected to the eyes (Hentschel, 2014; Jenks, 1995). In contrast, I approach seeing as a process in which several sets of sensory feedback within the whole body are involved (see Mirzoeff, 2015). Hence, seeing becomes something that we actively do. It is not given – it is a cultural construction that we learn how to do and cultivate (Berger, 1972; Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; Mirzoeff, 2015; Mitchell, 2002). This indicates that ways of seeing always have a historical grounding but are also ‘deeply involved with human

societies, with the ethics and politics, aesthetics and epistemology of seeing and being seen' (Mitchell, 2002, p. 166). As Mirzoeff (2015, p. 73) puts it:

the point here is that we do not actually 'see' with our eyes but with our brains. [...] Seeing the world is not about how we see but about what we make of what we see. We put together an understanding of the world that makes sense from what we already know or think we know.

He continues by arguing that 'it takes a brain to see, not just a pair of eyes' (p. 82). Thus, the relation between the seen and the known is in a constant state of exchange, which in turn is a product of how we look at the seen, and what we think we know about it, but also how we view our own relation to it. From this point of view, looking is always an act of choice that influences what we actually see (Berger, 1972). Taking inspiration from this, I approach seeing as a process that springs from tensions between our inner thought processes and phenomena that we encounter and are exposed to externally, such as images or objects (Burnett, 1995; Hooper-Greenhill, 2000). As Bateson (1972) once explained after asking his audience to raise their hands if they agreed that they saw him: 'Of course, you don't "really" see me. What you "see" is a bunch of pieces of information about me, which you synthesize into a picture image of me. You make up that image. It's that simple' (p. 478). One example of how this could be made more comprehensible is the picture of the 'duck-rabbit' (Figure 7).

Figure 7. What do you see when looking at this picture? A duck? A rabbit? Or something else entirely?
Draftsman: Unknown

The duck-rabbit was drawn by an anonymous artist and originally published in a humorous German magazine in 1892 but became famous after being used by the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein in his reflections on different ways of seeing. He used it to explain that, when looking at the picture, some people will see a rabbit while others will see a duck. Or both. His point was that, as humans, we see different things when looking, and thus have different ways of seeing the world. This reasoning about the importance of reflecting upon how our seeing is influenced by our worldviews and previous experience can be transferred to my analytical context. In Figure 8, there is a photograph of the non-human world. Or, perhaps a forest among many others? Or rather an inviting playground? A fir tree whose wood is spiraling around its trunk? Autumn colors? A piece of nature? A space that offers an escape from the stressful city? A place where blueberries could be found? Or a primeval forest? A scary and frightening scene? Or something else entirely?

Figure 8. What do you see when looking at this photograph?

As I argued in the introduction, ways of seeing produced through the national parks and their tourism are part of their visual culture. Visual cultures have always been part of human histories, even though not all human cultures have been centered around visual dimensions (Hentschel, 2014). Briefly explained, they:

encompass specific modes of seeing and surveying, pattern recognition and visual interpretation, favorite aids and instruments for improving or supporting this

viewing (e.g., telescopes) and for temporary or permanent recording of these observations (e.g., cameras), adopted media or the distribution and multiplication of these visual records (inscriptions, print, digital storage, etc.), and preferred visual objects, as well as modes of viewing and communicating. (Hentschel, 2014, p. 83–84)

However, it needs to be clarified that the term ‘visual culture’ refers both to the name of an academic field and the name of the object of study (Mirzoeff, 2015; Mitchell, 2002). As an object of study, visual culture is the visual construction of the social field (Mitchell, 2002), which indicates that it represents both the relation between the visible and the invisible and also the names that we assign to the seen and the unseen (Mirzoeff, 2015). This further implies that, in relation to Swedish national parks and their tourism, I am interested in their visual culture and how different ways of seeing are expressed and constructed through that culture. To grasp different ways of seeing, I focus both on the production of environmental knowledge and how this is produced visually. I also focus on what has been made to be (un)seen about the non-human world. This includes studying how the non-human is pictured and seen, which influences how humans interact, approach, and act towards it.

The research field of visual culture originated from ‘cultural studies’ and is an interdisciplinary field (e.g., Aiello & Parry, 2020; Bal, 2003; J. Evans & Hall, 1999; Hentschel, 2014; Mirzoeff, 2009, 2013). It pays attention to questions of visibility (Rose, 2016); ‘the visual construction of the social field’ (Mitchell, 2005, p. 345), and also the role played by the visual in cultural contexts (Mirzoeff, 2009) and social life (Rose, 2016). One of the main interests within visual cultural studies is researching ways of seeing and how they have been discursively and historically constructed (e.g., Berger, 1972; Miller, 1993; Mirzoeff, 2015; Patin, 1999). In relation to this, studies of visual culture often emphasize the importance of researching visual empirical materials (such as photographs, films, drawings, videogames, or paintings) (Rose, 2016), since these can make embodied representations and visualities perceptible (Crouch & Lübbren, 2003). A common misconception about the field is that it ‘only’ deals with researching images or media, but as Mitchell (2002) explains:

Visual culture is not limited to the study of images or media, but extends to everyday practices of seeing and showing, especially those that we take to be immediate or unmediated. It is less concerned with the meaning of images than with their lives and loves. (p. 170)

Even though images and media are not the only interest in visual culture research, they do play a central role and are often used to understand ways of seeing and showing, or other aspects of social life (Rose, 2016). The reason for this is that the visual

is the primary organizing sense in relation to ways of seeing and visual culture (Urry & Larsen, 2011), which indicates that it ‘organizes the place, role, and effect of the other senses’ (Larsen & Svabo, 2014, pp. 108-109). Returning to tourism practices and their visual cultures, they have a strong focus on the visual dimensions of tourist experiences, which are often centered on gazing towards certain views, scenes, or spaces. Thus, tourism practices create touristic ways of seeing certain phenomena and places. However, it is important to remember that these are not isolated to the tourism industry only. The people who construct particular ways of seeing as tourists are also involved in various other parts and practices of the wider society. Just like their ways of seeing. This suggests that analyses of tourism visual cultures and ways of seeing can not only provide insights into tourists’ worldviews and understandings but are also valuable for gaining insights into what is happening within that wider society (Urry & Larsen, 2011).

2.1.2. A Critical and Problematizing Way of Seeing and Doing Research: Approaching Nature as Socially Constructed

I situate this dissertation as part of a critical branch within the humanities where the intention is not to solve or develop solutions to already defined societal problems. Instead, the intent is to critically analyze a certain phenomenon or context in order to gain an understanding of what is taken for granted and then reflect upon the constructions of this. Thus, criticism could be seen as ‘a structure of thought and knowledge existing in its own right’ (Frye, 2000, p. 5). This structure of thought not only problematizes what the productive effects of the taken for granted are but also presents alternative understandings that are well anchored in empirical investigations. This implies that criticism deals both with the structure of different empirical contexts and also with the social environments that shape those contexts (Frye, 1973). Not uncommonly, there is a desire for change involved in this endeavor, whereby the researcher wants to stir up the nest (Demeritt, 2006; Eagleton, 1983; Frye, 1973, 2000; C. Gibson, 2019; Mirzoeff, 2013; Sandywell & Heywood, 2017) and make room for other stories than the taken for granted ones (Descola, 2013a; Munar & Jamal, 2016; Paul, Katherine, Paul, & Matt, 2015; Pritchard, Morgan, & Ateljevic, 2012; Rutherford, 2011). From my perspective, such a critical ethos and the courage to question the unquestionable are some of the most essential components of the humanities of our time because, through such an approach, we can reveal our normative stances, identify their consequences, and also lay the foundations for constructive changes.

One researcher who has particularly inspired me in my critical pursuit, the ways in which I design my work, and my research ethos is the French philosopher Michel Foucault (1926–1984). A red thread running throughout his work is an approach to

phenomena and concepts as socially constructed, especially those that have been taken for granted and considered unquestionable and static (e.g., Foucault, 1991a, 1994, 2006). Thus, he approached his objects of study as dependent upon the existence of human thoughts about them, which means that they would not exist outside those kinds of relationships and structures (Foucault, 2000). He was interested, for example, in the construction of homosexuality as a disease (Foucault, 1998) or how physiological illnesses were positioned as products of madness (Foucault, 1994). In his analyses of such phenomena, he developed an analytical approach of problematization, meaning that he paid attention to how different ways of seeing, notions, and ideas traveled through time, emphasizing what appeared to be self-evident. But it did not stop there. The core of his problematizations was to elaborate upon potential productive effects of notions and ideas, and also to reflect upon the implications that they might have for different relations, contexts, or beings (Foucault, 1986, 1991c). My critical ethos is centered around striving to understand how ways of seeing the non-human world in Swedish national parks are enabled by their tourism and visual culture, and also seeking to trace their connections and interrelations, as well as how they have been embodied, and how they have produced different truths.

In this way, I intend to discuss the consequences that might follow for how humans understand the non-human and our relation to it. The core of all of this lies in my concern with the normative and naturalized approach to nature as something that is static and separated from humans and our comprehension. Like Foucault and many of the other critical researchers whom I have mentioned up until now, I begin with the understanding that the world (as we know it) and everything within it is socially constructed. This indicates that I also approach nature as something that comes into being through humans' lines of thought. This contrasts with how it is approached in many Western contexts (Descola, 2013b; Fletcher, 2016) and not least in relation to national parks and their tourism (Holden, 2016; Lund, 2013). Thus, the research that I conduct has a social constructivist orientation. There exist several social constructivist approaches, with some researchers using it as a kind of refutation and others in more philosophical terms (Hacking, 1999). I would situate myself within the latter, which means that I pose a philosophical critique by problematizing one of our time's most taken for granted phenomena – nature. How nature is understood, approached, and constructed has changed over time and will continue to change in the future (Castree, 2014; Mitchell, 2005). Currently, we live in a time when nature, culture, and their histories are generally regarded as fundamentally separate realms. This is problematic in many ways (Williams, 2014); not least, since the human and the non-human have evolved and coexisted alongside each other for thousands of years and thus been mediated through one and another (N. Smith, 1984).

Furthermore, renderings of nature as external to humanity and something that is in desperate need of safeguarding erase the social and discursive dimensions of nature (Braun & Castree, 1998; Wilson, 2019), with the consequence ‘that the nature to be preserved simply reflects our own social values and anxieties’ (Braun & Castree, 1998, p. 34). As Escobar (1996, p. 46) writes: ‘It is necessary to reiterate the connections between the making and evolution of nature and the making of the discourses and practices through which nature is historically produced and known.’ Thus, the ways in which humans construct nature have been shaped throughout history with its social and representational practices, which form our understanding of reality and the world (Braun & Castree, 1998). A common critique of social constructivist approaches taking this orientation is that they ignore the materialist attributes of nature by arguing that humans have physically set up the whole world and everything within it. Another part of this critique is directed towards social constructivists’ ‘undermining’ of the human ability to contest environmental degradation since they have given up the existence of a biophysical reality (e.g., Derby, Piersol, & Blenkinsop, 2015; Kidner, 2000).

In contrast, I believe that these approaches argue that nature and other phenomena are real in a materialist sense at the same time as they are being symbolically constructed (see Mels, 1999). This indicates that the phenomenon called ‘nature’ and all the beings, objects, and places that it composes are not nature in themselves, but rather represent what we as humans have chosen to call nature (Bateson & Bateson, 1987; Urban & Rhoads, 2003). Thus, social constructivist approaches have not given up the existence of a physical reality but, rather, such allow ‘for a more nuanced appreciation of ways in which specific constellations of humans and nonhumans are connected across the traditional nature-culture divide’ (Fletcher, 2016, p. 6). As with the duck-rabbit, there is a visual product that pinpoints and exemplifies this – René Magritte’s painting entitled *The Treachery of Images* (*This is Not a Pipe*), which he painted in 1929. The painting depicts a pipe and the text: ‘Ceci n’est pas un pipe’ (This is not a pipe). Magritte’s point was that the painting *portrayed* a pipe but was not, in fact, a pipe. Neither was the word ‘pipe’ below. In this way, Magritte played with the relation between the visual, the oral, and material reality. In other words, he played with how the words we use are connected to the phenomena they are supposed to depict and how all of this is connected to the thing that we call reality. From such a standpoint, reality ‘can only be reached from within particular human modes and lexicons of experience and practice’ (Mels, 1999, p. 3). Foucault later used Magritte’s painting in his problematizations of the relation between visibility, language, and reality, which he argued were all socially constructed (Foucault, 2008).

Figure 9. A picture of 'The Treachery of Images (This is Not a Pipe)'. ©René Magritte

Magritte's pipe is a good example of how phenomena are constructed and reconstructed. It touches upon the kind of approach that I am posing in this dissertation as well. The core of my problematization concerns the broader question of how humans see the non-human world and their own relation to it, but also how these understandings might have an impact on how the human world encounters and interacts with it. From such a standpoint, I do not deny the 'naturalness' or materiality of nature in the parks. Instead, I emphasize its functioning as a cultural formation and its inseparability from culture (see Gordon-Walker, 2019; Grusin, 2004; Mels, 1999; Wilson, 2019; Wöbse, 2012). This situates my research within a context of studies concerning the intersection between nature and culture (Bird Rose, 2015; Castree, 2014; Cronon, 1996; Demeritt, 2001; Grusin, 2004; Patin, 2012b), which could be seen as related to the kind of reflections in which Magritte and Foucault engaged. If I were to create a painting similar to Magritte's, but with a connection to my research subject, it would look something like the 'painting' in Figure 10.

Figure 10. This is not nature.

As already mentioned, national parks are often approached as prominent environmental organizations that have a given role in our modern societies (Gissibl et al., 2012; Grusin, 2004; Mels, 1999; Patin, 2012b). Questioning them and their tourism from a social constructivist approach that takes inspiration from Michel Foucault carries the risk of being taken for a climate skeptic who does not believe in environmental – or climate – change (see Rutherford, 2011). Furthermore, questioning the very ‘existence’ of a ‘natural’ nature and approaching it as something that is socially constructed might be offensive to many. Due, not least, to the self-evident character that nature has been assigned, but also because it has become so unreflectively bound up with contemporary understandings and norms of what the natural world represents (Olgwig, 1995). But this does not mean that I find it worthless to scrutinize and problematize the normative notions produced in relation to those phenomena. In contrast, as I have tried to explain, it is crucial to question the components of our social worlds that we consider to be essential and self-evident (Foucault, 1988b; Harvey, 1996; Jameson, 1994) because:

It is the very act of critique that we might find different definitions of what we come to know as nature, different ways of encountering it, and different means to make this encounter more just. (Rutherford, 2011, p. 184)

My hope is to shed light on the implications that might come along with ways of seeing the non-human world, which have so far been relegated to the shadows of the self-evident within the context of Swedish national park tourism. Through such illumination, I hope that this dissertation will contribute to stimulating reflection among those who read it. Because I believe that it is by means of such reflections that we can become aware of the consequences of our constructions of the non-human, and it is also within these that we can make changes and strive towards more non-human-friendly actions and approaches (Bird Rose, 2015; Wilson, 2019). To achieve this, we need to take responsibility for and reflect upon the notions of nature that we produce and what the productive effects of these notions are. We also need to find analytical tools that help us to scrutinize them, and political tools through which we can make changes (Braun & Castree, 1998; N. Smith, 1984).

2.1.3. A Reflection on My Use of the Concepts of 'the Non-Human World' and 'Nature' in Preference to the 'More-than-Human World'

As part of my analysis and critique, I use the concepts of *nature* and the *non-human world* closely together. Described simply, the concept of the non-human world functions as the analytical lens through which I try to understand how humans construct and understand the parts of the world that they consider to stand outside of the human realm. The empirical concept that can provide me with such examples and thus enable me to study this is the concept of nature, which has become the label for describing and referring to the non-human world within Western societies (Castree, 2014; Descola, 2013b; Harvey, 1996). This includes the contexts of national parks (Grusin, 2004; Mels, 1999; Patin, 2012b) and nature-based tourism (Fletcher, 2016; Holden, 2015, 2016). Many researchers before me, who have engaged with the kinds of questions that I raise in this dissertation, have used several different terminologies to problematize the relationship between 'nature' and 'culture,' and also the social construction of these concepts (Castree, 2005; Fletcher, 2016). Some of the most commonly used are *nature* and *culture*, *the non-human world* and *the human world*. Not infrequently, all these words have been used in conjunction within individual studies (e.g., Castree, 2014; Descola, 2013a; Soper, 1995) to problematize the construction of nature and the non-human world.

Even though many researchers who use and have used the concept of nature clearly demonstrate that they are not interested in understanding or researching nature per se, but rather the social and cultural realities that we have created around the piece of the world that we call nature (e.g., Castree, 2005; Castree & Braun, 1998; Demeritt, 2001; Descola, 2013a; Escobar, 1996; Karlsdóttir, 2013; Lund, 2013; Soper, 1995; Urban & Rhoads, 2003), I have chosen to place the concept of the non-human world at the center of my study. This is due to the normative and naturalized char-

acter of the concept of nature and my own critique of the understandings tied to that word, and also because I find the concept of the non-human world more neutral to work with. Despite the different uses and terminologies within studies concerning this topic, researchers engaged in this kind of research share an engagement with decentering the human in favor of the non-human and problematizing normative and naturalized ways of seeing nature (e.g., Bateson, 1979; Bird, 1987; Bird Rose, 2015; Castree, 2001; Castree & Braun, 1998; Chaloupka & Cawley, 1993; Cronon, 1996; Demeritt, 2001; Descola, 2013a; Soper, 1995).

Over the last two centuries, several *non-human turns* have taken place, whereby researchers have engaged with these questions from a range of different perspectives and research fields. The first tendencies in this direction can be traced to the beginning of the 1800s, while the most recent has been described as the non-human turn of the late 1900s and early 2000s (Grusin, 2015). This dissertation could thus be seen as part of that ongoing non-human turn, due to my focus on problematizing human understandings of the relationship between the human and non-human, and its situating in the 2000s. Research of this kind, with its interest in the relationship between something that is human and something that is non-human has been criticized because it ‘feeds’ the already existing and normative approaches to nature and human as separate, rather than challenging them (e.g., Fletcher, 2016; Maller, 2021). In response to this, a new turn with similarities to the non-human turn has evolved – the *posthuman turn*. Like the non-human turn, this focuses on decentering the human favor over the non-human but is more involved in dissociating from and reducing the nature–culture divide within analyses and different research processes. Hence, the concepts of nature, culture, non-human, and human are rarely used, and are instead replaced by *the more-than-human world*. This concept is used to underline that the world is more than human, without stressing any differences between things that might be human or non-human (Grusin, 2015). Thus, the use of this term strives towards resituating humans and our relation to other beings, and thereby opposing the Western notion that humans and nature are separate (Haraway, 2015). It is often used in relation to, and has derived from, relational thinking (Whatmore, 2002), which centers around understanding, studying, and experiencing the world and phenomena within it in performative, material, and dynamic ways, instead of ‘rational’ ones (J. Bennett, 2010; Haraway, 2015). Briefly described:

the idea is to try to see beyond human rationality, dissolve binary or oppositional categories that elevate ‘people’ above ‘nature’, and recognise the agencies, and dependencies, of a range of living and non-living non-human actors including plants, animals and ecosystems. (Maller, 2021, p. 4)

This move away from human-centrism focuses on illustrating how the agency of non-humans can be seen, heard, and recognized within different contexts, such as research (Maller, 2021). Even though I agree with the argument that we live in a world that is more than human, and that we could make more conscious and non-human-friendly decisions if we saw ourselves as kin to other beings, I would lose several critical points, and perhaps even the core of my problematization, if I used the concept of the more-than-human world instead of talking about the non-human world and the human world. As Descola (2013a, p. 8) explains, “nature” only has meaning when set in opposition to human works, whether one chooses to call these “culture,” “society,” or “history.” I am interested in human ways of seeing and relating to the world that we call nature within the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture. Furthermore, the Western nature–culture dichotomy is strongly present concerning national parks (Grusin, 2004; Jamal & Everett, 2010; Patin, 2012b; Rutherford, 2011), their tourism (Gössling & Hultman, 2006; Holden, 2015; Lund, 2013), and also in Swedish nature conservation in general (Lundgren, 2009, 2011, 2013; Mels, 1999).

Therefore, I find it necessary to address this dichotomy. In fact, it was this particular dualism that initially sparked my interest in conducting this kind of research. It is part of my critical pursuit, and it is what I problematize throughout this dissertation. Ignoring it or using concepts that diminish it are therefore not options for me, since that would render invisible the fundamental relationship that originally attracted my interest. To understand such a relationship of production, I find it necessary to make distinctions by positioning the human and the non-human in relation to each other. Otherwise, I would not be able to address the nuances of the context that I am studying (see Adorno, 1990). With that said, my ontological and epistemological stances should not be confused with my interest of analysis. As has become visible through the previous parts of this chapter, my ontological and epistemological stances are grounded in understandings of the world and knowledge as socially constructed, at the same time as I am decidedly critical of the nature–culture dichotomy that resides within Western contexts. This indicates that I share many ontological standpoints with researchers within the posthuman turn. However, epistemologically, there are several differences among us.

CHAPTER THREE

Outlining the Research Scene

3.1. Previous Studies: Problematizing Ways of Seeing the Non-Human World, National Parks, Tourism, and Visual Culture

Even though this dissertation takes inspiration from a myriad of different research fields and disciplines, there are primarily three research fields that have shaped its foundations: critical tourism studies, the environmental humanities, and visual culture. What unites these three fields is their problematizing and critical focus, where the taken for granted and self-evident are problematized and reflected upon. Critical tourism studies problematize tourism as a social phenomenon and practice (Ateljevic, Morgan, & Pritchard, 2012; Hannam & Knox, 2010; Shaw & Williams, 2001; Þór Jóhannesson, Ren, & van der Duim, 2015). The environmental humanities address questions of the nature–culture divide and the production of the non-human world within institutions such as national parks (Bird Rose, 2015; McKibben, 2006; Oppermann & Iovino, 2017; Wilson, 2019). Visual culture explores ways of seeing, and also how the visual is part of social life and vice versa (Bal, 2003; J. Evans & Hall, 1999; Mirzoeff, 2013; Mitchell, 2005). Within these research fields, there are relevant studies that problematize national parks, the construction of the non-human, ways of seeing within tourism practices, and the visual cultures of different national contexts.

However, there are very few researchers engaged in all three research fields simultaneously, to address questions of ways of seeing the non-human enabled by national park tourism and its visual culture. In fact, many of the studies that I present in this chapter do not touch upon all three research fields. Instead, they might cover one or two of them, while concurrently bringing in other ones. Some might even be situated outside of all three research fields while addressing related ones, such as cultural geography, tourism studies without a critical orientation, or environmental history. Nevertheless, the shared research scene in which they operate provides a palette of different approaches and offers a collection of studies that approach ways of seeing the non-human world, national park tourism, and/or visual culture from a myriad of research angles. Together, they have built the foundations for the research path that I am constructing with this dissertation. To make this path visible, in this chapter I will present three overall orientations that I have identified within previous studies and highlight specific topics among them. I will explain what take-home messages they have provided me with, how I have been inspired by them, the opportunities that I have identified to extend the insights of this kind of research further, and how my dissertation differs from what has already been achieved.

3.2. National Parks' Historical Constructions of the Non-Human

The historical development of national parks and how they have contributed to shaping notions of the non-human world over time is one of the themes that I have identified within previous research. With a focus on environmental protection, national parks, nationalism, and/or tourism during the late 1800s and the 1900s, these studies have dealt with histories of national parks from several corners of the world but with a special focus on the ones in the United States (Benson, 2012; Boime, 2012; Daniels, Harmon, Park, & Brayley, 2009; Frost & Hall, 2009a, 2009c; Grusin, 2004; Harper & White, 2012; Jones, 2012; Kupper, 2012; Mark, 2009; Martin, 2012). Other countries, unions, and realms that have been researched are Sweden (Lundgren, 2009, 2011; Mels, 1999, 2002, 2020; Sundin, 1989; Wall-Reinius, 2009), Russia (and the Soviet Union) (Roe, 2020), France, French colonies in Africa (Ford, 2012), Canada (Boyd & Butler, 2009; Harper & White, 2012; Martin, 2012), New Zealand, Australia (Harper & White, 2012; Martin, 2012; White & King, 2009; Young, 2009), Malaysia (Kathirithamby-Wells, 2012), Indonesia (Cochrane, 2009), British colonies in Asia (Kathirithamby-Wells, 2012; Lewis, 2012), Germany, German colonies in East Africa (Gissibl, 2012), Switzerland (Kupper, 2012), Nepal (Benson, 2012), Mexico (Wakild, 2012), the Netherlands (van der Windt, 2012), India (Lewis, 2012), Slovenia (Firouzeh Roeder, 2012), Spain (Medina Somoza, 2009), the United Kingdom (Crouch, Marson, Shirt, Tresidder, & Wiltshier, 2009; Sharpley, 2009), China (Honggang & Chaozhi, 2009), South Africa (Carruthers, 2009), and Finland (Puhakka & Saarinen, 2013). Additionally, there are also studies that have dealt with these kinds of questions from a more international perspective (Frost & Hall, 2009a, 2009b; C. M. Hall & Frost, 2009; Wöbse, 2012; Zeppel, 2009).

3.2.1. National Parks as National Protectors of a Wild Non-Human World

The first group of studies within this theme has focused on the historical development of national parks, with an emphasis on the parks as national bodies and protectors of the non-human world. Examples of topics that have been raised within this group are the establishment of national parks (e.g., Roe, 2020; van der Windt, 2012), national parks' participation in the production of national identities (e.g., Grusin, 2004; Harper & White, 2012; Kathirithamby-Wells, 2012), and initial notions of nature that were involved in the early establishment of parks (Benson, 2012; Ford, 2012; Gissibl, 2012; Grusin, 2004; Kathirithamby-Wells, 2012; Mels, 1999; van der Windt, 2012). In one way, the major research interest in national parks in the United States does not come as a surprise, because the country was the first in the world to establish national parks (Frost & Hall, 2009a; Grusin, 2004; Mark, 2009). Studies concerning these parks have focused on their historical development in terms of the

extent to which they were products of environmentalism and nature conservation. Among these, it has been argued that the parks were initiated as part of the country's national heritage and centered around the idea of preserving areas of wilderness character, which meant 'natural' areas with little human intrusion (Frost & Hall, 2009c; Grusin, 2004).

Several other studies have argued that these establishments can be seen as the result of white European imperialist encounters with the non-human world, which have been very much centered around ideals of wilderness and expressing ownership over nature (Benson, 2012; Ford, 2012; Gissibl, 2012; Kathirithamby-Wells, 2012; van der Windt, 2012). From the very beginning, the American parks were products of nationalism that centered around constructing ideas of countries' identities, with a strong focus on their nature (Ford, 2012; Grusin, 1995; Harper & White, 2012; Jones, 2012). These ideals were then transferred to several other countries at the beginning of the 1900s (Frost & Hall, 2009a, 2009b; Gissibl et al., 2012; C. M. Hall & Frost, 2009; Lundgren, 2009; Mels, 1999), including Sweden (Lundgren, 2009, 2011; Mels, 1999). Research focusing on the early policymaking and nature conservation of the Swedish parks has illustrated that they too were represented as spaces of nationalism and wilderness archives that were 'empty' of any human presence (Lundgren, 2009, 2011, 2013; Mels, 2002, 2020; Sundin, 1989). Within this area of research, the point has been addressed that the three main spatialities of the Swedish national parks in the past and the present have been ones of nature, home, and scenery. In other words, the national parks have been presented as natural bodies of national character that have had and still have a visual orientation (Mels, 2002). These spatialities are very similar to those seen in relation to the parks in the United States (Grusin, 2004).

Other studies have shown that countries and unions such as the Soviet Union, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and the Netherlands took different directions. For example, the establishment of the first Soviet and Dutch parks were not as focused on the idea of wilderness (Roe, 2020; van der Windt, 2012). In the Netherlands, the non-human world and the human world were seen as interlinked parts of the national parks, and they were seen as products of both cultural and natural character. This stood in sharp contrast to the ideals of the European colonial sovereignties that characterized the parks in the United States, which made the parks primarily approached as natural products (van der Windt, 2012). Regardless of whether national parks were seen as products of nature or culture, a common theme found in several countries was that they functioned as mediators of nations and their identities (Frost & Hall, 2009b; Harper & White, 2012; Kathirithamby-Wells, 2012), at the same time as they were approached as environmental organizations that protected the non-human world (Boyd & Butler, 2009; Ford, 2012; Jones, 2012; Sharpley, 2009). Even though

some studies within this theme have problematized a country's national parks as one united body, the majority have been analytically designed with a focus on a smaller number of parks (e.g., Benson, 2012; Boyd & Butler, 2009; Carruthers, 2009; Firouzeh Roeder, 2012; Grusin, 2004; Jones, 2012; Martin, 2012), or have used specific parks as case studies to address various questions in one book (e.g., Mels, 1999; Roe, 2020).

Since I am not interested in specific parks, but rather in the ways of seeing that are enabled by the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture, I am not only approaching the national parks as a united body but also, as will soon become apparent, taking a broader analytical approach whereby I deal with all of Sweden's 30 national parks. Thus, this is one point on which my dissertation differs from these previous studies. If I had taken a narrower analytical approach and only focused on a handful of parks, I think that it would have become difficult for me to trace the intensification of tourism that the national parks as one united phenomenon are currently facing. Furthermore, even though some of the cited studies deal with a few aspects of the visual and visibility, and/or have used some visual materials (see Grusin, 2004; Mels, 1999, 2002), none of them have paid attention to questions of visual culture in relation to the histories of national parks. Thus, there is also room for more historical studies that focus on national park tourism and its visual culture, not least due to the centrality accorded to visibility and visual experiences in contemporary societies (Mirzoeff, 2013; Rose, 2016) and in national park tourism (Bednar, 2012; Cronin, 2011; Jamal & Everett, 2010; Patin, 2012b). Once again, historical studies have the potential of enabling us to understand the present by looking at the past and, in this, visual culture plays an important role (Burke, 2019).

Yet another way in which these studies differ from my dissertation is that most of them do not pay particular attention to the construction of the non-human world. Instead, they focus on the construction of national parks as a phenomenon and trace the histories of this, while only occasionally touching upon notions of nature. However, many of the studies mentioned in this theme have been important in increasing my understanding of how national parks have developed over time, and even though they have not focused particularly on social constructions of the non-human world, several of them touch upon such questions. For example, as I have illustrated, several studies have highlighted national parks as protectors of wild nature (Frost & Hall, 2009c; Grusin, 2004; Lundgren, 2009), and these have supported me in my analytical understanding of notions of national park nature as wild.

3.2.2. National Parks as Tourism Destinations Related to Environmentalism

Another group of studies has focused on the relationship between national parks, tourism, and environmentalism from a historical perspective (e.g., Carruthers, 2009; Fredman & Sandell, 2014; Frost & Hall, 2009c; Mark, 2009; Medina Somoza, 2009; Roe, 2020; Young, 2009). Examples of the questions on which these studies have focused are the early role of tourism in the establishment of national parks (e.g., Boyd & Butler, 2009; Lundgren, 2009; Medina Somoza, 2009; Roe, 2020), its relation to and impact on indigenous lands (e.g., Young, 2009; Zeppel, 2009), and the values and ideological stances that tourism has imposed on national parks historically, such as patriotism and romanticism (e.g., Medina Somoza, 2009; Wall-Reinius, 2009). Several studies have shown that tourism was considered a central part of the early park establishment in many countries, including Sweden (Boyd & Butler, 2009; Grusin, 2004; Lundgren, 2009, 2011; Medina Somoza, 2009; Mels, 1999; Roe, 2020). However, in contrast to the Swedish parks (Lundgren, 2009, 2011; Mels, 1999), other countries have developed much stronger traditions of tourism. Two examples are the United States and the Soviet Union, where the relationship between tourism and environmentalism has been central to the national parks and their functioning (Grusin, 2004; Roe, 2020).

Some studies have shown that Sweden was not alone in facing opposition to allowing tourism in the parks (Lundgren, 2009, 2011; Mels, 1999). For example, national parks in Switzerland (Kupper, 2012), the United Kingdom (Sharpley, 2009), and French colonies of Africa (Ford, 2012) were characterized by natural scientific interests and environmentalism, where the exclusion of any human presence was fundamental and desired. Tourism, which was considered a human and commercial interest, became seen as the nemesis to the parks and nature conservation (Ford, 2012; Kupper, 2012; Sharpley, 2009). Despite this, tourism has been identified as an integral part of national park histories worldwide (Frost & Hall, 2009a; C. M. Hall & Frost, 2009; Lundgren, 2009; Mels, 1999; Roe, 2020), which indicates that it has contributed to shaping people's understandings of the relationship between the human world and the non-human world. Even so, constructions of ways of seeing the non-human within tourism practices have been overlooked within this kind of study. Like the studies presented in the previous group, few of these have problematized or paid particular attention to constructions of the non-human world within national park tourism. Roe (2020) has analyzed the histories of tourism, environmental protection, and national parks in the twentieth century in the Soviet Union and Russia, but without a specific focus on the construction of the non-human. Studies focusing specifically on the latter, such as this dissertation, could help us to understand how

ways of seeing have travelled through time, and also provide insights into the origins of our contemporary ways of seeing.

Although some previous studies have touched upon questions of tourism in relation to the history of the Swedish national parks, their main focus has been the development of the country's nature conservation movement (Lundgren, 2009, 2011) and policymaking around the national parks (Mels, 1999). Outside of the national park context, there exist a few studies that have dealt with the historical relation between the Swedish tourism movement and its interest in, and relationship with, the non-human world (Emmelin, 1989; Erlandson-Hammargren, 2006; Ödmann et al., 1982). One of these, Erlandson-Hammargren (2006), has paid particular attention to notions of nature developed within the Swedish Tourist Association between the years 1885 and 1915, although with no particular focus on national parks. Nevertheless, that study has provided me with important examples of how Swedish nature, in general terms, was approached and understood around the time when the first Swedish national parks were being established. For example, it has provided me with an understanding of romantic notions of nature as a wild treasury to be defeated. Nevertheless, up until now, no studies have dealt specifically with questions of how tourism practices have contributed to shaping ways of seeing the non-human world in Swedish national parks over time.

There exists one study written by Puhakka and Saarinen (2013), which addresses the role of tourism in Finnish national park planning, where tourism's relation to the national parks and nature conservation has been traced over time. That study has shown that the Finnish parks, like the Swedish ones, currently face an intensification of tourism. However, like the Swedish studies, this one does not focus particularly on the social construction of the non-human world, but rather on the role of tourism. Returning to the Swedish context, two studies have highlighted the intensification of tourism that the national parks are currently facing. In particular, these studies have traced a shift within national park planning (Mels, 2020) and conservation policy (Zachrisson et al., 2006), which has led to an increased focus on commercializing the Swedish national parks. However, neither of them has brought together the long and contested histories of national park policymaking and tourism. Mels (2020) researched official documents relating to national park planning, while Zachrisson et al. (2006) analyzed interviews and policy documents connected to three cases. This implies that no studies have traced ways of seeing the non-human world enabled by the practice of Swedish national park tourism from the establishment of the first national parks up until contemporary times. Such studies are important because they could help us understand the present by looking at the past. This is something to which I hope to contribute through this dissertation.

As can be seen in the overview of this dissertation's papers, one of them focuses on past representations (1870–2021) as a way of diagnosing, tracing, and understanding contemporary ways of seeing the non-human world and where they originated. In relation to that paper, I have gathered much inspiration from the above-mentioned studies, in particular those focusing on historical developments and the establishment of national parks. Their investigation of how the non-human was approached during those establishments has been central to my understanding of the Swedish context. They have enabled me to place the Swedish national parks in relation to other national and international contexts, and have also helped me to understand the broader context of my identified ways of seeing. For example, Grusin (2004) and Mels (1999) have both addressed representations of the non-human world as wilderness, while Benson (2012), Ford (2012), Gissibl (2012), Kathirithamby-Wells (2012), and van der Windt (2012) have discussed them as related to European imperialism, morals viewing culture and nature as separate, and human ownership and domination over nature. Another concept that several of these studies have provided me with is an inspiration about approaching nature as socially constructed.

Several of the studies mentioned within this theme have dealt with national parks as mediators of nature, and several have emphasized or focused on the social construction of nature. Hence, national parks have been approached as national institutions that contribute to shaping humans' understanding of what nature is and how it should be approached (e.g., Benson, 2012; Grusin, 2004; Mels, 1999; Wöbse, 2012). For example, one of the main arguments of Mels (1999), who was interested in 'the labour that fashions and transforms space' (p. 8) in Swedish national parks, was that they represent reinvented nature and not pieces of static nature that have nothing to do with how humans imagine them. Similarly, Grusin (2004) problematized the relationship between nature and culture through an exploration of how nature in the parks of the United States 'has acted within the cultural and historical field of representation in the last half of the nineteenth century' (p. xv). Through this, he exemplified how national parks function as technologies that produce and reproduce nature, and notions of it, based upon cultural, scientific, and aesthetic practices. Related to these approaches, Wöbse (2012) problematized the dualism between nature and culture that white male Western scientists and lobbyists assigned to the national park discourse during the late 1800s and the beginning of the 1900s. In many ways, their focus on wilderness characteristics contributed to the division between nature and culture, while also claiming human ownership of the non-human world in the national parks.

3.3. The Role of the Visual and Visual Culture in National Parks' Construction of the Non-Human World

Despite the limited focus on visual cultural aspects within the studies presented in the previous theme, there exists a plethora of studies outside of the historical sphere dealing with questions of visual culture, national parks, tourism, and ways of seeing the non-human world. Like many of the historical ones, these studies have a firm Northern American orientation. In fact, only national parks in Canada (Cronin, 2011, 2013) and the United States (Bednar, 2012; Bergman, 2012; Boime, 2012; Chaloupka, 2012; Clark, 2012; Germic, 2012; Grusin, 1995; John, 2012; Lippard, 1999; Neumann, 2012; Opel, 2002; Patin, 1999, 2012a, 2012b; Peters, 2012; Spurlock, 2012; Tschida, 2012; Wilke, 2012) are represented. This means that, currently, the empirical focus for these types of studies is geographically narrow and needs to be broadened.

3.3.1. The Visual Culture of National Parks and its Construction of Nature

One group of studies within this theme deals with visual culture in relation to national parks and their construction of nature. Even though several studies within the other groupings also deal with aspects of the visual culture of national parks and their tourism, the ones presented here do it in a more explicit way. Up until now, studies within this group have researched, for example, how 'visual imagery shapes conceptions of nature' (Cronin, 2011, p. 1), the visual rhetorical framing of national parks as natural and national heritages (John, 2012), and 'how individuals come to understand themselves in relation to the environment as citizens whose identification with particular narratives of public memory also serves to situate them as environmental subjects' (Spurlock, 2012, p. 248). Many of these studies have approached national parks as tourist spaces that contribute to shaping notions of nature and have also had a focus on how such notions are produced through visual means (e.g., Bednar, 2012; Cronin, 2011, 2013; Patin, 2012b). Above all, they have been of inspiration to me concerning researching ways of seeing the non-human and working with concepts tied to visual culture, such as visibility. They have also provided me with arguments for why national parks are interesting and important to study from a visual or visual cultural perspective when addressing tourist constructions of the non-human world of national parks.

Within these studies, for example, the national parks have been emphasized as ideal places for examining visual aspects and their relation to the construction of nature, since they represent 'those spaces [...] that stand for a seemingly untouched natural world, that act as sites of national identity rooted in the land, and where we find some of the most intense debates on land-use policies' (Patin, 2012b, p. xii). Here, a visual focus has been promoted as something that enables analyses of

‘strategic uses, functions, and operations of a wide range of visual signifying materials and practices [...] used in addressing an audience in order to accomplish some kind of goal’ (Patin, 2012b, p. xv). National parks have also been described as spaces in which visual culture has played a significant role in how the non-human is understood, as well as the relationship between the cultural and the natural:

Throughout their histories, National Parks have provided a ‘contact zone’ in which ‘nature’ and ‘culture’ collide, each helping to define the other. Ideas about what constitutes ‘nature’ and what constitutes ‘culture’ are specific to each historical time period and place, as are ideas about what is acceptable behavior in these spaces. In other words, these are not static, easily identifiable concepts but, rather, are ideas that shift depending on a wide range of factors. (Cronin, 2013, p. 215)

In terms of their impact on this relationship, national parks have also been approached as institutions that contribute to the production of discourses on the non-human world (e.g., Cronin, 2011, 2013; Grusin, 1995; Lippard, 1999; Patin, 2012b; Tschida, 2012). It has also been argued that how the non-human is pictured in various visual materials has implications for environmental notions and questions (Cronin, 2011; Grusin, 1995; Lippard, 1999), rather than only functioning decoratively (Cronin, 2011). In other words, all of these studies approach nature as socially constructed and problematize how the non-human world comes into being through national parks, their tourist practices, and visual culture (e.g., Boime, 2012; Chaloupka, 2012; Cronin, 2013; John, 2012; Lippard, 1999; Peters, 2012). Their inclusion of all these subjects has been of major inspiration to me and has provided me with examples of why it is relevant to talk about how national park tourism and its visual culture construct ways of seeing the non-human, even as they have functioned as analytical contexts for comparison with the Swedish one. That has been valuable for me when analyzing my empirical materials but also when reflecting upon how the context that I study relates to other contexts.

To mention two examples of analytical arguments within this group of research that have been central to me, several studies have dealt with notions of the non-human world as wilderness (e.g., Boime, 2012; Cronin, 2011; Peters, 2012) and national parks as products of nationalism (e.g., Bergman, 2012; Boime, 2012; Cronin, 2011; John, 2012; Peters, 2012). They have also inspired me in relation to my critical ethos, since many of them question the taken for granted character of nature and conduct analyses of problematizing character. As with the historical studies, those presented here only deal with one or a small number of national parks, a focus that I will broaden through this dissertation as I address all of Sweden’s national parks. Something else I will contribute is detailed descriptions of how critical analyses with interest in researching ways of seeing the non-human world enabled by national park

tourism and its visual culture can be operationalized. Even though many of the mentioned studies within this group are empirically grounded, they are not always explicit in how the analysis has been planned and carried out.

3.3.2. The Role of Visual Technologies in Shaping Ideologies about the Natural Landscape in National Parks

Another topic within this theme is the role of display technologies (e.g., instructive installations or architecture) in shaping ideologies about the natural landscape in national parks. According to the studies dealing with this topic, display technologies seek to inform visiting tourists or make them aware of certain phenomena or places within the national parks by visually displaying the non-human (Bednar, 2012; Patin, 1999, 2012a; Senda-Cook, 2013). Traditionally, such displays have been approached as ‘innocent’ within many Western societies, but they have been problematized by current studies. For example, there have been requests to approach display technologies as highly mediated and discursive:

Analyzing the materiality of vision in the parks shows that how people experience space always already structures what they experience, and how they are embodied in particular spaces structures how and what they can see, know, represent, and even are when they are ‘in’ that space. (Bednar, 2012, p. 24)

These kinds of studies have been of major inspiration to me, in particular in relation to paper III, which also deals with technologies of display and their construction of the non-human world, as well as the relationship between the human and the non-human. One example of a topic in which they have inspired me is the relationship between visitors and display technologies. Several of these studies have a particular focus on natural landscapes, and have argued that display technologies influence the relationship between the national parks’ landscapes and their visitors (Bednar, 2012; Patin, 1999, 2012a; Senda-Cook, 2013). For example, the visual rhetorical impact that maps, trails, and signs could have on tourists has been researched, and they have been emphasized as mediators between visitors and the natural landscape. Hence, it has been argued that visitors’ understanding and experience of the natural landscapes in national parks will be influenced by the installations and the architecture that they encounter (Bednar, 2012; Senda-Cook, 2013). Research has also been conducted into how techniques borrowed from paintings and museums are implemented and used to present the natural landscape in national parks. Around the turn of the millennium, for example, architecture and installations in national parks in the United States were influenced by nineteenth-century paintings. This was visible not least through the ways in which the parks’ viewing platforms and outlooks were designed, which to a large extent focused on making the tourists into gazing subjects. They not only con-

structured a museological gaze among the visitors, but also a musealization process among the parks in the country. This implies that the landscapes in the parks were displayed using the logic of museums and their exhibition techniques, which is a way of bringing 'the museum into nature' (Patin, 1999, p. 48).

In this way, the relation between nature and culture has been problematized through a focus on spaces in national parks that are of a cultural character. It has been argued that the visual rhetoric and poetics of such spaces in the parks will influence how people look upon themselves and their relation to the non-human world (Patin, 2012a). These arguments about national parks facing a musealization process have also been a great source of inspiration to me, not least in my analytical understanding of the intensifying tourism that the Swedish parks currently face, in which the installation of instructive installations is a cornerstone. Other studies have problematized how scenic outlooks encourage visitors to look at the landscape from a 'safe' distance. Such an orientation creates distance between it and the visitors, whereby the display technologies make certain parts of the landscape visible and others invisible (Bednar, 2012).

Yet another string of studies has focused on architecture such as roads and bridges. For example, the development of car travel in Western U.S national parks has been analyzed, whereby the design of the national parks' roads has enabled visitors to experience the parks by car. Before the entry of cars, the main idea was to make visitor centers and lookout points blend into the landscape. This was a type of design that was quickly abandoned as the car-driving visitors arrived, and the focus instead changed towards leading visitors through the parks on roads (Peters, 2012). It has been argued that these kinds of architecture and their transformations over time influence the relationship between the human and the non-human (Clark, 2012; Peters, 2012). For example, Clark (2012) has illustrated how the first national parks in the United States had a rhetoric function of showing visitors not only what places where society and the natural world are at peace could look like, but also that such places are desirable and something that they had to both wish and work for. Memorial sites are another subject that has been considered in relation to display technologies. Such sites, with a focus on nature or the environment, could personify the non-human world and thus impact upon the environmental thoughts of visitors. Memories attached to memory sites and their interrelationship between loss and performance could be understood through a rhetorical lens, by which their relationships to, for example, histories or land use could be read (Chaloupka, 2012).

All of these studies have provided me with analytical examples that I can use when researching the Swedish context. Through their empirically grounded findings, they have illustrated how landscapes come into being through display technologies.

However, many of them do not present detailed explanations of how it is possible to analyze such. This underlines the importance of broadening such reasonings, which I provide in paper III. Even though the studies in this group touch upon ways of seeing the non-human world, a large majority of them do so with a focus on landscapes. As will become visible in my papers, I also discuss aspects of landscapes in my analyses, but this has not been my primary focus. With that said, I have gathered a great deal of inspiration from previous studies dealing with the construction of landscapes. Nevertheless, I think that the non-human world becomes embodied in more forms than just as a landscape. Thus, to deepen the understanding of human ways of seeing the non-human, more studies that focus specifically on the non-human world rather than landscapes are needed. Furthermore, like many of the studies presented under the historical theme, most of the studies in relation to this theme have focused on just one or a small number of national parks. This in-depth approach certainly has an important analytical value, but it needs to be combined with broader approaches, like the one taken within this thesis. Something else that makes this dissertation different in relation to the studies within this theme is the fact that I conduct analyses of empirical materials produced by different kinds of actors, such as governmental authorities, nature conservation actors, tourism actors, and tourists. In this way, I enable ways of seeing to be traced between different actors and empirical contexts. In contrast, many of the studies mentioned above (even though some of them are collected in anthologies) have analyzed empirical materials produced by just one type of actor.

3.3.3. The Visual Dimensions of Popular Culture, Informational Mediations, and Art in Constructing National Park Nature

Besides researching display technologies and architecture, several studies have also focused on the visual dimensions and impact of popular culture, art, and information materials for visitors. These include films, brochures, guidebooks, and magazines (Bergman, 2012; Neumann, 2012; Spurlock, 2012; Tschida, 2012). Similarly to display technologies, these have been emphasized as mediations that influence visitors and affect how they look upon the national parks and their non-human world during a visit (Tschida, 2012). For example, it has been analyzed how board games featuring national parks could nudge people into a capitalist tourist gaze if the games have a focus on exploration and consumption in relation to the parks. This relates to contemporary discourses around environmentalism and sustainable development, where visits to national parks are seen as environmentally friendly rather than something that could harm those spaces (Opel, 2002). Another example, with a stronger focus on information materials, concerns different kinds of films. In this thread, the ways in which visual rhetoric in and around orientation films in visitor centers stimulate

ideals of unity and loyalty have been researched. It is argued that such films have an educational purpose and offer visitors an introduction to the site they are visiting. Instead of just heading out into the park, visitors are strongly encouraged to watch such films first, which could be understood as a way of governing them into certain behaviors and ways of seeing (Bergman, 2012). Another kind of film – documentary films – has also been researched and these are highlighted as mediations that shape visitors' understandings of the national parks and their non-human world. Here, it has been illustrated how power operates through the films and by encouraging viewers into certain environmentally friendly views. This process makes the viewers 'green', or environmental subjects, which indicates that the films pose a kind of 'eco-governmentality or environmentality' (Spurlock, 2012, p. 248).

Focus has also been directed specifically towards stunt scenes in films from national parks, where they have been approached as components that can reveal changes in how meanings are depicted and ways of seeing constructed. In relation to Grand Canyon National Park, for example, it has been argued that the ways in which meaning was made regarding the site started to change when previously marginalized and alternative connotations that disrupted the established and traditional ones increased. Examples of such events are stunt scenes in films, where people jump the canyon on motorbikes or drive a car over an edge (Neumann, 2012). Yet another focus within this group of studies is the relation between visibility, national parks, and art. Here, paintings and their visual rhetoric have been analyzed from different angles. Alike many of the studies on installations and architecture, these have focused more on the construction of landscape than on the construction of the non-human world. It has been argued that landscapes need to be approached as representatives of spaces that are both rhetorical and discursive. Rhetorical framings in paintings and illustrations of popular magazines and newspapers have proven to be remnants of the nationalistic rhetoric and capitalist commercial ethos, where the landscape is portrayed as beautiful, wonderful, and sublime (John, 2012). These are also present in the visual grammar within the tradition of German Romantic landscape paintings and nineteenth-century American landscape paintings. Such paintings have set the scene for what outlooks and vistas today's tourists are looking for in the American national parks (Wilke, 2012). Furthermore, such paintings have contributed to shaping the United States and Canada's notion of wilderness and national identity, Native Americans, and national parks (Boime, 2012). These studies have, similar to the ones presented up until now, been of major inspiration to me in my problematization of how the non-human world comes into being.

3.4. Constructions of the Non-Human World through Ethnographic Tours in National Parks

The third and final theme that I have identified concerns constructions of the non-human world through tourist tours in national parks, where the researchers have applied ethnographic methods. In contrast to the previous themes, with their representations in several studies, this theme is only represented by two studies, but is still equally central to this dissertation.

3.4.1. Moving within the National Parks to Trace Constructions of Nature

What distinguishes these studies is their analytical design, which centers around conducting ethnographic studies in national parks by visiting them, or taking part in tours designed for tourists (Lund, 2013; Rutherford, 2011). Like many of the previously presented studies, national parks in the United States have once again been a focus (Rutherford, 2011) but this time, Iceland has also made it onto the research agenda (Lund, 2013). These studies have problematized ideas about what it means for something to be ‘natural’ or ‘wild,’ and have also reflected upon how these and other attributes are assigned to the nature of national parks (Rutherford, 2011). In other words, these studies also take a social constructivist approach, in which they approach nature as something that comes into being through human understandings and ways of seeing (Lund, 2013; Rutherford, 2011). Instead of exploring this through the eyes of others, the researchers have used their own experiences in their analyses to conduct a kind of auto-ethnographic study. In relation to this, Lund (2013) argues that ‘in order to locate nature, one needs to move with it. Movement is the primary feature in tourism and thus by moving with nature, one must be moving along the paths of nature-loving tourists’ (p. 159).

These studies have also argued that national parks and their tourism should be considered as related not only to questions of environmentalism but also to questions of power. According to Rutherford (2011), national park tourism governs tourists into specific ways of seeing nature and ‘can work to structure vision, separate nature and culture, and proffer discourses of science and romanticism that have the effect of “truth”’ (p. 90). Thus, Rutherford argues that such activities have an impact on how humans understand and experience the world that we call nature, as well as its inhabitants. These studies have underlined the value of conducting ethnographic studies in national parks in order to grasp ways of seeing the non-human world, even as they have inspired my own ethnographic analysis of the newly installed instructive installations in the Swedish national parks, which I will describe further in the upcoming chapter. They have also provided me with arguments as to why such studies are relevant and important to conduct, while I have been inspired by how digital

notes taken with a camera can function to document an analysis ‘on site’ (Lund, 2013). This has provided me with insights into why it is important to study the practice of national park tourism. It has also inspired my own problematizations of how the non-human world comes into being.

CHAPTER FOUR

Methodological Stances

4.1. An Explorative and Reflexive Process for Conducting Discourse-Oriented Research

The process of designing and conducting my sub-studies and their analyses has evolved over several years. During my work, I have developed a reflexive-explorative discourse analysis, taking inspiration primarily from Michel Foucault. As became visible in my reflections upon my ontological and epistemological stances, I have gathered many stimuli from his critical ethos, which can also be seen in how I have developed my discourse analysis. In the following section, I explain my methodological journey and highlight events that have been important for how this dissertation and its sub-studies turned out. This means that my explanations remain at a general level, without diving into all the details of the different sub-studies. Such explanations and thorough presentations of the different steps can be found in each of the dissertation's papers, which are available at the end of this dissertation.

4.2. The Process of 'Getting There'

When I started this journey, I knew that I wanted to focus on the Swedish national parks from a tourism perspective and explore how the non-human world was constructed through the parks' tourism. However, I did not know how to study this, what methodological stances I would take, or what key concepts I would use. I did not even know that I was interested in ways of seeing and visual culture. This is something that has grown along the way and, in the following parts of this chapter, I will share its different twists and turns.

4.2.1. Working in a Reflexive-Explorative Manner

It is always difficult to decide where to start an analytical process and what the initial step should be. Perhaps the classic question of whether the chicken or the egg arose first might come to mind. My analytical journey started with a reflective decision about what kind of analytical approach I wanted to take, and how that agreed with my ontological and epistemological position. But there was also a first reflection about what types of focus my different sub-studies should have. At this stage, I had ideas about conducting one historically focused sub-study and three of contemporary character. My idea was to start in a contemporary context to get a sense of the intensifying tourism times in Swedish national parks that I described in the introduction. Thereafter, I wanted to take a historical approach to use the past in order to understand the present (Burke, 2019; Foucault, 1991a, 1992, 1994, 1998). I also had ideas about focusing my sub-studies on different kinds of actors, in order to capture different aspects of how the non-human world is constructed. To enable this, I wanted to focus on actors who manage the national parks, actors who offer tourist excur-

sions there, and also the actors who are the target groups for visiting the national parks – tourists themselves.

Around this time, I had a strong desire to plan out every detail concerning this dissertation early, but I soon decided to apply an explorative approach grounded in empirical contexts instead. I made this decision because I believe that it is within the details of the empirical materials that it is possible to observe nuances and gain inspiration for where to look further, but it is also here that constructions and their productive effects are embodied (see Foucault, 1982). By the term ‘explorative’, I mean approaching my issues and empirical materials stepwise and determining the next step depending on what I see in one empirical context. In other words, I wanted to dig into the practice of Swedish national park tourism with an open mind to see what I could find and then design my way forward depending on what intriguing components I unearthed. The delight of working in such a manner is the curiosity that it opens up inside of me as a researcher, but I also think that it is a good way of identifying constructions, being able to trace them, and following their productive tracks. Furthermore, it has enabled me to gradually explore empirical fields and stay open to what I encountered.

Due to my interest in how the non-human world came into being through national park tourism, the research field of the environmental humanities, with its focus on problematizing constructions of the non-human, became an early and central source of inspiration (Bird Rose, 2015; Oppermann & Iovino, 2017). Explorative thinking is one of several components that characterize such studies, which provided me with examples of how I could work with components such as remaining open to and curious about my empirical field, and adapting to it in a responsive and responsible way (K. Gibson, Bird Rose, & Fincher, 2015). As a result of this, I became interested in reflexive studies, and their emphasis on situating oneself as a subjective being within the research conducted, rather than an observer striving for the impossible task of being ‘objective’ (Pink, 2013; Rose, 2017). As my ontological and epistemological reflections have revealed, I see not only nature as socially constructed, but also research. Frequently, these dimensions are ignored or overlooked within research, as ‘we fail to see how science necessarily and always builds its knowledges through social means. The issue is to see how this matters’ (Braun & Castree, 1998, p. 29).

This underlines the importance of being transparent about how my ways of seeing the surrounding world affect not only the research I conduct but also the results I come up with (Jameson, 1994). This is because the ways in which I conduct my research are ‘not a way of opening a window to the world, but a way of interfering with it’ (Mol, 1999, p. 155). Taking an explorative and reflexive approach felt espe-

cially important because many studies grounded in a social constructivist approach have received massive amounts of criticism for their statements about research and knowledge as socially validated (Demeritt, 2006). In this context, researchers such as Foucault have been questioned for not being stringent and vibrant about their ways of conducting research (Simons, 1995; Wight, 2019). Furthermore, interdisciplinary studies of a critical character, where different methods, perspectives, and concepts are combined, and reflections upon epistemologies and ontologies are integrated, frequently face criticism from disciplinary perspectives for being superficial or lacking rigor (Kincheloe, 2001). An explorative approach also felt important because I had read a request from tourism scholars Jamal and Everett (2010), who asked researchers involved in (critical) tourism studies to reflect upon their ontologies, epistemologies, and ways of seeing the non-human world. This made me interested not only in tourism studies but also in critical ones, and this supported me in my approach to the practice of tourism as a social phenomenon and how it can be analyzed and problematized (Ateljevic et al., 2012; Thór Jóhannesson et al., 2015).

Because of all of this, and due to my understanding of myself as a co-producer of and participant in the contexts that I study, I found a reflexive perspective to be important. Not least since, through my ways of engaging with and studying tourist constructions of the non-human world in Swedish national parks, I am contributing with constructions and implications for how the relationship between the human and the non-human is understood (Jamal & Everett, 2010). This indicates that this dissertation is just as discursive as the context that I am studying. My empirical objects do not just 'exist out there' but are brought into existence in this dissertation through my encounters with them. The analytical luggage that I bring with me is what mediates these, and my analyses of them is a performative act of interaction between the object of study, my analytical framework, and myself as an analyst (Bal, 2003; Fabian, 1990). Being reflexive means asking myself what kinds of realities and truths my research produces and reflecting upon what implications this could have for how it is understood, perceived, and interpreted by others (Bacchi, 2012). It also means reflecting upon my own ontological and epistemological stances and how they impact upon the kinds of research that I conduct (Jamal & Everett, 2010).

4.2.2. Sub-Study One: Visitor Information Publications

With the explorative and reflexive orientations set, I was a bit overwhelmed about taking the next steps on this journey. What would be explorative and reflexive enough, and where should I begin? After many deliberations and searches for empirical contexts, I wanted to start in one that could give me an insight into how the national parks were ‘officially’ communicated to tourists, and then work my way onwards from there. The choice arrived at focusing on contemporary visitor information publication materials since these are used to attract tourists, inform them about the parks, and spark their interest in going there (Tschida, 2012). In other words, these kinds of materials can influence how tourists imagine the national parks and their non-human world (Rutherford, 2007). Thus, I took off on the task of designing my first sub-study, which later resulted in the paper that I call Paper II. I designed it together with my co-author Johan Hedrén, and our intention was to determine, make visible, and problematize how nature comes into being through visitor information publications and what the productive effects of such representations are. To answer this, we addressed the following four research questions: 1) How is the non-human world portrayed and characterized? 2) What ontological and epistemological understandings appear, and how are they constructed? 3) How is the relationship between humans and the non-human world presented? 4) What implications might the above have for how humans understand and relate to the non-human world?

After exploring what kinds of visitor information publications we could find, we decided to work with websites and books produced by two types of actors: tourism-related ones and nature conservation ones. To us, nature conservation actors are those who consider themselves to be experts in nature conservation questions, or actors who work with the development and maintenance of the parks (such as SEPA), while tourism actors are those who concentrate their organization around tourism (such as the Swedish Tourist Association). The empirical material we choose to work with had a touristic interaction with the Swedish national parks, which means that it informed tourists about the parks or sold pre-arranged trips there. We selected empirical material that was produced between 2008 and 2018 – which are at the heart of the shifting times currently faced by the Swedish national parks. This enabled us to trace representations that sprang from those shifting times. In total, we worked with three books and five websites that were produced by different kind of nature conservation actors and tourism actors. Together, they comprised 2043 pictures with associated texts.

With these details set, we wanted to work with an analysis that would enable us to trace constructions of the non-human world and also enable and involve a reflec-

tion on their potential implications for how humans understand and relate to the non-human world. Based on this, we decided to conduct a discourse analysis. This choice was mainly grounded in my inspiration from Michel Foucault. Simply described, he approached discourses as groups of meaning-making statements ‘posing the problems of its own limits, its divisions, its transformations, the specific modes of its temporality’ (Foucault, 1982, p. 117). A discourse analysis seemed convincing because such can address how different phenomena are constructed through practices and human meaning-making, and also enable a problematizing focus in a search for the taken for granted (Foucault, 1988b; Rose, 2016). Three components that were especially important to Foucault and his analyses were: the operations of power, the construction of knowledge (Foucault, 1982, 1986), and the establishment of truths (Foucault, 1991a). After reading about the relation between these three and how they can be used as concepts to analyze discourses in a problematizing and critical manner, I became even more convinced that discourses are powerful in the sense that they construct norms and deviations in society. Hence, they set the boundaries between the possible and impossible, or rather the acceptable and the unacceptable. They affect what is considered doable and undoable, seeable and unseeable, imaginable and unimaginable, and so forth (Foucault, 1988b). Instead of being attached to certain individuals and serving the interests of these, discourses are anonymous and situated at a societal level (Foucault, 1998).

Thus, discourses enable power relations through the ways in which they produce these components and also circulate them, accumulate them, and make them function. All of this is dependent upon the existence of truth regimes, which define what is considered to be true and not (Foucault, 1986). Grounded in these regimes of truth, power produces knowledge, and vice versa. What knowledge is produced depends on what is considered true and doable, which means that power and knowledge are constantly situated in relation to each other, and characterized by dependence (Foucault, 1991a). This indicates that all discourses are saturated with power relations that aid the discourses, while each corner of such a concern is dependent upon its connection to the construction of knowledge and the establishment of truths. These are dependent upon one another and cannot exist without each other (Aiello & Parry, 2020; Foucault, 1988b, 1991a, 1998). From this understanding, discourses contribute to producing human realities and all of their dimensions (Escobar, 1996). In relation to the non-human world, discourses do not simply mediate how it is understood but instead infuse the human relation to the non-human ‘at every turn, including even at the micro level of knowledge and practice’ (Braun & Castree, 1998, p. 17). When trying to decide how to conduct the analysis, my initial idea was to search for discourses in the empirical material, but Johan and I

soon decided to focus on representations instead. This choice was made mainly because I see discourses as assemblages that do not exist in one single material, but also due to my definition of what discourses are. Initially, I used the same definition as Foucault, but after going through the empirical material a few times, Johan and I realized that the ways in which the non-human world came into being through visitor information publications were not only linguistic.

In fact, a major proportion of our empirical context consisted of representations of the non-human world that were visually embodied through pictures of different kinds. Since I wanted to include such dimensions in the analysis, I modified Foucault's definition of what discourses are and came up with the following: 'discourses are meaning-making assemblages of representations that give meaning to social and physical realities' (paper II, 2020, p. 9). This definition, with its emphasis on 'representations' instead of 'statements,' is grounded in my understanding of statements as being either oral or textual. I established this line of thought with inspiration from Noel Castree's (2014) and Arturo Escobar's (1996) approach to discourses as consisting of representations rather than statements, and also Stuart Hall's (2013) writings about representations as a central interest of Michel Foucault and his discursive studies. Like Castree (2014), I think that using the word 'statements' would ignore other discursive expressions in empirical contexts, such as photographic or illustrative ones. Since such expressions played an essential role in my empirical material, this was not an option for me. Therefore, I started developing the idea of searching for representations in my sub-studies and then bringing them together in the findings of this dissertation in order to reflect upon the discourse they take part in constructing – the discourse on national park nature. Since then, that idea has stuck with me. To identify and problematize representations in the visitor information publications, Johan and I analyzed the pictures and texts from our empirical sources and discerned themes among them by means of four analytical steps. To examine the major number of pictures, we divided them into collages (Figure 11).

Figure 11. This is an example of how one collage might look. This example consists of my own photographs and is thus not part of the empirical material used in sub-study one.

The collages were analyzed in a visualization facility called *the Norrköping Decision Arena* (Figure 12), which enables its user to look at the content of ten devices simultaneously and thus become immersed in the empirical material. Even though we had decided to make a discursive analysis with an interest in power, knowledge, and truth, we did not start out with predetermined strategies or questions about what to look for in the visitor information publications. Instead, we started from the notion that we wanted the empirical material to guide us in different discursive directions (see Foucault, 1982) and we tried to stay open and curious to what we explored along the way. This analysis took us approximately two full workdays to complete before heading over to the texts.

Figure 12. Johan and I conducting the analysis in the Norrköping Decision Arena.

The texts were not analyzed in the arena, but rather in a more traditional way, in which we organized and analyzed them in Word documents. Even though, in practical terms, this analysis was different from the one involving the photographs, we worked with the same intention – to allow the texts to guide us in different discursive directions. This also means that we tried to analyze the texts with ‘fresh eyes’ (see Rose, 2016), instead of searching for themes that we had identified among the photographs. Thus, the intention of this first analytical step was to identify representational configurations in pictures and texts separately. This offered us a first glimpse of both recurring discursive elements and ontological and epistemological structures. It also enabled us to step away from the problematic but common understanding within research that photographs only can be fully understood once their associated texts are analyzed (Balomenou & Garrod, 2019; Burke, 2019). Instead, we approached the photographs as equals to the texts, as objects that in themselves contain representations. Early on during this analytical step, we identified a strong focus on visibility and a stated desire among publishers such as SEPA to strengthen the visual identity of the Swedish national parks (SEPA, 2012). This led us to focus this first step on questions of visibility and was the reason why we decided to search for visibilities and invisibilities within the representations. This means that we focused on what became visible and/or invisible through the visitor information publications (see Foucault, 2001; Mirzoeff, 2011).

The production of ‘spaces of visibility’ involves the production of ‘spaces of invisibility’ (Foucault, 1991a) and thus dwells within the productive effects enabled by the relation between power, knowledge, and truth (Bal, 2003; Pajackowska, 2000). Because of this, paying attention to questions of visibility enabled us to work with all three of these concepts in our contextualization and in our interpretations and analysis. During this period, I came across literature about visual culture and, due to the focus on visibility in the empirical material that Johan and I were working with, I decided to look more closely into that field. Soon, I realized that it had a lot in common with the perspectives I had been working with until then, and I felt that it corresponded with my interests. Its focus on questions of visibility (Hentschel, 2014; Mirzoeff, 2013, 2015; Mitchell, 2005; Rose, 2016) and the role of the visual in cultural and social contexts (Bal, 2003; J. Evans & Hall, 1999; Mirzoeff, 2013; Mitchell, 2005) were two components that I found particularly appealing and relevant to my study. After working with the separate analysis of pictures and texts, the second step was to structure the representational configurations that we had identified into eight themes: 1) characteristics of nature; 2) non-human subjectivities; 3) relations; 4) ways of encountering nature; 5) interpretation opportunities; 6) knowledge epistemes; 7) tourist motives, expectations, and experiences, and 8) human subjectivities. Then, the third step was to develop analytical questions in relation to these. The questions were permeated by the paper’s discursive focus, in which issues of power structures and relations played an essential role. Thus, these kinds of analytical questions were grounded in the initial steps of our analysis and helped us to dig deeper into the empirical material during yet another round of analytical actions.

Keeping the themes and questions in mind, we analyzed the empirical material once more during the fourth step, but this time we did not separate the pictures and texts. Instead, they were analyzed together in their ‘original form,’ as part of the websites and books from which we had collected them. As the final step, we discussed our findings and identified seven groups of representations of the non-human world in Swedish national parks: 1) extraordinary features of the north as sublime; 2) ordinary features of the open and accessible south; 3) national park nature as national heritage; 4) national park nature as elitist and unique; 5) national park nature as an observed object; 6) national park nature as an exploration arena for education and the mastery of nature; and 7) national park nature – for whom? When designing the ways in which we were going to present the results, I searched for a concept that could organize and visualize both the representations and their involvement in the discourse of national park nature. In Foucault’s work, I found the concept of ‘discursive formations,’ which I understand as systems of representation that constitute a discourse and tie together its different meanings (Foucault, 1982, 1988b, 2001).

At this moment, I started to approach the representations that Johan and I had identified as discursive formations and experimented with the idea of working in a similar manner in my upcoming sub-studies. That would make it clearer why I have worked with analyzing representations in the sub-studies instead of discourses, since these embody the cornerstones that construct the discourses.

4.2.3. Sub-Study Two: Instructive Installations

In our analysis of the visitor information publication materials, Johan and I had identified a strong emphasis on the instructive installations available in the parks (e.g., signs and other informative structures), which were portrayed as strong reasons for tourists to visit the parks. I had also read a lot about the new instructive installations in strategies and policies written by SEPA. In these kinds of sources, there was an emphasis on displaying nature to tourists (SEPA, 2011b), which underlined the portrayal of Swedish national parks as places for visual experiences. This insight piqued my curiosity, and I decided to look closer into the constructions that such installations produced. As a continuation of my reflexive, discursive, and explorative approach, focusing on installations in the national parks became my second sub-study, which goes under the name Paper III. Instructive installations are interesting because they are fundamental for the tourist experience and affect both how and what the tourists experience during their visits (Mills, 2003).

Figure 13. Here are two examples of how the instructive installations might look – like traditional two-dimensional signs.

Furthermore, such installations are used to show, proclaim, and communicate the national parks as nature, to elucidate reasons for experiencing them (Bednar, 2012), to present certain corpuses of knowledge, and also to make certain statements and assign meaning (Bal, 1996). In other words, these installations are highly discursive (Bal, 1996; Grusin, 2004; Macdonald, 1998) and construct understandings of the non-human world (Bednar, 2012; Johns & Pontes, 2020; Lekies & Whitworth, 2011). By focusing my second sub-study on these, I wanted to contribute to the understanding of how the non-human world is constructed and displayed in Swedish national parks. I decided to continue focusing on representations, which would enable me to make a problematizing analysis and put the representations from my different sub-studies together as I pursued my understanding of the national park nature discourse. However, analyzing instructive installations was not the same as studying visitor information publications. Based on this, I made the decision that each of my sub-studies and their practicalities would be adjusted to their specific context. Simultaneously, I found it important to design them with a common red thread. I wanted my critical ethos to stay the same and develop a set of key concepts that could follow me during my analyses while still retaining some space for variation.

At this stage, I already had the concepts of discourse, representation, power, knowledge, truth, visibility, and discursive formation with me from my first sub-study. Since I had limited experience of working with analyzing representations through other kinds of empirical material than documents, websites, and books, I needed inspiration from researchers who had worked with analyzing instructive installations or similar. Even though studies on installations did exist (Bednar, 2012; Cronin, 2011; Patin, 1999), they did not fully explain ways of analyzing them. Because of that, I found inspiration from researchers within museum studies, such as Bal (1996), Macdonald (1998), Alberti (2008), and Gordon-Walker (2019), but I also found a lot of inspiration in the work of Sarah Pink (e.g., 2013), who has developed ways of conducting reflexive ethnographic studies where visibility is of great interest. Inspired by the key concepts that I had identified during my first sub-study, I formulated an aim whereby I wanted to ‘understand how knowledge of nature is put to work and how power operates through these installations, but also how the non-human world is produced visually’ (paper III, p. 2).

Thus, the aim of the second sub-study was more grounded in analytical concepts than the first, but both sought to discover ways in which the non-human world comes into being through different tourist-related contexts connected to the Swedish national parks. This also marked the moment when I started using the concept of ‘ways of seeing’ – which later became the key concept that I use to refer to how the non-human world becomes understood and comes into being. To make

the aim more comprehensible, I used three concepts of an ‘explanatory’ character, taking inspiration from Foucault: *technologies of display*, the *tourist gaze*, and *institutional apparatuses*. Briefly, technologies of display are understood as ‘those methods and procedures, but also tools used to display the non-human world in the parks’ (paper III, p. 3). I used it to contextualize the part of the aim that concerns the actual installations and their visual production of nature. To contextualize the part of the aim that concerns ways of seeing the non-human, I used John Urry’s and Jonas Larsen’s (2011) concept of the tourist gaze. In short, I approached the concept as ‘a cultural product that is socially organized and affects tourists through a specific lens of ideas, skills, expectations, desires, and mediated material’ (paper III, p. 4). To understand how knowledge of nature is put to work and how power operates through the installations, I used the concept of the institutional apparatus. In my understanding, this concept represents those arrangements of power and knowledge that organize the organization of the technologies of display and the tourist gaze but also the discourses that are expressed through them.

Due to my interest in using different concepts in my sub-studies, depending on the empirical contexts, I started to search for a perspective that would enable me to make this visible. At this time, I came across Foucault’s use of the term ‘toolbox,’ which he used to describe the different analytical and contextual concepts for his analyses. They were rich in contrasts, as he did not follow the same structure in each of them. However, he saw himself as a researcher carrying a toolbox of concepts, which he could use as analytical and contextualizing tools to problematize certain concepts and phenomena (Scott Hamilton, 2020). Inspired by this, I tried to look upon my approach in the same way, whereby I could use different concepts depending on what I was studying. Such an approach requires being stringent with the key concepts in relation to this dissertation. Key concepts that recur in all of my sub-studies lay the foundations for my way of conducting discourse analyses. Simultaneously, this made me aware of the possibilities of adding more concepts depending on the context, and I decided to add this approach to my analytical concepts as part of a toolbox. I see this toolbox as interlinked with my ontological and epistemological stances, which means that these set the directions for what kinds of tools I will use. In working with this sub-study, I allowed the conceptual tools I was using to develop due to my interventions with the empirical material and context that I was studying. In broad strokes, this process was similar to the one I had developed during my first sub-study, but the empirical context was totally different. To trace representations through the instructive installations, I worked with field visits to the parks, but decided to keep my approach explorative.

When I embarked upon this task, I had not decided to use the concepts of institutional apparatuses, technologies of display, and the tourist gaze. Instead, this was something that grew along the way after I had completed my visits to the parks. The process of getting there consisted of immersing myself in the visual milieus created by the installations and trying to focus on discourse, power, knowledge, and truth (which followed me as key concepts from my first sub-study). However, in line with my first sub-study, I had not developed a structured way of working with these concepts. Instead, I traveled to the national parks and let the analysis grow along the way. During the years 2018–2019, I traveled to 26 of Sweden’s 30 national parks and developed a way of systematically searching for representations. While spending between one and three days in each park (depending on their size and number of installations), I visited their entrances, went to the installations highlighted on the maps, followed the paths that led to installations, and focused on what they displayed. To document this analytical process and my own analytical gaze, I was inspired by studies in which the authors had taken visual notes with their cameras (Bal, 1996; Grasseni, 2004; Johns & Pontes, 2020; Lund, 2013; Orobítz Canal, 2004), and I did the same from my very first visit.

Figure 14. During this analytical work, my camera became an important tool for documenting the analysis that I developed and to trace my own analytical gaze, which supported my reflexive intentions.

This picking out of analytical tools from my toolbox continued as I completed the fieldwork and processed my visual notes. During this step, I reflexively used my visual notes to identify what I had focused on, what questions I had addressed in relation to the installations, and how I had traced the representations in practical terms.

While doing so, I noticed that I had focused on the installations' design, content, and also rationalities. In relation to these, I had also focused on visibilities and invisibilities, which led me to include them in my analytical concepts. Then, I merged the analytical concepts that I had chosen to work with along the way (representation, discourse, power, knowledge, truth, and visibility) to develop analytical questions in relation to the concepts of design, content, and rationality. Concerning design, I dealt with questions relating to the actual design of the installations and how they were composed. In terms of content, I focused on what content the installations communicated, focusing on knowledge. In relation to rationality, I asked what fields of possibility the installations created and what relationship between the human and the non-human they constructed. With this set of analytical questions set and in mind, I went through my visual notes again to deepen the analysis based on these questions. In one way, it could be stated that, during the fieldwork, I had started to identify representations but, during this step, I organized them into discursive formations and identified three sets of representations: 1) branding representations, 2) exploring representations, and 3) enlightening representations. With these decided, I related them to my aim and the three contextualizing concepts of institutional apparatuses, technologies of display, and the tourist gaze.

4.2.4. Sub-Study Three: Past Policy Documents and Touristic Yearbooks

Through my work with analyzing contemporary materials, I had started to gain an understanding of how the non-human world comes into being in Swedish national parks nowadays, but as yet I had little insight into how it had been constructed in the past. Furthermore, the previous analyses had made me aware that the national parks are currently facing changing times, which also made me interested in tracing how they had evolved over time. Thus, my initial idea of including a historically oriented article came into play here. This felt important because the representations I had identified in the visitor information publications and the instructive installations are related to, and have evolved from, representations of the past (see Burke, 2019). Just like discourses, I see representation as always historically situated, which indicates that a historical tracing enables an understanding and diagnosis of the present, seen through the lens of the past (see Foucault, 1979a, 1985; Jameson, 1994). In my pursuit of empirical materials through which to trace this, I reflected upon what kinds of organizations or bodies have been involved in questions of tourism and national parks since before the establishment of the first nine parks. After some reading, I understood that the *Swedish Tourist Association* (henceforth STF) had been active since the late 1800s and that much of its focus on tourism in Sweden concerned nature and nature-based tourism (Erlandson-Hammargren, 2006; Kvarnström, 2013; Nordlund, 2000; Ödmann et al., 1982). Additionally, I read that the STF had been involved in

nature conservation questions since its beginnings (Lundgren, 2009; Sundin, 1989; Synnergren, 1986) and that it had functioned as an important source of information for the people of Sweden through its production of information about the country and its tourist-related opportunities (Erlandson-Hammargren 2006).

When the association was established, the availability of communications such as books and magazines was much lower than it is now, and through its production of such publications, the STF soon became an influential educator of the people and also an organization with the character of a mass movement. In other words, the STF has had a significant influence on Swedish tourism, nature conservation, and society over a long period of time. Through its focus on nature, nature-based tourism (Erlandson-Hammargren, 2006), and its involvement in questions of nature conservation (Sundin, 1989), it has contributed to shaping understandings of Sweden, Swedishness, and Swedish nature from a tourist perspective (Erlandson-Hammargren, 2006; Kvarnström, 2013). One form of communication that the association produced was yearbooks, which assembled travel depictions, tips, and information about tourist destinations in Sweden, published once a year (Erlandson-Hammargren, 2006). I chose to focus on these books, since they would enable me to trace tourist constructions stretching more than a century back in time. The first yearbook was published in 1886, and the association continued to produce books up until 2013. In one way, these yearbooks can be seen as similar mediations as the visitor information publications that I analyzed in my first sub-study, in which STF was one of the tourist actors whose material I analyzed. Thus, I decided that I did not need to complement the yearbooks with more recent empirical materials in this sub-study, since I had already analyzed such materials produced by the STF. However, because I think that discourses and their representations exist within and interact with different kinds of empirical materials (see Foucault, 1991a), and I wanted to delve into the traces of these, I decided to add another type of material to this context as well – policy documents produced by authoritative Swedish actors. I found this interesting because the Swedish authorities have published Governmental Bills, proposals, law documents, strategies, Governmental inquiries, Parliamentary letters, policies, brochures, handbooks, and similar documents that touch upon the Swedish national parks or the broader question of nature conservation. Thus, I wanted to focus on the part of Swedish policymaking that considers nature conservation questions and national parks.

Many of the people involved in the nature conservation movement were politicians, which connected the movement with policymaking at an early stage (Lundgren, 2013). Based on this, I wanted to trace the construction of the non-human world through the histories of tourism and nature conservation policymaking

in Sweden. In this way, I could trace constructions between two different contexts involved in the national parks that have evolved during the same period and been active up until today. The analysis, which I conducted together with my co-author Tom Mels, was in many ways similar to the one in my first sub-study. We focused on representations and continued to elaborate on the idea of representations as the bits and pieces of discourses. In our analysis, we identified the ways in which the non-human world came into being through the histories of tourism and nature conservation policymaking. We were able to gain an understanding of the shifting times that I wrote about in the introduction to this dissertation. Since Tom had a background in analyses of policy documents and had worked with many of the documents that we wanted to include, and I had a bachelor's degree in tourism, we decided to divide the empirical material between us. While Tom searched for representations in texts and photographs of 175 policy documents produced during the period 1870–2021, I conducted the same search in 126 yearbooks.

As in my previous sub-studies, we looked at visibility (what was included and excluded) but also retained a critical mindset around power, knowledge, and truth, which indicates that we focused on the kind of knowledge that was produced through the empirical materials, how truth was constructed, and what productive effects we could see related to the representations we identified. Through our reading of previous studies, we had learnt that the two histories of tourism and nature conservation have a contested relationship with many twists and turns in relation to the Swedish national parks (Lundgren, 2009, 2011; Ödmann et al., 1982), something that also became visible through our analyses. After completing our separate analyses of the empirical material, Tom and I merged the representations we had identified and saw that, despite the tense relationship between the two histories, they followed each other in many ways. Above all, we could see that the non-human world has faced several periods of time when it was approached as a tourist product, which led to it becoming both commercialized and commodified. In particular, the present time illustrated that the non-human world is currently used as a tourist product. Hence, we were able to identify several tensions, such as a separation between the human and the non-human, and also between environmental interests and commercial interests.

In order to understand and contextualize this, we decided to work with the concept of *boundary struggles*, taking inspiration from Nancy Fraser. Like the tendencies we could see in our material, she argued that the non-human world often functions as a background condition for the possibility of capital production, and that capitalism relies on such institutional separations. To understand this, it becomes fruitful to talk about boundary struggles, which provide insights into the contradic-

tions of capitalism and the different conflicts that give rise to it (Fraser, 2014, 2016). To contextualize how the histories, their ways of constructing the non-human, and their boundary struggles have transformed through time, we also decided to work with the analytical concept of *displacement*, inspired by Foucault's use of the term. He used it when referring to different historical conditions where discursive constructions of different phenomena change or transform (Foucault, 1991a, 1991b, 1992) and we decided to divide the representations we had identified into different displacements. In other words, the concept of displacement became important for me in my understanding of how the discourse on national park nature had transformed through time. When merging our analyses, we were able to divide the representations into five different displacements: 1) the non-human world as background and foreground: conservation without accumulation (1870s–1900s); 2) the non-human world as ideological foreground and raw material (1910s–1930s); 3) the non-human world as a realm of social reproduction (1940s–1970s); 4) the non-human world as a source of self-reflection (1980s–1990s); and 5) the non-human world as a commodified foreground: conservation by accumulation (2000s–2021).

Among these displacements, we had identified several representations that I had seen in my previous analyses as well. For example, in the contemporary contexts I had studied, there was a major focus on the national parks and their non-human worlds as spaces to gaze at, but now I could see that this was already central when the first parks were established. To me, this underlined the importance of conducting studies around visual culture in relation to the parks and their non-human world, and also to focus on how different ways of seeing the non-human are constructed (see Mirzoeff, 2013). Furthermore, I could also see how the shifting times that the national parks are currently facing have developed over time and where they originated from. This made several parts of the dissertation fall into place, and I found new arguments for why this is an intriguing time for analyzing the Swedish national parks as tourism destinations, and also why the visual and visibility are central aspects of all of this.

4.2.5. Sub-Study Four: Tourists' Instagram Posts

For the final paper, I turned my attention to the tourists. I wanted to complement the empirical material produced by 'official' actors, who offer and set the frames for tourists' experiences in the Swedish national parks. Since I approach tourists as subjects who participate in constructing the non-human world in Swedish national parks, rather than as pure recipients (Bednar, 2012), this felt like a piece that fitted my puzzle well. Initially, I had ideas about arranging activities in the parks where I could join tourists while they explored, but I soon realized that this would have been difficult. Many tourists spend a lot of time planning their trips in detail, and I did not want to intrude on their plans or make them feel like research guineapigs (even

though I was sure that many would have liked to let me take part in their experiences and explorations too). My next idea was to collect stories and photographs in two parks with many visitors and a strong pedagogical focus (Store Mosse national park and Tyresta national park). I wanted to ask questions to the tourists about their reasons for visiting the parks, their expectations before their visits, their actual explorations, and what they did during their stay, but also what they ‘took with them’ when they left. With permission to conduct such research in the Naturums (visitor centers) of Tyresta and Store Mosse and almost everything planned, it came to my attention that two visitor surveys conducted by SEPA would be taking place in all of the Swedish national parks during the same period as my material collection; one general survey and one concerning the Naturums. This would have meant that my research was competing for the tourists’ attention with SEPA’s surveys, and after much thought back and forth, I decided to cancel my plans.

Even though SEPA would ask different questions than me, and offered a completely different mission to the tourists, the existence of three tasks asking for their attention might have discouraged them from participating at all. Therefore, I had to develop a new idea and decided to continue my discourse analysis by analyzing tourists’ representations of the non-human world in their Instagram posts. Instagram is a social media platform where people can share photos and videos with captions (Leaver, Highfield, & Abidin, 2020). A focus on such posts would enable me to gain insights into what tourists want to share about their visits, and also how they construct such representational sharing. I approached such posts as sources through which representations are produced (see Andersson Cederholm, 2004) and used this part of my empirical material to gain insights into how tourists construct the non-human world in the parks. Furthermore, this investigation enabled me to trace aspects of their tourist gaze (Urry & Larsen, 2011) by focusing on an activity that has come to be known as one of the most central for tourist experiences – photography (Andersson Cederholm, 2004; Urry and Larsen, 2011). Within tourism studies, it has long been argued that vision is a central part of tourist experiences (e.g., MacCannell, 1973; Urry & Larsen, 2011), and also that the act of taking photos is an essential activity of those experiences (Andersson Cederholm, 2004; Urry & Larsen, 2011). Grounded in this, I sought

‘to unravel, illuminate, and problematize ways of seeing the non-human world that become embodied through tourists’ Instagram posts about Swedish national parks and to consider the productive effects that such posts can have on the relationship between humans and the non-human world’ (paper IV, p. 2).

The collected Instagram posts had a contemporary context, consisting of posts collected during the period 2018–2020. In total, I collected 12 posts from each national park and tried to ensure that they had been uploaded by tourists. I ended up with 360 posts in total, which consisted of pictures and texts. This implies that by using Instagram, I could also keep my focus on all Swedish national parks as a united body. That aspect would have been lost if I had collected photographs and stories from tourists in two national parks on site. The analysis of the Instagram posts followed many of the structures from my previous sub-studies, with a focus on representations, especially sub-study one. Once again, I used the Norrköping Decision Arena to initiate the analysis with a focus on the photographs from the posts. In the arena, I spent two days working with the analysis, allowing the photographs to guide me exploratively without any predetermined questions or themes to look for. However, the key concepts I had developed during the previous studies were still with me (representation, discourse, power, knowledge, truth, and visibility).

Figure 15. A photograph of the analysis in the Norrköping Decision Arena.

After finishing the analysis in the Norrköping Decision Arena, I took notes of a number of recurring representational patterns that I had seen and headed over to analyzing the texts. As in sub-study one, I organized them into a Word document and identified different representational patterns and themes among them. Instead of basing this part of the analysis on the patterns I had identified among the

photographs, I wanted to approach the texts with ‘fresh eyes’ (Rose, 2016). After analyzing the photographs and texts separately, I compared the identified representations and merged my interpretations by conducting yet another round of analysis – one in which I analyzed the photographs and texts in their ‘original’ shape, as Instagram posts consisting of both photographs and texts. In this way, I was able to identify five ways of seeing with their associated representations: 1) sublime scenery of grandeur and beauty; 2) an uncivilized wilderness of desolate character; 3) a challenger demanding physical performances; 4) a treasury with collector value filled with animal tokens; and 5) a unique place with iconic attributes. In order to both understand the origins of these and contextualize them, I related them to historically inherited representations of the non-human world identified in previous research. As the final step, I reflected upon the kinds of implications that these ways of seeing could have for how the non-human world is understood and approached.

4.3. Getting There: Merging Fragments from the Sub-Studies

When I had completed all the analytical work connected to my sub-studies, the next step of my analytical journey was to put the results together and try to pinpoint what the results of this dissertation were centered around. Connected to this, I also intended to reflect upon how I had designed my discourse analysis and how I would proceed with a reflection concerning the discourse of national park nature through the representations I had identified. To enable this, I mapped out what my different sub-studies had focused on and their results (boxes on the upcoming pages).

SUB-STUDY ONE (PAPER II)

Empirical material: visitor information publication materials consisting of photographs and texts (3 books and 5 websites)

Actor perspective: tourism actors and nature conservation actors

Time period: 2008–2018

Practical method: analyzing collages with photographs in the Norrköping Decision Arena and texts in Word document

Key concepts: discourse, representation, knowledge, truth, power, and visibility

Focus: tracing how the non-human world comes into being through materials produced by tourism and nature conservation actors to inform and attract tourists

Identified sets of representations: 1) extraordinary features of the north as sublime; 2) ordinary features of the open and accessible south; 3) national park nature as national heritage; 4) national park nature as elitist and unique; 5) national park nature as an observed object; 6) national park nature as an exploration arena for education and the mastery of nature; 7) national park nature – for whom?

SUB-STUDY TWO (PAPER III)

Empirical material: newly installed instructive installations in the national parks (installations in 26 out of 30 national parks)

Actor perspective: nature conservation actors

Time period: 2018–2019

Practical method: analyzing instructive installations during fieldworks at the national parks

Key concepts: discourse, power, knowledge, truth, representation, visibility, design, content, and rationality

Focus: tracing, making visible, and problematizing how knowledge of nature is put to work and how power operates through instructive installations, how the non-human world is produced visually, and how all of this produces specific ways of seeing the non-human world

Identified sets of representations: 1) branding representations; 2) exploring representations; 3) enlightening representations

SUB-STUDY THREE (PAPER I)

Empirical material: policy documents and The Swedish Tourist Association's yearbooks (175 policy documents and 126 yearbooks)

Actor perspective: tourism actors and nature conservation actors

Time period: 1870–2021

Practical method: analyzing photographs and texts in their original shape

Key concepts: representation, boundary struggle, discursive displacement, knowledge, truth, power, and discourse

Focus: tracing how the construction of the non-human world within tourism and conservation policies has changed historically, with a focus on identifying significant and contradictory boundary struggles

Identified sets of representations: 1) the non-human world as background and foreground: conservation without accumulation (1870–1909); 2) the non-human world as ideological foreground and raw material (1910–1939); 3) the non-human world as a realm of social reproduction (1940–1979); 4) the non-human world as a resource of critical self-reflection (1980–1999); and 5) the non-human world as a commodified foreground: conservation by accumulation (2000–2021)

During this reflection, I came to realize that I had been particularly interested in one component related to the discourse of national park nature that I had traced through representations – namely *ways of seeing* the non-human world and the human relation to it that the discourse projected. Even though I had not used that exact formulation in all of the sub-studies, this was what I had been paying most attention to. Based on this, I took the decision to use the concept of ways of seeing when pinpointing what this dissertation was about. As stated earlier, ways of seeing enable insights into the relationship between the seen and the known, which are products of people's worldviews, ontologies, and epistemologies (Bateson, 1972; Berger, 1972; Mirzoeff, 2015). These affect how people understand, construct, and relate themselves to the non-human world, and thus make it come into being (Cronin, 2011). Therefore, I think it is a fruitful concept that enables me to conceptualize my interest in human understandings and ways of looking upon the non-human world and their relation to it. Furthermore, a focus on ways of seeing also enables a focus on the visual culture of tourism (Crouch & Lübbren, 2003), since they are part of this (Mirzoeff, 2015). The entire context that I am studying has a visual focus, through the many initiatives to make the national parks more tourist-focused through visual developments. Therefore, I found it important to work with an overall concept that captured that focus, and enabled me to critically engage with questions of visibility and visual dimensions.

With this decision made, I formulated the current version of my aim and reflected upon how the different concepts I had placed in my toolbox were related to each other and to ways of seeing. During the work with this dissertation, I have developed and worked with a set of twelve analytical concepts that have helped me to trace, illuminate, and problematize the ways of seeing that are enabled by the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture (see Figure 16). Since I have already explained my understanding of these concepts in this chapter, and even more detailed explanations of them can be found in my papers, I will not explain them once again. Even though all twelve concepts have been important for my work, I do consider the first six, on the left-hand side of Figure 16, to constitute the core of my analytical approach. They relate not only to the aim that I have developed and worked with but also to my critical ethos and intention to generate a problematization. Furthermore, they have had great influence on the analyses of all the sub-studies.

Figure 16. A list of the concepts that have been part of my toolbox during the work with this dissertation.

The six concepts on the right have also played an important analytical role but, as the boxes on pages 72–74 illustrate, they have been of importance for particular sub-studies rather than recurring in all of them. As I have claimed that ways of seeing are the main interest of this dissertation, and also that I have conducted a kind of discourse analysis with a focus on representations in order to grasp ways of seeing, I would like to reflect upon how I see the relationship between these three concepts. First, I want to clarify that I see them as being in a constant state of fluidity, interrelating to and dependent upon each other's existence. Through the establishment and upholding of social rules and truth regimes, discourses generate certain ways of seeing the world and phenomena within it (Foucault, 1991a, 1994). This indicates that ways of seeing are influenced and controlled by the boundaries and conditions that discourses set up around them, which makes them discursive components.

As indicated previously, I see representations as the building blocks (also known as discursive formations) of discourses (Foucault, 1982, 1988b, 2001) and contend that analyzing these enables an understanding of a discourse's components, such as ways of seeing (Castree, 2014; Grusin, 2004; S. Hall, 2013; Pauwels, 2006). Furthermore, I see discourses and ways of seeing as immaterial phenomena with material consequences, which can become visible and be traced through representations. This indicates that representations not only compose discourses but also 'bring them to life' by embodying them. In other words, I have designed a discourse analysis that started out with an identification of representations in four different sub-studies using diverse empirical materials, which enabled me to grasp ways of seeing the non-human world (even if these were not always explicitly mentioned or pinpointed). Then, the analysis continued with a merging of the results from the sub-studies, where I grouped the identified representations and ways of seeing in order to reflect upon the discourse that they are part of and enable. This contemplation on the national park nature discourse constitutes the core of the concluding reflection of this dissertation.

4.4. Additional Experiences that have Shaped my Understanding and Way of 'Getting There'

When trying to describe and explain the process of 'getting there,' there are always aspects and details that are left unwritten. What is important to remember is that the explanation of my methodological journey is a construction in itself, in which I try to describe a five-year process in a few pages. What I have chosen to write about up until now are mostly details about the parts of my work that ended up in my papers. Nonetheless, there are several other experiences that have contributed to shaping my composed understanding of the context that I am studying, as well as my analytical

gaze. All of these experiences have been valuable to me in the work with this dissertation, but they have also shaped how I look upon the context that I am working with. Because of this, I find it important to bring these experiences to light and reflect upon the role I think they have played. However, they will not be explicitly visible in the findings of this dissertation but have still been highly present in my horizon of interpretation.

Near the beginning of this journey, I came across some news about the release of a Netflix-produced horror film that took place in Sarek National Park. The film, which was directed by David Bruckner, was called *The Ritual* and premiered in 2017. Since I had not planned to work with any empirical materials within popular culture, I became interested in this and wanted to conduct an analysis to see what kinds of representations it entailed. Together with a doctoral candidate who had experience of analyzing films, Isabelle Strömstedt, I conducted an analysis of the film with the initial intention of including it in this dissertation. However, since I had worked with the idea of keeping a ‘broader’ perspective, rather than focusing one single sub-study on one national park, and instead approaching all of them as a united body, the inclusion of *The Ritual* would have been difficult to justify. Furthermore, Isabelle and I struggled to convince journals that it was interesting to analyze that particular film and ended up comparing it to another internationally produced horror movie about Sweden – *Midsommar* (directed by Ari Aster and released in 2019).

With the intention of unraveling how nature is portrayed in the two films and how their characters move between upper and lower worlds (with inspiration from Northrop Frye (1976)), we wrote a paper called ‘A Cathartic Journey through Horrific Swedish Nature,’ which was published in *Film International*, a journal that publishes essays and other products about films both to researchers and people working within film-related professions. Even though I did not include this analysis in my dissertation, it expanded my understanding of the context that I was studying and confirmed many of the impressions I had gained during the work with my sub-studies. For example, I recognized many of the depictions of Sarek National Park and northern Sweden as wild and dangerous, which I had come across in all the materials I had worked with up until that moment. The films’ portrayal of nature as something external and foreign to humanity that can be visited through tourism was also very much present. Thus, the work with this analysis enabled me to step outside of the empirical boundaries of this dissertation and see my topic from another perspective. It also enabled me to practice identifying representations in films, which I had not worked with before.

Stepping outside of the empirical boundaries to broaden my understanding has been achieved in several ways. While I was working with the analyses of the

instructive installations, I planned to also include installations from the parks' visitor centers in the analysis. Because of this, I conducted similar analyses of such during my field visits as I did in the rest of the parks. This resulted in almost as extensive an assemblage of documented photographs concerning their exhibitions and instructive installations as from the rest of the parks. Due to delimitation reasons and the fact that the instructive installations outside of the visitor centers were updated as part of the intensifying times, I decided to only focus on the installations in the parks. Nevertheless, this did not alter the fact that I had completed analyses in the majority of visitor centers, which had provided me with insights into how the non-human world is portrayed to tourists during their visits. Not all national parks have visitor centers but, out of the 26 parks that I visited, 17 of them had or were related to some sort of visitor center with indoor information for visitors. While moving among the exhibitions and instructive installations of the visitor centers, I had the opportunity to talk to other visitors, listen to their conversations, and see what they were paying attention to. Similarly, I had the chance to talk to national park staff. Since conversations were not part of the empirical material I planned to work with, most conversations were spontaneous, but they were certainly interesting and valuable to me. I asked whether it was okay for me to take photographs inside of the visitor centers and on several occasions, after saying yes, many of the staff asked me what I was working on. One of the most interesting aspects of such conversations were their reactions to my research topic, which taught me a lot about the norms and understandings that resided among the staff. I also learned a lot from the questions they asked me and the things they told me about their work. I have had several similar experiences on other occasions, not least when visiting opening ceremonies in two national parks.

On May 25, 2018, I visited Åsnen National Park for a field visit to the opening ceremony of the park itself. Without the intention of conducting a structured analysis to include in the dissertation, I wanted to travel there in order to get a sense of what SEPA highlighted during an opening ceremony, to see what kind of guests were invited to hold speeches and give performances, and also to talk to people and 'mingle'. One year later, on May 26, 2019, I traveled to Muddus/Muttos National Park to visit the opening ceremony of a renovated entrance. During these two field visits, I got the opportunity to see and listen to the opening ceremonies themselves, as well as participating in activities around them, and talking to both visitors and national park staff. Through that, I got the chance to listen to the perspectives of both the staff and the visitors and found it especially interesting when talking to people who had been involved in a certain national park for years and could tell me things that I did not know. It was also interesting to meet people who, for example, had worked

with planning parts of the instructive installations I had been studying. Such conversations inspired me to arrange a workshop in Stockholm for ‘Naturum directors,’ who work with the development of the Naturums. Together with their co-workers, the directors decide what to display in the Naturums, what instructive installations will be placed in the parks, what activities to offer, and how the overall pedagogical operations will be developed. There are 13 Naturums related to the national parks and I invited all the directors to participate in the workshop, which I arranged in relation to their annual gathering. In total, seven directors participated in the workshop, which was divided into two parts. During the first part, we used photographs that they had taken in their national parks as a starting point for the conversations. They discussed the characters of their national parks, which enabled me to see how they perceived the parks, how they approached the non-human world, and how they understood and used the concept of nature. During the second part, we once again used photographs taken by the directors but this time with a focus on educational aspects and instructive installations. In this way, I wanted to gain insights into how they view knowledge, the national parks as knowledge producers, how they view the visitors (which can provide insights into how the directors view themselves as well), and how they approach their role and the effects that come with it.

The workshop provided me with many valuable insights that broadened my understanding of both the instructive installations and the educational role that the national parks are described as having during the ongoing intensifying times. It was also valuable for me to talk with the directors about my research to see what their reactions were. The day after the workshop, I participated in their annual meeting in Stockholm. This is an assembly where directors from Naturums all over Sweden meet. I participated as an observer and learned a lot about how the Naturums are constructed, what kind of knowledge is considered viable, what the directors want the visitors to learn while visiting a Naturum, and how different subjects (such as ‘tourist,’ ‘Naturum director,’ and ‘educators’) are made. SEPA organized this gathering, which took place in their facilities. This means that I also gained insight into SEPA’s standpoints on the above-mentioned topics.

CHAPTER FIVE

Overview of Insights Drawn in the Papers

5.1. Introducing the Insights Drawn in the Papers

Before heading into the insights drawn through this dissertation, I want to share a brief overview of such from my papers. I hope this will serve a good overview and summary because, after all, these are the parts that constitute the ways of seeing that are recognized in the next chapter.

5.1.1. Insights from Paper I (Sub-Study Three)

In this paper, Tom Mels and I shed light on the relationship between the long and contested histories of nature conservation and tourism in relation to the Swedish national parks. We traced how the construction of the non-human world within tourism and conservation policies has changed historically, with a focus on identifying significant and contradictory boundary struggles. The histories that we focus on have their starting points during the late 1800s and continue up until the present time, enabling us to trace representations through time. Via our analysis of policy documents on nature conservation and the Swedish Tourist Association's yearbooks, we identified five displacements with reconfigurations of such boundary struggles, revolving around representations of the non-human world: 1) the non-human world as background and foreground: conservation without accumulation (1870–1909); 2) the non-human world as ideological foreground and raw material (1910–1939); 3) the non-human world as a realm of social reproduction (1940–1979); 4) the non-human world as a resource of critical self-reflection (1980–1999); and 5) the non-human world as a commodified foreground: conservation by accumulation (2000–2021). Despite some early intentions to make tourism a central part of the national parks and the non-human a tourism arena, the latter has mainly been constructed as a sublime wilderness in which tourism should be restricted. As the 2000s began, this changed drastically, as tourism was reinvented into an essential part of the national parks. Through a focus on approaching the non-human world as an arena for tourists to explore, it transformed from being approached as a location outside of industrial exploitation to one that was firmly inside of the capitalism of modern society.

5.1.2. Insights from Paper II (Sub-Study One)

In this paper, Johan Hedrén and I shed light on embodied representations of the non-human world in visitor information publications about the Swedish national parks. Through our analysis, we identified seven different discursive formations: 1) extraordinary features of the north as sublime; 2) ordinary features of the open and accessible south; 3) national park nature as national heritage; 4) national park nature as elitist and unique; 5) national park nature as an observed object; 6) national park nature as an exploration arena for education and the mastery of nature; and 7) national park nature – for whom? In summary, these discursive formations contained

a divergence between the extraordinary and the ordinary. The first was assigned to northern parks and was characterized by sublime, wild, and pristine portrayals, while the latter was assigned to southern parks, with an emphasis on accessibility and openness. This divergence creates hierarchizations between the national parks, while other portrayals create hierarchizations between the parks and other spaces. Another strong emphasis was the national parks as spaces for learning, whereby the non-human world becomes displayed, taught, explored, and experienced. Together, the discursive formations result in a portrayal of the national parks as dreamlike places of otherness – characterized by their difference from other social worlds. Based on this, we drew upon Michel Foucault's (1984) concept of the heterotopia and approached the parks as 'real' places with utopian features. We also drew upon the notion of the fairy tale of Peter Pan and his Neverland, which enabled Peter and his friends to escape aging. Similarly, the Swedish national parks offer tourists an escape from environmental degradation, where 'original' nature can be explored as a product of environmentalism. In contrast to Peter's Neverland, the national parks do not offer its visitors the chance to stay young, but they do offer an enclosed pocket of time where the aging of nature can flourish far from modernity, and seemingly without the intrusion of humankind.

5.1.3. Insights from Paper III (Sub-Study Two)

In this paper, I shed light on how the non-human world comes into being through new instructive installations in the Swedish national parks. Through my analysis, I identified three sets of representations: 1) branding representations; 2) exploring representations; and 3) enlightening representations. The branding representations are of an elitist character and focus on the opportunity to experience quality through the Swedish national parks. These depict the parks as unique and much more highly ranked than other spaces, constituting a strong brand associated with high quality and extraordinary experiences of nature. The exploring representations emphasize the parks as tourist spaces and the non-human as an exotic world containing an abundance of phenomena worth seeing. Lastly, the enlightening representations depict the national parks as places for education and the non-human world as primarily understandable through the rationale of the natural sciences. Despite the different characteristics of these sets of representations, what they all have in common is a focus on cultivating interest among park visitors in the non-human world and nature conservation. It is thus considered rational to support the national parks as environmentalist organizations by traveling there as visitors. Through this, the national parks become tourist spaces driven by consumerism, in which the non-human is commodified. Hence, I argue that the core of the installations' discursive expression lies in emphasizing nature conservation, environmentalist thinking, and a

focus on getting to know the non-human world. This discursive process involves the institutional apparatuses of science, nature conservation, and museology. The latter is so strongly established in the installations that I contend that the parks are facing a musealization process. This means that they are being transformed into museum-like places. The installations' focus on portraying the non-human world visually and in non-interactive ways makes them akin to the science museum and descendants of the modernist museum that impose a museological gaze on their visitors, who are taught to look upon the parks as a kind of museum.

5.1.4. Insights from Paper IV (Sub-Study Four)

In this paper, I shed light on embodied representations of the non-human world in visitors' Instagram posts. Through my analysis, I identified five sets of representations that signify five ways of seeing: 1) seeing the non-human world as a sublime scenery of grandeur and beauty; 2) seeing the non-human world as an uncivilized wilderness of desolate character; 3) seeing the non-human world as a challenger demanding physical performances; 4) seeing the non-human world as a treasury with collector values filled with animal tokens; 5) and seeing the non-human world as a unique place with iconic attributes. The sublime representations constructed the non-human world as a beautiful and impressive world that should primarily be gazed upon, while the wild ones depicted it as a wasteland separate and different from the human world. The challenging representations made the non-human appear to be an arena for demanding physical performances, in which tourists can challenge themselves. The treasury views focused on the non-human world as a space for discovery filled with fascinating riches to find, in the shape of both animal encounters eternalized through photographs and traces of animals. Lastly, the unique and iconic representations portrayed the non-human world as extraordinary and exceptional. I argue that these representations and ways of seeing the non-human create a tourist gaze that springs from the Romantic movement of the 1700s and early 1800s, when there existed a focus on emotion, sensation, and poetic mystery. Thus, I refer to 'the romantic tourist gaze' that Urry and Larsen (2011) have written about in their work on various tourist gazes. This romantic gaze approaches the non-human world in the Swedish national parks as isolated enclaves and commodified havens that offer tourists grand views, seclusion, and an escape from humanity. The main productive effect of the gaze is that it sustains and (re)produces a distancing relation between the human and the non-human, which separates rather than unites the two.

CHAPTER SIX

Identified Ways of Seeing
the Non-Human World

6.1. Four Identified Ways of Seeing the Non-Human World

Throughout this chapter, I will present four ways of seeing the non-human world that I have identified after merging and processing the insights drawn in my papers. I will clarify how the non-human becomes represented and assigned characteristics within the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture, explain the ontological and epistemological stances that hence become visible, and reflect upon their productive effects. Some empirical examples will be shared to strengthen and exemplify my points, while the majority of the empirical exemplifications is to be found in the papers presented at the end of this dissertation.

6.2. Seeing the Non-Human World as an Edutainment Arena for Environmentally Conscious Tourists

Among all the empirical materials that I have analyzed, there is one way of seeing the non-human world that stands out as most prominent and sets the tone for the others that I have identified. It approaches the non-human world as an edutainment arena for environmentally conscious tourists, filled with entertaining and educating experiences of the non-human world (paper I–IV).

6.2.1. An Initial Approach to the Non-Human World as an Edutaining Arena Transforming into Silent Times

Seeing the non-human world in the Swedish national parks as an edutaining arena for environmentally conscious tourists had already begun to emerge before the first parks were established in 1909. From the 1870s up until then, areas that later became national parks (e.g., Abisko, Sarek, and Stora Sjöfallet/Stuor Muorkke) were frequently mentioned in the yearbooks of the Swedish Tourist Association, which situated them and their non-human world as potential commercial tourist places that could be consumed and experienced by tourists (paper I). At that time, they were foremost available to a delimited group of travelers – natural scientists traveling to natural areas to reveal the secrets of nature. These scientists were also the ones who got to share their stories through the yearbooks, which often focused on ‘exotic’ explorations of nature in the northern parts of Sweden. In parallel, there existed an expressed desire to make such natural areas available to tourists from among the general public, and as soon as any accessibility initiatives were implemented by the tourist association, they were listed and presented in the yearbooks. These lists portrayed the non-human world as open and accessible, at the same time as they underlined it as a tourist resource. Within policy at that time, nature was generally seen as connected to Sweden’s industrialization, where interests such as forestry, mining, and agriculture were central. In relation to nature located in areas that were

designated to become national parks, it was stated that it should be protected in order to offer aesthetic-patriotic tourist experiences and outdoor recreation, and thus entertain tourists. Besides making it available both for tourism and outdoor recreation, the initial conservation project was also centered around a threefold natural scientific goal. It strived to make the non-human world function as a natural-historical record for natural scientists, and a space where the public could be educated, while also enabling the rational management of the forests (paper I).

In one of the policy documents from 1907, for example (which is part of my empirical material in paper I), it was emphasized that the non-human world in the parks could both encompass ‘natural curiosities’ and also function as an ‘outstanding tourist arena’ [my transl.] (Améen, Lönnberg, & Starbäck, 1907, p. 47). Thus, the non-human world was ordered according to natural scientific norms even as it was approached as something that could educate and entertain tourists from the public (paper I). This indicates that it was seen not only as a tourism arena of entertaining character but also of an edutaining one (see Rader & Cain, 2014; Rutherford, 2011). Around the time when the first national parks were established, the focus on natural scientists and their explorations of the non-human remained strong but greater focus was directed towards what lay people could experience if they travelled to a national park. The yearbooks told tourists how to find their way there, what to do, and what to keep their eyes open for. At the center of attention was the exploration of nature, which was described as offering tourists extraordinary experiences (paper I).

Figure 17. The non-human world was considered to encompass ‘natural curiosities’ and function as an ‘outstanding tourist arena,’ which allowed the scientific to meet the commercial. The left-hand picture was published in the tourist association’s yearbook of 1893 and depicts a natural scientist with his Saami guides in the area that later became Sarek National Park, photographer unknown. In the photograph on the right, a commercial tourist can be seen in Abisko National Park. This photograph was published in the yearbook of 1911, ©de Perre foto. Both pictures are part of my empirical material in paper I.

In relation to the parks offering tourists experiences of nature, it was stressed that those should be made even more accessible to tourists from the general public, since such tourism was considered to make people cherish nature. Hence, the non-human became seen as something that should be loved and cherished – feelings that could be achieved through a tourist visit to any of the parks. Through this, tourism became seen as a source of income but also something that could make tourists interested in nature and nature conservation. Around that time, the tourism association portrayed itself as deeply involved in questions of nature conservation and took on an educative role through which tourism was depicted as an activity that could simultaneously contribute to nature conservation and function as a bridge between the human and non-human. Such depictions remained strong up until the end of the 1930s, when the relationship between notions of national park nature as tourism-oriented and notions of it as a space for conservation became strained (paper I). As previous research has demonstrated, the close connection between the nature conservation movement and the tourism movement came to an abrupt end after a period of conflict regarding exploitation of the non-human world (Lundgren, 2009, 2011).

The time between the 1940s and the 1960s marks a period when representations in the yearbooks and policy documents depicting the non-human as tourist-oriented disappeared almost completely. Little was written about the national parks in general and the non-human world went from being portrayed as an edutainment arena into being depicted primarily as a world in need of protection. Even though some representations of a tourism character still existed, primarily within the yearbooks of the tourist association, they were sparse. Within policy, the Swedish parks were compared to those in the United States, which were described as having a strong tourism orientation centered around outdoor recreation. In contrast to the Swedish ones, they offered tourists services and facilities such as parking, lodging facilities, boats, campfires, renting horses, and guides. In Sweden, critical voices were raised against approaching the non-human world as a tourist product, primarily within the nature conservation movement. Warnings were raised claiming that tourism risked ruining the wilderness qualities of nature, at the same time as other exploitations of the non-human world were criticized for draining wetlands, and leading to deforestation and the loss of species and their habitats. It was also stated that the national parks were both remote and had limited economic value, which depicted them as uninteresting for tourism. To address the criticism directed against tourism, the tourist association tried to assure people that tourism and nature conservation could coexist in relation to the management of the national parks, while asserting that the movement itself had the same burning interest in questions of nature conservation as the nature conservation movement itself.

During the 1960s and 1970s, attempts to dissolve the contradictions between the non-human world as a tourism arena and a product of nature conservation were initiated. Instead of mentioning tourism, policy now focused on outdoor recreation, which was projected as part of a larger accessibility project that would enable the population of Sweden to gain physical access to nature. Despite the previous descriptions of national parks as nothing other than products of nature conservation, they were now described, together with other protected areas, as important for increasing public outdoor leisure. In this, they were seen as valuable contributors to both outdoor recreation and open access to nature. However, tourism was not mentioned as part of this, because commercial industries were still understood as having no part in the nature conservation of cherished natural areas. Such understandings remained strong during the 1980s and 1990s, when criticism against approaching nature as touristic remained, because the tourism industry was still considered to harm the wilderness qualities of the non-human world. In contrast to the previous decades, the tourist association was also putting forward a critique of tourism, and especially negligent tourists who harmed the non-human world in the national parks (paper I).

However, there was an undertone of making nature tourist-oriented again, as there were discussions of how tourists could be taught to behave properly in nature. In this endeavor, the tourist association took on an educative role and suggested that an entrance fee should be adopted in the parks. The idea was that, if tourists paid a fee, the money could be used to improve and support the conservation of nature. In other words, the non-human world became an arena for tourists through which they could contribute to nature conservation and thus become more environmentally conscious. Still, the idea of putting a price on the non-human world definitively underlined its tourism-related characteristics, and the idea of incorporating the money into nature conservation emphasized the functioning of Swedish national park tourism as an act of environmentalism. Thus, in contrast to the early 1900s, availability for tourists was not prioritized, as a fee could make it more difficult for people to access the parks and exclude those who could not afford to pay. The prohibition of cars from the national parks was also put on the agenda, which contributed to making the non-human world in the national parks a place for elitism, in which primarily hikers were welcome. In contrast to the tourist association, policy started to raise the question of how the national parks could become interesting to tourists. One way in which this became embodied was through the publication of coffee-table books about the national parks, which were directed towards tourists. This could be seen as an initial step towards re-envisioning the non-human world as an edutainment arena for environmentally conscious tourists (paper I).

6.2.2. A Rediscovered Focus on the Non-Human World as an Edutaining Arena for Tourists

Around the turn of the millennium, and continuing until today, the non-human world once again became represented as an edutainment arena for environmentally conscious tourists, but on a much larger scale than ever before (papers I–IV). Within policy, the national parks are now simultaneously valued for the ways in which their nature attracts tourists and highlighted as important and popular nature-based tourist destinations. This becomes visible, for example, through encouragement from the Swedish government to make commercial activity possible in the national parks, since such activity is seen as important for tourists interested in nature. Such encouragement has attracted praise from several tourism organizations, but surprisingly not always from the Swedish Tourist Association, which has been critical of the idea of greater exploitation of nature in the parks through tourism. Despite this, the association is, and has been for a long time, highly involved in representing the non-human world as an edutainment arena for environmentally conscious tourists (paper I), together with several other kind of actors, such as other tourism organizations (paper II), nature conservation actors (papers II, III) and tourists (paper IV). Through different mediations, these portray the national parks as environmental organizations and protectors of fragile nature, but tourism is assigned a totally different role in relation to this than before (paper I–IV). Similar to some of the representations from around the time when the first national parks were established (paper I), tourism is once again seen as a bridge that brings people closer to the non-human (paper I–IV). This is noticeable, for example, in strategic documents about the parks, where increased numbers of visitors are considered to intensify the opportunity to improve people's general knowledge about protected nature and its importance, which in turn could increase their engagement with and faith in nature conservation (paper I). In SEPA's branding strategy (which is part of my empirical material in paper I) the following is stated:

By attracting more visitors, we become an important component of rural development and increased tourism to places outside of the big cities. A prerequisite for this is that we not only think of nature conservation as the preservation of protected nature, but also realize the value of refining it into an attraction. [my transl.] (SEPA, 2011b, p. 5)

In other words, human exploitation of nature, which is often projected as something that needs to be delimited in relation to national parks (Gissibl et al., 2012; Grusin, 1995; Patin, 2012b), is now seen as part of their conservation of the non-human world (paper I–IV). In this context, tourists are portrayed as one of several stakeholder

groups that has the opportunity to contribute to nature conservation by consuming the non-human and spreading the word about the importance of national parks, in order to get more people involved (papers I–III). This can be exemplified through the newly installed instructive installations, which encourage tourists to see themselves as environmentally engaged consumers who explore and learn about nature. Even though it is not always clearly spelled out, the installations contain an implicit ‘hope that opinion will germinate in society and turn people into environmentalists who cherish nature and nature conservation’ (paper III, p. 14). Thus, tourists are supposed to not only enjoy themselves while visiting a national park, but they are also encouraged to become environmental activists and contributors to nature conservation (papers I–III). Learning opportunities about the natural world are presented as one of the tools to make tourists environmentally engaged. Simultaneously, they are presented as one of the main things that the national parks offer tourists (papers I–III), especially through their instructive installations (papers II, III), which are frequently presented as worth exploring by contemporary visitor information publications (paper II).

Related to this, SEPA has declared that displaying nature visually is important due to the learning opportunities it provides, which is what the instructive installations are considered to do (paper III). The focus on educating tourists via instructive installations could be understood as a kind of exhibitionism (see Lippard, 1999), which turns the non-human world into a museological space for tourists to learn from. This is particularly the case since most of the instructive installations are designed as two-dimensional signs that are situated along the trails in the parks and focus on displaying nature (paper III). This relates to the ‘show and tell’ orientation of many museums (Bal, 1996). Traditionally, such institutions have transferred objects to an exhibition site, where they can be displayed to visitors (T. Bennett, 2018; Hooper-Greenhill, 2000), but in the Swedish national parks, the whole non-human world is enclosed within such a display orientation. This implies that the parks not only face intensifying tourism but also a musealization process (paper III). Throughout all of this, an intellectual and predetermined relation between the human and the non-human is sought, rather than one based on spontaneous interactions, impressions, and feelings. Simultaneously, a distance between the two is upheld, with the installations portraying nature as ‘a commodified world made for us to look at, learn from, experience, care for, and be amazed by’ (paper III, p. 17).

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Figure 18. The instructive installations in the national parks, with their focus on educating tourists and nudging them into looking for certain things is reminiscent of how museums have traditionally been arranged. The four photos at the top were taken by me in Hamra National Park and Tiveden National Park during my fieldwork for paper III. The two photos at the bottom were also taken by me, but during one of my visits to The Swedish Museum of Natural History. I took them at an exhibition called 'Swedish Nature' that, similar to the Swedish national parks, centers around displaying the non-human to tourists.

The museum-orientation of Swedish national parks suggests that tourists need to be guided while visiting the nonhuman world (Bednar, 2012). This assigns them the position of unknowing and temporary guests in need of guidance, rather than being integrated inhabitants of nature, reminiscent of the enlightening projects conducted by modernist museums during the twentieth century (paper III). Like the Swedish national parks, these museums approached their visitors as subjects in need of education (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; Reeve & Woollard, 2020). The intention was to make visitors into better and more educated citizens and, to enable this, immense invitation initiatives were commenced to reach as many people as possible (Ekström, 1994). According to SEPA, displaying nature to tourists will increase their knowledge and make them feel positive towards nature conservation establishments, such as national parks (paper III). This implies that tourists are being instructed to embrace understandings and behaviors that match the rationalities of SEPA. If they adapt to these, they will become vehicles of power helping to spread the word (see T. Bennett, 1995; Foucault, 1988b). In other words, it is intended that tourists will get to know and become interested in nature, while learning about the importance of nature conservation and spreading the word once they get home. This indicates that being a Swedish national park tourist becomes a kind of knowledge-brokering (paper III) and a form of environmentally oriented activism that focuses on consuming the non-human world as a tourist product (papers I–III).

In this way, tourists also become subjects of ‘environmentality’ (Spurlock, 2012), which ‘refers to the knowledges, politics, institutions, and subjectivities that come to be linked together with the emergence of the environment as a domain that requires regulation and protection’ (Agrawal, 2005, p. 226). Apart from a few critical reflections in the tourists’ Instagram posts, most of the contemporary empirical materials I have analyzed contain few reflections on tourism’s negative impact on the national parks. Instead, the opportunities it presents to save the non-human are highlighted (papers I–IV). This makes it appear as though Swedish national park tourism stands outside of the intrusion on the non-human world enacted by modern society (paper IV). National parks have a long history of separating the human realm from the natural and, in one way, the whole idea of preserving nature in parks and reserves could be seen as an attempt to keep human exploitation away (Grusin, 2004; Patin, 2012b). Interestingly, since the 1980s, ecotourism and nature-based tourism in such areas have been approached by the environmental movement as supportive of nature conservation (Fletcher, 2014; Holden, 2016), and the practice of Swedish national park tourism is a current example of this. Through the parks’ focus on saving original and fragile nature, they position themselves as institutions that are saving the non-human world from the degradation that humanity is creating in other parts of the natural

world, while their tourism becomes the only form of human exploitation that is acceptable (paper I–IV).

Through such hierarchizations, national parks and the nature within them become *heterotopian* places, instituted through their otherness from other social spaces (paper II). Foucault (1984, p. 24), who coined the term heterotopia, explains that they function as ‘enacted utopias in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted.’ Furthermore, through the portrayal of national park tourists as environmental activists who contribute to saving nature through consumption (papers I–IV), the national parks become heterotopias of compensational character (see Foucault, 1984) and sanctuaries for natural wonderlands characterized by their perfection in comparison to unprotected pieces of nature (paper II). What seems to be forgotten, or made invisible, is that the establishment of national parks is in itself a colonization of the non-human world, whereby ‘it is ordered and governed according to the premises of the human world’ (paper II, p. 29). Also neglected is the character of modern tourism, which today is one of the largest industries in the world (Zuelow, 2016). Within this industry, the desire to connect tourists with the non-human world is increasing (Holden, 2016), and during the last few decades, its selling of encounters with ‘nature’ has expanded radically (Fletcher, 2014). Due to this interest, it is also one of the industries that has a major impact on the non-human world (Holden, 2016) and certainly needs to be just as problematized as other industries (Tschida, 2012). Because, however ‘innocent’ tourism might appear, it is an industry that centers around consuming places (Hannam & Knox, 2010), which situates those within modern consumer culture (Sassatelli, 2007).

Tourists in Swedish national parks are exposed to understandings of the non-human world as something to be consumed even before they visit the parks. Through visitor information publications, they are told that it is a place for entertainment and education. Such publications, produced by both nature conservation actors and tourism actors, emphasize that the parks offer great tourist experiences of the non-human world, while most parks offer services that will make the tourists’ visits comfortable (papers I, II). It is also very much emphasized that the parks (in particular the southern ones) are open and accessible to tourists (papers I, II). This becomes visible through lists of services and facilities that the tourists can use as well as photographs of accessibility installations, such as informative signs, footbridges or wide paths, and photographs of people using those (paper II). These kinds of representation emphasize the comfort that a visit to a Swedish national park offers tourists, while framing the non-human as a ‘polite’ world (Williamson, 1995). In that world, comfortable and gentle experiences can take place, which define it as an ‘extension to the well-tended

garden – to be enjoyed with binoculars and a guidebook in hand’ (S. Evans & Spaul, 2003, p. 210).

Contradictory as it might sound, the focus on openness to tourists also becomes visible through photographs of people who are not using such accessibility installations and instead are walking across the middle of an inaccessible mire or a mountain area. In such representations, the main focus is the opportunities that the national parks and their non-human world offer to tourists in terms of roaming and exploring (paper II). Such representations could be seen as linked to the Right of Public Access that, as I wrote in the introduction, gives everyone residing in Sweden the right to roam freely (SEPA, 2020c). The modern version of this right evolved during the same time period as the Swedish nature conservation movement and the tourism movement were initiated, and it was also connected to the establishment of the first national parks. Back then, there was a focus on making the non-human world open and accessible to people who wished to spend their leisure time there (Sandell & Svenning, 2011) and now, around a hundred years later, this is once again very much present (paper II).

Figure 19. Photographs from different empirical materials illustrating how the easily accessible meets inaccessible openness. Top left: part of the visitor information material in paper II, Söderåsen National Park ©Sebastian Mullaert. Top right: Instagram post concerning Tresticklan National Park ©Sandra Hermann (@honmedtollarna on Instagram). Bottom left: part of the visitor information material in paper II, Padjelanta/Badjelánnda National Park ©Hans-Olof Utsi/imagebank.sweden.se. Bottom right: Instagram post concerning Pieljekaise National Park ©Eirik Hennissen Pedersen (@1995eirik on Instagram).

One component that is interesting in relation to representations of the non-human world as accessible and open for tourists to explore is that nature in the northern parks is more frequently mentioned as a place to roam freely. The southern parks and their non-human world, on the other hand, are more often portrayed as both accessible and open (papers II, IV). These tensions are also present in the photographs in Figure 19, in which the two photographs at the top were taken in national parks in the south of Sweden, while the two at the bottom were taken in two parks in the north. These photographs also illustrate that it is not only visitor information publications that uphold this division between north and south. In these, it is very much emphasized that everyone is welcome to visit the parks as a temporary tourist and that it is uncomplicated to do so, regardless of whether the park is located in the north or the south (papers I, II). To underline how easy it is to visit a national park, some of the visitor information publications highlight that visitors do not need a ticket to enter the parks (paper II, p. 19). This stands in sharp contrast to the idea of charging an entrance fee during the 1980s and 1990s (paper I). Nevertheless, people are still encouraged to travel to the parks as tourists and consume pieces of the non-human world (paper II), which makes them part of contemporary consumer culture (Sassatelli, 2007) because commodification within tourism is not only tied to putting a price on something (Hetherington, 1992). Tourism commodification is a political matter that shifts places that were previously thought of as free into places centered on different modes of production (Hannam & Knox, 2010). As my research has made visible, the non-human world in Swedish national parks has faced several shifts between a commodified and an uncommodified state (paper I).

Despite the focus on how easy it is to visit the non-human world in national parks, there is a specific group of tourists who are visible in visitor information publications (paper II), just like at the beginning of the 1900s. Back then, it was fair-skinned, upper-class male scientists who were searching for the secrets of nature (paper I), and today, it is fair-skinned, middle-aged women and men with blonde or brown hair who travel in pairs or small groups and have an interest in exploring nature. They are described as having experience of spending time in demanding nature and are visually depicted as dressed in branded products, while taking part in active outdoor pursuits, such as hiking. Narrow representations like these communicate that the non-human world is accessible to only a small group of tourists, while making people with other appearances invisible. In relation to this, there are almost no representations depicting local inhabitants or users, which further accentuates the dominant role of the non-human as a tourist attraction. These invisibilities assign other kinds of tourists and local inhabitants to marginalized subject positions (paper II), which stand in contrast to how the national parks of the modern day are often

depicted – as spaces for all the nation's people (Gissibl et al., 2012; C. M. Hall & Frost, 2009).

Something else that underlines the notion of the non-human as an edutainment arena for tourists to discover is the instructive installations' presentation of experience values and tourist services, as well as available nature experiences for tourists to look out for. They are encouraged to keep their eyes open for beings, objects, and phenomena belonging to the non-human world, such as birds, mammals, insects, flowers, plants, geological formations, or natural phenomena such as the northern lights (paper III). Through this focus on what tourists can see and experience, they are encouraged to approach the non-human world as something that should primarily be consumed in visual terms, while other senses are excluded. This focus assigns vision a privileged role and (papers II, III) relates to a trend within the modern tourism industry, where the visual is considered to play an essential role in tourists' experiences (Burns, Lester, et al., 2010; Crouch & Lübbren, 2003; Urry & Larsen, 2011). Encouraging tourists to look for and see certain things has become a typical characteristic within the modern tourism industry and its commodification of places (Crouch & Lübbren, 2003; Urry & Larsen, 2011). One example of a visual depiction that has also become typical in this regard is the map. In relation to nature-based tourism destinations such as national parks, maps function as lenses through which tourists see the non-human world (Senda-Cook, 2013) and in Swedish national parks, maps are frequently used in the instructive installations (paper III). At each entrance, tourists encounter a map of the specific national park, which depicts the park's boundaries and illustrates where tourists can find different experiences and phenomena. Similar to the visitor information publications, accessibility is also underlined here, while the non-human is emphasized as fascinating and something for the tourists to experience (paper III).

Thus, such maps 'direct the visitor through the park and suggest that the park is a stage for their tourist-centered enjoyment' (Tschida, 2012, p. 126) while also being a protector of fragile nature (paper III). In contrast to many of the decades of the twentieth century, the parks are thus simultaneously portrayed as spaces of tourism and of nature conservation (papers I–IV). The maps' directions make the non-human world within the national parks visible and emphasized, while the areas outside of the parks are often made invisible. Erasing or blurring the areas surrounding the parks is a common characteristic among maps in the instructive installations (paper III). Such representations, where some areas become observable and others unobservable (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000), are also built upon understandings of the national parks' 'otherness' from other spaces (see Said, 2003). They make the national parks and their non-human world function as isolated spheres that differ from both the

areas around them and the everyday spaces of the tourists (Bednar, 2012), which further reinforces the interpretation of them as heterotopias (see Foucault, 1984).

Figure 20. This is a photograph of a map of Björnlandet National Park, which tourists encounter at one of the entrances. Besides showing landscape features such as lakes and watercourses, it marks out trails and different places in the national park, as well as services and facilities for the tourists to use. It also makes Björnlandet appear to be an island (which it is not), as the areas outside of the park are rendered invisible. This photograph was taken during my fieldwork for paper III.

‘Othering’ places has long been part of the tourism industry and is something that has frequently been criticized as an expression of institutional and postcolonial manipulation in the construction of people, beings, and places (Crouch & Lübbren, 2003). This, together with the emphasis on tourist services and facilities, and also the portrayals of the non-human world as the phenomenon that is to be experienced, underlines the approach to nature as a commercialized product. It defines the space of the attraction and underlines that tourists should stay within the park to experience the non-human world, even though there might be areas just outside of the borders with the same or similar characteristics. This makes it appear that the non-human world residing within the national park borders is a tourist product worthy of protection, while the parts on the other side of the border become less institutionalized, commercialized, and saved (paper III). Thus, the borders of the national parks become functional boundaries where not only does the protected meet the unprotected, but the commodified meets the uncommodified, at least in tourism terms.

Tourists also depict the non-human world as an edutainment arena to discover, with an emphasis on its entertaining characteristics. They write about their leisure travels and vacations in the national parks and highlight what they experienced, while simultaneously encouraging other tourists to look for certain phenomena or things (such as a specific bird or view). One of the most frequently used words in their captions is ‘nature’ and many tourists describe what they thought of it in terms of experiences. In contrast to many of the visitor information publications, they focus less on services and facilities, or on the educational aspects (paper IV). Instead, most of them focus on highlighting their own presence in the non-human world of the parks. They do this, for example, by posting photographs where the tourist can be seen posing in relation to something that is typical of the national parks, or something that visualizes the national park status, such as the national park symbol. In relation to this, there exists a trend among tourists for visiting as many of the Swedish national parks as possible, and some tourists even have dedicated Instagram accounts chronicling their visits to the various parks. There, they share tips for other tourists interested in visiting any of the parks (paper IV). This trend resembles bucket-listing, which tourists often share on social media to construct their identity and tell others about who they are as travelers. Simultaneously, ‘crossing an item off one’s bucket list bears a resemblance to the collection of an artefact, as such bucket list items are typically rare and only secured after significant planning and effort’ (S. P. Smith, 2019, p. 13). What the tourists visiting a national park collect is experiences of the non-human world. Hence, they portray it in traditional nature-based tourism terms, whereby nature is approached as the primary phenomenon used to create tourist demand and attract tourists (see Holden, 2015). This further reinforces its tourism-focused character and its relation to the so-called ‘experience industry,’ as tourism is often called (Crouch & Lübbren, 2003; Urry & Larsen, 2011).

As the non-human is turned into a product for tourists to experience as temporary visitors, the separation between the human and the non-human is reinforced (papers I–IV). The many representations of the non-human as a tourist space for temporary visits, rather than a space where the tourists belong, assign it a passive role as an object to be explored by the tourist subjects (papers I–IV). In this way, the human world is allocated a privileged position as ‘knowing,’ while no space is left for the non-human world to express agency. This tendency is typical of the nature–culture dichotomy, in which the non-human is approached as something primarily material that can and should be controlled by humans to serve our interests (Rutherford, 2011). This uncritical approach to the non-human world as a commodified edutainment arena that can be saved through tourism relates to tendencies among Western ecologists and ecodevelopmentalists, who have traditionally over-

seen the cultural commercialization of the non-human world and its implications. These represent a Western way of seeing nature according to an urban-industrial ontology in which the non-human world is assigned a passive role and becomes something that seems to exist only for humans to 'use,' while human agents (primarily tourists) construct and commercialize it. As long as this approach is pursued, imperatives for capital accumulation and the disciplining of the non-human world will be accepted and sustained (Escobar, 1996). Thus, this way of seeing the non-human includes, brings together, and situates the abstractions of tourist exploration and environmental care in the tourists' visits, where acts of environmentalism in the shape of reverence and care become possible through consumption. Through this, the non-human becomes a focal point for both past and present environmental use, care, and concern.

6.3. Seeing the Non-Human World as Nationalist Heritage and a Trademark

The second way of seeing that I have identified throughout the papers represents the non-human world as heritage and a trademark of nationalism that is part of, and shapes the identity of, Sweden (papers I–IV).

6.3.1. An Initial Nationalist Love of the Non-Human World as Heritage Developing into Decades of Vacuum

About the time just before and during the establishment of the first national parks during the late 1800s and early 1900s, the non-human world in the areas that later became national parks was very much seen as an ideological phenomenon linked to Sweden's national identity. This is visible both in relation to policy and within the yearbooks of the tourist association. Thus, this way of seeing emerged and developed together with the nature conservation movement and the tourism movement (paper I), which were both linked to nationalism – 'the identification and promotion of a unified cultural identity' (Facos, 1998, p. 27). The tourism association encouraged tourists to 'know their country,' with a special emphasis on nature. Such engagement, which was also visible in the policies of the time, was considered to overcome class divisions, strengthen patriotic initiatives, and support the growing nature conservation movement. It was argued that, above all, the association's most important duty was to be a tutor that nurtured Swedes' love for nature, and through that, their homeland (paper I).

When the first national parks were established, this notion was transferred to them as well. They were considered a way to enable Swedes to get to know their country and its most impressive natural heritage through a visit (paper I). Thus, they

became seen as ‘places where people were supposed to transpose the metaphysical longing for union with nature into the political doctrine of union with the nation’ (Mels, 1999, p. 75). This longing was nationalist in many ways, with the non-human world being seen as linked to national pride and the fostering of the people (paper I), which relates to the contemporary focus on Sweden as a nature-loving country (Mels, 1999; Olwig, 1995; Ödmann et al., 1982). Such representations also underline national belonging and nature’s relation to Sweden’s identity, because identity is always linked to ‘heritage – those things (tangible or intangible) that we value as special and worth preserving’ (Frost & Hall, 2009b, p. 63). The intense focus on the importance of preserving the non-human world in the national parks as a kind of national heritage that is of interest to future generations clearly marked national park nature as something that was more worthy than the areas just outside its borders.

Thus, such representations distance the non-human world in the Swedish national parks from other pieces of the non-human, and also from the rest of the world. This means that this way of seeing creates a sense of apartness that, together with the intense focus on positioning national park nature as central to Swedish identity, could be seen as a kind of ‘naturalistic nationalism.’ All kinds of nationalism rely on a relationship between a nation and its geography; in relation to naturalistic nationalism, that relationship is based upon the relation between a nation and those geographical areas that are considered to be nature. Thus, a naturalization of a nation is different from a nationalization of nature. The first occurs when a nation’s culture is imprinted upon a territory that is considered to be nature, while the latter occurs when a nation positions the non-human world as a generator of the nation itself (Kaufmann, 1998). As Thorpe and Rutherford (2010, p. 131) argue: ‘In the former form of nationalism, the nation imposes itself onto nature, whereas in the latter, nature is seen as determining national culture.’

Nations’ establishment of national parks could in itself be seen as a nationalist statement, because their choice of which places are to become national parks says much about who they think they are and how they wish to be seen, both by their own citizens and by other nations (Frost & Hall, 2009b). Once those statements have been made, tourism in the national parks continues to construct and promote a nation’s identity, which affects its acceptance from other nations (Wall, 1982). The establishment of the first Swedish national parks assigned the ideological space of nature a material status related to the country’s patriotic tone (paper I). Previously, Sweden’s patriotism had been more centered around the country’s military victories (Sundin, 2005), but now, this changed. Simultaneously, the non-human world in the national parks became ordered according to idealistic norms, which resulted in a focus on ‘harnessing nature in the service of national romantic sentiments,’ which

‘embodied the state’s duty to protect pristine parts of the non-human world for aesthetic patriotic experiences of outdoor recreation and tourism’ (paper I, p. 7).

In one way, it might not come as a surprise that the non-human world in Swedish parks was seen as a product of pride and nationalism – the term *national park* is indeed very much centered around nationalism, as is the whole idea of saving pieces of a nation’s nature in national parks. Since the first parks were established during the late 1800s in the United States (C. M. Hall & Frost, 2009), parks all over the world have been established to function as symbols of national identity (Bergman, 2012; Carruthers, 1995; Facos, 1998; C. M. Hall, 1985; Harper & White, 2012; Wall, 1982) and, as I have illustrated, the Swedish ones are no exception. Initially, they provided key opportunities for people to visit the non-human world, which was considered to stand in contrast to the human world. However, as time moved on, the nationalist emphasis and the centrality of the non-human for Swedish identity faded away as the focus on nature as an edutainment arena decreased. Between the 1910s and the 2000s, the representations of national park nature as a national and patriotic heritage faded away completely. However, as the current intensification of tourism entered the scene, this changed drastically (paper I).

6.3.2. The Revival of a Nationalist Love of Nature as Heritage, with a Focus on Branding

Since around the beginning of the 2000s up until today, the nationalist focus on the non-human world in Swedish national parks has once again been strong (papers I–IV), but it has taken a slightly different direction than it did during the late 1800s and up until the 1910s (paper I). In contemporary visitor information publications, for example, the non-human world is once again portrayed as part of the national heritage of Sweden, which in turn is portrayed as a ‘country of nature’ filled with nature-loving Swedes. Thus, Sweden’s history of being a nature-loving country is often mentioned, with the national parks assigned a central role (paper II). Many of these publications have a strong nationalist focus, whereby Swedes are encouraged to visit any of the national parks in order to get in touch with the country’s finest nature (paper II), which is referred to as ‘nature’s hall of fame’ (paper I). Foreign tourists are also encouraged to visit the national parks in order to get in touch with the non-human, which is described as enabling them to forge a closer connection to Sweden, Swedes, and Swedishness (paper II). Due to this claimed centrality, the non-human world becomes related to the key attitudes, values, and meanings tied to Swedishness, which places it at the core of what it means to be Swedish. All of this is also tied to an approach to nature as part of a national heritage that should be of interest to both present and future Swedes (papers II, III).

Underlining the contemporary presentation of the non-human world as a product of nationalism are representations of a branded character, by which the national parks and their nature are presented as one united brand (papers I, III). Presenting the parks in this uniting way is a recurring theme within contemporary representations of the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture. Even though the specific characteristics of the different parks and their non-human world are described and emphasized, they are often presented as a united body and trademark (papers I–IV). The presentation of the parks as a united whole that constitute a set of destinations, or attractions that offer tourists nature-based experiences that extend above and beyond the ordinary (papers I–IV), also reinforce a nationalist orientation, not least through the focus on experiencing, identifying, and highlighting the unique characteristics of Swedish nature in the parks. In the visitor information publications, for example, the national parks are constantly presented as a united whole that is unique and thus stands in contrast to other places. On some occasions, the parks' belonging to Europe is mentioned but, despite this, they are never described as untied with or connected to other parks in Europe of similar character. Such ways of representing the parks and their non-human world underline their nationalist orientation (paper II) and could be seen as springing from the intensifying tourism that the parks currently face, and especially the branding initiatives that I described in the introduction. These have led to the development of a new brand of Swedish national parks and their non-human world (papers I, III).

From around the beginning of the 2000s up until today, the interest in nation branding has increased among national governments and bodies because it is considered to have possibilities for articulating a cohesive and coherent identity, enlivening citizens' national spirit, and preserving loyalty to the national territory. One central part of nation branding is to communicate a set of identities and loyalties (Aronczyk, 2013), which also becomes visible within the branding of the Swedish national parks. The brand is stated to stand for and offer tourists high-quality experiences of and knowledge about the finest pieces of Sweden's non-human world. This becomes central to Swedish identity at the same time as it is presented as being important both for us living in the present time and for those who come after us. It is seen as something unique and extraordinary for Swedes to be proud of (paper III). This nationalist orientation is noticeable in all my empirical materials, not least through the design of symbols linked to the brand, which are meant to be used in relation to the national parks (papers I–IV). These are visible in contemporary policy (paper I), visitor information publications (paper II), the instructive installations (paper III), and tourists' Instagram posts (paper IV). One such symbol is the golden crown, which was developed as a three-dimensional extension of the national parks'

logotype – a golden star. That star is, in turn, an extension of the logotype of all protected nature in Sweden – a snow star. I have discussed the use of the crown in several of my papers and also presented empirical examples. Up until now, however, I have not provided an extended reflection upon its meaning and relation to the other two symbols.

Figure 21. The top photo was taken by me in Abisko National Park during my fieldwork for paper III. It pictures the golden crown that is a three-dimensional version of the symbol at the bottom left – the golden star. This, in turn, is a development of the snow star, seen at the bottom right. Bottom pictures: ©SEPA.

To deepen my understanding of the relationship between these symbols and their meanings, I have read SEPA's explanations of how they relate to each other. In its design platform, which is part of the policy documents I have analyzed in paper I, SEPA describes the relation between them as follows:

The logotype of the national parks is based on the already established and well-known snow star that is used for protected areas in Sweden. But for Sweden's national parks, the snow star becomes a golden star, and in a three-dimensional shape, a golden crown. All to symbolize that this concerns the finest Swedish nature most worthy of viewing. [my transl.] (SEPA, 2012, p. 5)

When developing brands of national character, it is common to choose visual symbols and logotypes to underline and communicate what the brand stands for. Thus, such symbols and logotypes function as a kind of informational context in themselves (Aronczyk, 2013), and in relation to the three I have just described, it becomes obvious that they have different functions and are considered to communicate different aspects of nature. Among these symbols, there also exists a hierarchy. The snow star represents the lowest level, while the golden star represents the highest, together with the crown. When visiting a Swedish national park, a tourist will see that all of these are present. The snow star is primarily visible on trees (without the black edging or text), where they mark the borders of the national park, and on small signs that also mark the border. When visiting a Swedish nature reserve or similar, visitors will see that the snow star is used in the same manner, but is also present in the instructive installations that welcome visitors at the reserve entrances, and on brochures and folders. Even though the snow star is well represented on both trees and smaller signs in the national parks, the golden star is used to a much larger extent, which underlines its role as the symbol for Sweden's national parks. It can be seen on everything from instructive installations, brochures, and folders to the clothes of national park staff, national park vehicles, and decorative installations (Figure 22).

Identified Ways of Seeing the Non-Human World

Figure 22. The golden star is frequently used in the national parks. These photographs were taken during my fieldwork for paper III. Top left: Björnlandets National Park. Top right: Åsnens National Park. Middle: Tyresta National Park. Bottom left: Sonfjället National Park. Bottom right: Färnebofjärden National Park.

This frequent usage situates the golden star as central for the brand of the national parks and their non-human world, simultaneously as it becomes something recurrent that the visitors will recognize at each national park they visit. While the snow star is present in older signs of the parks and the golden star is used in the new instructive installations that are sprung from the intensifying times, it also embodies a relationship centered around a transformation from ‘the old’ to ‘the new’, which is further reinforced by the golden crown. In contrast to the golden star, which is presented in different sizes and on different kind of mediations, its three-dimensional extension is only presented in one shape – as a massive golden crown placed in the landscape⁴. It has a diameter of almost two meters and is often placed in relation to any of the main ‘attractions’ of the national parks (paper III), which makes it function as a marker for the extraordinary (Bednar, 2012). On the top of the crown, the name of the national park is carved out to underline the specific identity of the park, but otherwise – it is always identical independent of which park it is placed in (paper III).

All these aspects make the crown a symbol used to mark out the extraordinary character of the non-human world in the parks (paper I, II, III). In tourists’ Instagram posts, tourists can often be seen posing in front of or on top of the crown and it seem important for many to place themselves in relation to it, almost in a way of saying ‘I was here’ (paper IV). From above, the golden crown has the same shape as both the snow star and the golden star. This underlines their kinship, and also that the crown is an extension of the golden star. The shape they share is a symmetrical six-pointed star, which is often seen as a sign for the Pole Star and a symbol related to the North Pole. In Western ideograms, different forms of stars are common and frequently seen as important. Different golden stars are often used to indicate military rank or power, which makes such symbols of authority and sovereignty (Liungman, 2004). Similarly, the crown is one of our time’s most well-known symbols, and it has a long history of being used as a visual symbol to mark power, sovereignty, and quality, frequently in relation to monarchs (Balmer, Greyser, & Urde, 2006).

⁴ However, there exists smaller ‘replicas’ of the crown in several parks, such as on the top of guideposts.

Figure 23. Photographs of the golden crown. The three at the top were taken by me in Björnlandet National Park, Stenshuvud National Park, and Hamra National Park during my fieldwork for paper III. The one to the bottom left is part of my empirical material in paper IV, ©Lars-Erik Andersson & Mari Stridh (@aventyramedoss on Instagram), while the one to the bottom right is part of my empirical material in paper II, ©Ulf Öhlund.

In a Swedish context, the crown has often been used to decorate the heads of kings and queens, to underline and honor their greatness, but it has also played an important role in Sweden's visual language in other ways. For example, it has been central in the 'three crowns' symbol, which has a long tradition of functioning as the national symbol of Sweden (Facos, 1998). This symbol has, for example, been stamped onto Swedish coins (De Lagerberg, 1908) and is today a central part of many

national sport teams' uniforms including the national men's hockey team, which is called 'the three crowns' (while the women's team is called 'the lady crowns').

Figure 24. The 'three crowns symbol' is also visible in older instructive installations within the national parks. Here, it is visible to the left in the top sign in Muddus/Muttos National Park.

In other words, the crown as a symbol is very much tied to Sweden's national identity (Balmer et al., 2006; Facos, 1998) and, traditionally, both the golden star and the crown have often been used to mark the extraordinary character of something, while also symbolizing dominance and power (Balmer et al., 2006; De Lagerberg, 1908; Liungman, 2004). The position of such symbols as part of the trademark and brand of the Swedish national parks underlines the portrayal of the non-human world as extraordinary and nationalist, which also makes them appear as higher ranked than other natural areas in Sweden (papers I–IV). In fact, saving and preserving pieces of the non-human world in national parks due to their extraordinary qualities makes them appear to be higher ranked than other natural areas (paper II). This creates hierarchies between different parts of the non-human world that could lead to people not seeing the value of other 'natural' spaces. In other words, it contains embedded exclusions and inclusions, which creates relationships between different spaces centered around a kind of elitism. Through their status as representatives of Sweden's most noble nature, the national parks appear to be perfectly constructed worlds that are entirely different from other natural areas with their chaotic, tangled, and ill-constructed appearances (paper II).

Similar tendencies to the ones I have identified in relation to Sweden can also be seen in relation to countries such as Canada and the United States, which also developed a strong connection between nationalism and the non-human world around the late 1800s and the early 1900s. This has remained strong up until the first parts of the twenty-first century (Kaufmann, 1998; Mawani, 2007; Thorpe & Rutherford, 2010). Like the Swedish case, these contain practices of exclusionary nationalism that has been present through places considered to be national nature (Thorpe & Rutherford, 2010). In this way, national parks and the nature they contain have been portrayed as extraordinary and unique, at the same time as they are seen as important parts of the national identity (Mawani, 2007). I have only focused on how this comes into being in relation to the non-human world in Swedish national parks, but other studies have emphasized that all kinds of nature have been incorporated as part of the Swedish identity since the late 1800s and early 1900s (Mels, 1999; Olwig, 1995; Ödmann et al., 1982). Thus, the tendencies that I have identified are part of the so-called ‘Swedish love of nature,’ which consists of the merging of understandings of the non-human that have existed in relation to the Swedish nature since the late 1800s, and Romantic approaches to nature (Ehn, Frykman, & Löfgren, 1993). To sum up, seeing the non-human world as a nationalist heritage and trademark leads to it becoming part of Sweden’s national-identity promotion, in which its uniqueness is emphasized, simultaneously with tourists being promised unique experiences of nature. Hence, it is not only the extraordinary character of nature that becomes promoted as important for the national parks, but also the parks’ brand, with its values and activities. These are used as part of the acceleration in the commercialization of the non-human world of the Swedish national parks, and place the non-human world at the center of Sweden as a ‘nature nation.’

6.4. Seeing the Non-Human World as a Sublime Vista of Grandeur and Beauty

The third way of seeing that I have identified throughout the papers represents the non-human as a sublime world, where attributes of beauty and grandeur are assigned to nature, but also a small portion of danger (papers I, II, IV).

6.4.1. An Initial Appetite for Grand, Beautiful, and Dangerous Nature Fading into Silent Times

As with the previous ways of seeing that I have identified, the sublime also has its roots in the late 1800s and early 1900s, just prior to when the first Swedish national parks were established. Back then, the natural scientists visiting the areas that later became parks portrayed the non-human world as grand, beautiful, and dangerous.

Often, they did so through photographs of vast mountain vistas, dramatic waterfalls, lush forests, and comparatively small people gazing at scenic and aesthetic views, but they also employed descriptions of how awe-inspiring, stunning, and potentially dangerous nature was (paper I). Such depictions are typical of the sublime (Chang, 2019; Corbett, 2002; Karlsdóttir, 2014; Kaufmann, 1998; Urry & Larsen, 2011), which imposes a mixture of awed and overwhelmed feelings among those who experience it (Bell & Lyall, 2002). From this sublime perspective, many features merge, such as the great, the disordered, the massive, the tremendous, the shapeless, the dangerous, the obscured, the thundering, and the dizzying (Brady, 2014).

Sublime characteristics tied to the non-human world have been a central part of tourism and tourists' experiences since modern tourism began (Bell & Lyall, 2002). In relation to the Swedish national parks, the early sublime representations from prior to the establishment of the first parks in 1909 stayed the same up until around the 1940s. Such representations were highly visible in the yearbooks of the tourist association, in which much attention was directed towards consuming the non-human world in visual terms, as tourists were encouraged to gaze upon vast and beautiful views. However, such tendencies were also present, to some extent, within policy. As I explained in relation to seeing the non-human as heritage and a trademark of nationalist character, the first national establishments were considered to offer tourists aesthetic-patriotic experiences of the non-human world, which also underlined the importance of visual consumptions of nature (paper I). In relation to one of the first documented proposals to establish Swedish national parks, for example, the politician Adolph-Erik Nordenskiöld (1880) used the visual attributes of the non-human world as an argument for why such parks were needed:

When at present millions [of dollars] are paid for images by old masters on canvas or in marble, what would one not pay in about a hundred years for a real picture of the fatherland, as it was in the past [...]. We still own such paintings in most parts of the country, but it is clear that they are starting to disappear more every day. However, it would entail minor costs to preserve a series of such paintings for posterity. [my transl.] (n.p.)

This proposal is part of my empirical material for paper I, and this example quotation illustrates how Nordenskiöld used the word 'painting' when referring to the non-human world. This visual orientation matches that of the contemporary Swedish nature-based tourism genre and the country's artistic turn, when an admiration for and focus on exploring the non-human world visually was emerging (Andolf, 1989; Facos, 1998; Johannisson, 1984; Löfgren, 1989). Back then, the sublime portrayals were frequently embodied through paintings (Boime, 2012; John, 2012; S. P. Smith,

2019; Wilke, 2012). One typical portrayal of such sublimity was explorers who gazed towards vast landscapes from an elevated position, which also encouraged people to consume nature in visual terms (Boime, 2012; Wilke, 2012). Such depictions were also commonly used by colonial travelers, who wanted to illustrate their supremacy over conquered lands. In those cases, the landscapes in front of them represented the areas they had colonized, while the elevation of the travelers underlined their dominance over the world laid out in front of them (S. P. Smith, 2019).

Another common characteristic of such paintings was picturing a vast landscape by means of a foreground, a middle ground, and a background, where the background often captured the massive element, such as a waterfall or mountains (Erlandson-Hammargren, 2006). By underlining the grandeur of nature, such paintings strived to make their beholders feel overawed (Wilke, 2012). Through their emphasis on and portrayals of the non-human world as something vast and aesthetic (Erlandson-Hammargren, 2006; Jensen Adams, 2002; Wilke, 2012), they encouraged tourists to primarily focus their tourist experiences on gazing towards grand scenery. As a result, outlooks became one of the main attractions for which tourists searched, since they could offer grand views, aesthetic explorations, and emotional experiences (Erlandson-Hammargren, 2006; Jensen Adams, 2002). Similar to the national parks in the United States (John, 2012; Wilke, 2012), the interest in outlooks was also mirrored within the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture at that time. In the yearbooks of the tourist association, people could be seen gazing towards expansive scenes of the non-human world, but not always from an elevated position. Together with photographs of seemingly endless landscapes containing little human presence, and depictions of humans as small compared to nature, such portrayals underlined the great power of nature and the littleness of man, while also depicting the non-human as a painting (paper I).

With an initial focus on the northern parts of the country, the natural scientists who wrote the travelogues in the tourist association's yearbooks focused a lot on sublime characteristics, especially mountains and waterfalls (paper I). Their focus on the north as sublime can be seen as having sprung from its wider attraction as desirable and amazing, which reached Sweden during the late 1800s and was part of the country's artistic turn (Mels, 1999; Sörlin, 1988; Ödmann et al., 1982). The northern mountains and waterfalls amazed the natural scientists with their aesthetic features and huge size, which were said to offer experiences of nature's magnificent character. This magnificence also made the scientists aware of the great powers of the non-human world. Several of them shared travel stories in which they underlined the thrill offered by the mountains and waterfalls, but also emphasized that they were highly unpredictable and potentially dangerous to inexperienced explorers. However, such

depictions of danger were only visible in the textual descriptions and not the photographs, which focused solely on the grand and beautiful characteristics (paper I). In many ways, the sublime is dependent upon the relation between the beautiful, the grand, and the dangerous (Zuelow, 2016), but this illustrates that they were not always presented in united ways within the Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture of that time (paper I).

This was also the case within the many depictions of a popular activity that enabled the scientists to get in touch with the sublime – mountaineering. The natural scientists explained to readers of the yearbooks that, if they could conquer nature by climbing a mountain to its summit, they would be able to get in touch with the beauty and grandeur of the sublime. They would feel the magnificence of nature while fighting their way upwards against the steep walls of the mountains before reaching the summit and being able to grasp nature's beauty through the vast panoramas revealed to them. Even though the challenges involved in combating the grandeur of nature were part of the sublime experience, its main goal was the passive observation of nature's beauty that could be achieved from a mountain top (paper I). The interest in mountaineering relates to that time's fascination with approaching the non-human world as an arena for accomplishments and conquering. This could be seen in several countries (Fletcher, 2014; Zuelow, 2016; Zweig, 1974) and was a remnant of the nobility's Grand Tours of the 1700s (Zuelow, 2016). The Swedish interest in mountaineering existed outside of the national parks as well (Andolf, 1989; Erlandson-Hammargren, 2006; Fletcher, 2014; Johannisson, 1984; Ödmann et al., 1982), but it was strongly articulated in relation to those places (paper I). The focus on mastering sublime nature through mountaineering was very strong in relation to several of the first national parks, such as Abisko National Park and Sarek National Park, both prior to and after the establishment of them (paper I). It almost became an urge to be involved, which the following quotation from the yearbook of 1907 exemplifies: 'there are still mountain summits waiting for their masters' (Sjögren, 1907, p. 316). Through that fascination, nature became a space that was considered to trigger physical challenges among tourists, but also something that must be defeated (paper I).

Figure 25. The four photographs at the top exemplify sublime characteristics, where the grand and the beautiful meet. All of them were published in the tourist association's yearbooks. Top left: Abisko National Park in 1909 ©S. Ekman. Top middle: Sarek National Park in 1939 ©Mattis Möller foto. Top right: Abisko National Park in 1907 ©A. Roman. Bottom right: Area of Fuluſfjället in 1899 ©J. Weno. At the very bottom, there is a photograph of the painting 'An Avalanche in the Alps' from 1803. It is not part of my empirical material but exemplifies a visual depiction of the sublime that my empirical material made invisible: nature as grand, beautiful, and dangerous at the same time © Philips James De Louthembourg.

Two of the photographs from my empirical materials, together with the photo of the painting in Figure 25, illustrate that the relation between the human and the non-

human world is central for these kinds of sublime mediation (papers II, IV). Instead of portraying the natural landscape alone, with no human presence, humans are often placed in the photographs to function as ‘witness figures’ (Bordo, 2002) who experience the sublime and reinforce the grandeur of nature and its great powers through their littleness (Aurélié, 2016). After the first national parks were established, the sublime representations remained almost the same up until the 1940s, when a drastic decrease occurred. The sublime went from being very present, to being very sparsely represented. The focus on natural scientists disappeared and, instead, the sublime features were described as something that tourists from the public could experience. However, some new features of the sublime were introduced at the same time. The visual consumption of vast and beautiful scenery was still central, while the non-human world was portrayed as dangerous and unpredictable, but once again, only in the textual descriptions. In relation to this, the obsession with mountaineering was replaced by a focus on hiking, which was said to enable tourists to experience the sublime. However, this was something that only experienced tourists should take part in, since it was very demanding and potentially dangerous due to the unpredictable characteristics of nature. The sublime was no longer only considered to be experienced through gazing towards vast and beautiful landscapes, but now it could also be achieved through the observation of animals. For example, brown bears were depicted as signs of the sublime, since they were simultaneously dangerous and beautiful, which invoked feelings of both awe and terror among the tourists who were able to spot them. Such representations of the sublime were present up until the 1980s, when they experienced totally silent times for two decades as nothing was written or visualized about the national parks from such perspective (paper I).

6.4.2. A Continued Appetite for Grand and Beautiful Nature

From around the 2000s up until today, sublime representations have once again appeared on the agenda. Like the past sublime representations, these also depict the non-human world as something primarily visual to be gazed upon. Contemporary visitor information publications and tourists’ Instagram posts are filled with photographs of a sublime character, where there is a focus on capturing great landscapes of aesthetic character, stretching away from their beholder over vast distances (papers I, II, IV). Like sublime landscape paintings, which strive to make their viewers feel overwhelmed by the grandeur of the non-human world (Wilke, 2012), these kinds of photographs also contain attributes of a similar kind. They share the classical composition of landscape paintings, where an open and extensive landscape is captured in a foreground, a middle ground, and a background. The latter often contain

some sort of ‘grand’ element, such as massive mountains or waterfalls, rising towards spectacular clouds that create dramatic lighting (Kaufmann, 1998; paper IV).

Figure 26. The ‘painting-like’ photographs of the non-human world in the Swedish national parks have a lot in common with landscape paintings from the 1800s and early 1900s, but also how nature in the national parks of the United States are portrayed today. At the top, two photographs from my empirical materials can be seen. The left-hand photo was taken in Sarek National Park and is part of paper II ©Fredrik Schlyter/imagebank.sweden.se, while the one on the right was taken in Sonfjället National Park and is part of paper IV ©Musgul65 on Instagram. In the middle, the painting ‘The Grand Canyon of the Colorado’ from 1904 can be seen, which depicts the Grand Canyon National Park in the United States ©Thomas Moran. At the bottom, there are two photos from the American National Park Service. The left was taken in Glacier National Park ©NPS/David Restivo and the right one was taken in Rocky Mountain National Park ©NPS/Marianne Tucker.

The photographs in Figure 26 situate this sublime way of representing nature in the Swedish national parks in a wider context, illustrating that it extends beyond the Swedish parks and thus is part of a wider sublimity trend related to national parks. This is a trend that has been alive for more than a hundred years. Together with descriptions of how impressive nature is, these photographs emphasize the breathtaking qualities of the non-human world by portraying its vast views, its beauty, and its grandeur in comparison to humanity (papers I, II, IV). Similar tendencies can be seen in relation to the national parks in the United States, where the sublime has been and still is a central characteristic assigned to the non-human. Consuming the sublimity of a grand and beautiful non-human world as a tourist is thus seen as a way of bypassing the human world (Wilke, 2012). Furthermore, these kinds of photographs focus on consuming it through visual incentives, which matches today's global tourism industry (Burns, Lester, et al., 2010; Burns, Palmer, et al., 2010; Crouch & Lübbren, 2003; Urry & Larsen, 2011), and a specific branch within it, which focuses on the visual and aesthetic characteristics of nature (Jamal & Everett, 2010).

Furthermore, it also corresponds to society at large, where visual experiences play a more significant role in the lives of humans than ever before (Aiello & Parry, 2020; Bal, 2003; J. Evans & Hall, 1999; Mirzoeff, 2009, 2013, 2015; Mitchell, 2005; Rose, 2016). Depictions approaching the non-human world as something that is primarily visual are often part of sublime representations due to their offerings of great gazing opportunities: 'Open landscapes attract because they offer a clear vista, secluded areas (woods, caves, sombre or shadowed reaches, etc.), because of what they promise in the way of possible retreats and look-out posts' (Soper, 1995, p. 224). Although tourists' desires and demands change over time, as they are constantly re-invented by 'the current consumer style, the travel industry, and politics' (Bell & Lyall, 2002, p. 3), there is one component that seems to stand still within many genres of tourism – namely the desire to explore views of nature that are considered to be beautiful (see Bell & Lyall, 2002; Urry & Larsen, 2011). In this way, the non-human world becomes a kind of visual commodity for tourists to experience from viewing points (paper IV). This is an interest that is deeply grounded in the nature conservation movement (Drennig, 2013; Urry & Larsen, 2011), which often approaches national parks as icons of sublime and inspiring nature (Bilbro, 2016).

Being able to gaze towards grand, scenic, and dramatic views has been identified by other researchers as central to Swedish national park tourists (Raadik et al., 2010) and this importance is also noticeable in the empirical materials I have analyzed (papers I, II, IV). It can be exemplified by photographs of tourists gazing towards grand views, which are common both in visitor information publications (paper II) and tourists' Instagram posts (paper IV), as well as through descriptions of the

importance of gazing. In a quotation from a visitor information publication included in paper II, for example, it is stated that Sarek National Park, with its valley, ‘is a magical place to gaze upon from above’ (Emtenäs & Gustafsson, 2017, p. 302). Having an elevated position in relation to the landscape that is gazed upon is central within these representations (papers II, IV). Such a position enables the observer to both admire nature’s beauty and be amazed by its grandeur, while simultaneously feeling a bit afraid of its unpredictable character (Boime, 2012; S. P. Smith, 2019; Wilke, 2012).

Figure 27. The photographs from my empirical materials that depict tourists gazing towards grand scenery have a lot in common with the sublime paintings from the 1800s and early 1900s. At the top left, one such painting, called ‘Wanderer Above Sea Fog’ from 1817, can be seen, in which an elevated explorer gazes towards vast landscapes ©Caspar David Friedrich. The top right photograph is part of my empirical material in paper IV and was taken in Söderåsen National Park ©lingbergvibe on Instagram. The photograph at the bottom was taken in Abisko National Park and is part of the empirical material in paper II, ©Alexander Hall/imagebank.sweden.se.

Alike the examples in Figure 25, the photographs in Figure 27 illustrate that the relation between the human and the non-human world is central to these kinds of sublime mediations (papers II, IV). Instead of only portraying the natural landscape, these photographs position humans to function as ‘witness figures’ who are experiencing the sublime (Bordo, 2002). This way of taking photos, with someone gazing towards grand scenes, is common among today’s tourists and, as I also stated in relation to the past sublime representations, was common among the colonial travelers of the 1800s as well. They used such elevated positions in paintings to demonstrate their dominance over nature. Although contemporary tourists use the same kind of positioning (S. P. Smith, 2019), they are instead often expressing a reverence for the non-human world in front of them. In many of the descriptions related to photographs of this character published on Instagram, tourists visiting the Swedish national parks underline how impressed they are by nature and stress the gratitude they feel towards it. However, even where they are not purporting a dominance over nature, but rather a humility (paper IV), the elevated position still ‘draws upon historically entrenched significations of possession’ (S. P. Smith, 2019, p. 5) and is thus a remnant of imperialism of the 1800s (Pratt, 1992; S. P. Smith, 2019; Urry & Larsen, 2011). Although the fascination with experiencing sublime characteristics of the non-human is often said to invoke a sense of getting closer to the non-human world (Bell & Lyall, 2002; Wilke, 2012), this kind of representation is one example of how the human and non-human are portrayed as being separated (papers II, IV). As Soper (1995, p. 224) describes it, ‘the landscape we choose to simply gaze upon as an object of aesthetic pleasure is often very different from that we would choose to inhabit.’

In the representations I have identified, it becomes clear that the non-human world in national parks is portrayed as foreign in relation to the everyday spaces of tourists. For example, the intense focus on approaching the non-human as something primarily to be gazed upon in order to capture both the aesthetic and grand qualities constructs understandings of the human world and the non-human world as separate, where the latter becomes something exotic and distant (Soper, 1995; Urry & Larsen, 2011). As Braun (2002a, p. 129) argues, ‘situating the viewing subject [...] looking out into the wilds,’ such a photograph ‘firmly situates the viewer *in* modern society and asks him or her to ponder the yawning gap between culture and nature.’ Thus, representations of these kinds create a separation between the human and the non-human (paper II), whereby the latter becomes foreign (Soper, 1995). Another kind of representation that separates the human and the non-human focuses on physical adventures, where tourists can get challenged. In tourists’ Instagram posts, there is a major focus on physical challenges connected to nature, which are reminis-

cent of the past sublime representations focusing on mountaineering. In such posts, they describe their hiking journeys and share photographs of themselves, both while hiking and also when they have reached their goal: impressive views from mountain tops (paper IV).

Figure 28. These hiking photographs envisage both the challenging treks that the mountains put the tourists through, and also the rewards they received when reaching their goal. All of these were published by tourists on Instagram and are part of my empirical material in paper IV. Top left: Sarek National Park ©wild.tales. Top right: Sarek National Park ©Nathalie Fransson, @uteversum. Middle: Sarek National Park ©Levi Bergstedt, @_l_bergstedt. Bottom left: Pieljekaise National Park ©jan.of.the.north. Bottom Right: Sonfjället National Park ©Mikael Frimodig.

Most of the posts concern hiking journeys in foremost northern national parks, where tourists use the non-human world as an arena to challenge themselves. One pattern among the photographs is that, while hiking, many tourists are positioned at a low level in the midst of the immense surrounding environment, which presents the mountains as the challenge ahead of them. When reaching their goal, on the other hand, the tourists are often (but not always) placed in an elevated position, just like the gazing examples. The relation between facing a challenge and being rewarded by the beauty of nature is also visible in the textual captions (paper IV), which the following quotation connected to the photograph placed in the middle of Figure 28 can exemplify:

Two years ago today, we had fought hard for days and won our place by this small lake at 1400 meters above sea level. Waking up early we were greeted by a rain-washed sky and a gentle sun. Rising to the challenge we were granted the privilege to stand in awe and see the world painted before our eyes in perfect stillness yet remarkable agility and change. Accepting the present we were given the gift of a memory worthy a lifetime. (©Levi Bergstedt, @l_bergstedt on Instagram)

The genres of nature-based tourism and ecotourism have recently been facing a change in the desire to experience the sublime. In this, the previous focus on gazing towards grand views has been joined by more adventure-oriented experiences that require physical stamina (Bell & Lyall, 2002). A similar pattern can, as the tourists' Instagram posts illustrate, be seen in the context of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture. The sublime representations started out as a combination of gazing and mountaineering and, today, the challenges that enable tourists to gaze towards huge vistas are, once again, a central part of experiencing the sublime as a Swedish national park tourist (paper I, II, IV). Gazing becomes the reward for taking on the challenge that nature puts the tourists through. While the early mountaineers climbed as part of their explorations and scientific investigations, contemporary tourists search for experiences of the sublime alongside physical challenges. Even though the hiking journeys are depicted as challenging, depictions of danger are not part of the hiking representations in mediations produced by tourists, either in the textual captions or in the photographs (paper IV).

The only contemporary type of mediation to contain such depictions of potential danger are the textual descriptions in the visitor information publications (paper II), while they are invisible in policy (paper I), the tourist' Instagram posts (paper IV), and the instructive installations (paper III). The visitor information publications state that nature can put tourists to the test and that everyone who wants to visit a Swedish national park needs to prepare themselves and realize that they must adjust to

nature's conditions. In this way, the northern parks in particular are depicted as potentially dangerous and unpredictable (paper II), while the southern ones are depicted as kind and safe to visit (paper II). It is impossible to know for certain why depictions of nature as a foe are invisible in most of my empirical materials. One potential factor could be that such depictions stand in sharp contrast to the portrayals of the non-human world as an accessible and open edutainment arena for tourists to visit, which very much set the tone for other depictions.

Something else that is interesting is that sublime representations are totally absent from the instructive installations (paper III). I found this surprising because many of the mediations that tourists can take part in before they travel to the parks encourage them to focus on the sublime (papers I, II, IV). For example, the visitor information publications encourage tourists to gaze towards grand vistas and consume nature visually (paper I, II, IV). However, when they get there, the new instructive installations tell another story and instead encourage visitors to focus on completely different attributes of the non-human world (paper III). This could be interpreted as meaning that tourists are considered capable of identifying and experiencing the sublime on their own, while the instructive installations need to make them aware of the importance of nature conservation and nature's importance. In one way, the search for the sublime could be seen as a way for tourists to familiarize themselves with nature while taking control of it, which surely allows them to taste the grandeur of nature in their search for stunning vistas. Simultaneously, as they get to know nature, they are also getting to know themselves and their capabilities, as nature puts them through demanding challenges. They have a place in it, but only as passing observers who are on the hunt for its beautiful features.

6.5. Seeing the Non-Human World as a Pristine and Original Wilderness

The fourth way of seeing that I have identified throughout the papers represents the non-human as a wilderness of desolate and pristine character, where wild animals roam (papers I–IV).

6.5.1. An Initial Focus on Wilderness Characteristics Leading into Times of Low Presence

Around the late 1800s and early 1900s, the non-human world in the areas that were planned to become Sweden's first national parks was also seen as wilderness – as nature freed from human exploitation that still had pristine and original characteristics. Within the policy of that time, wilderness attributes were often cherished and seen as a central interest for the growing nature conservation movement. This was

already present in one of the first documented proposals from 1880 that I mentioned in relation to the sublime. In that proposal, it was stated that nature untouched by the axe was disappearing more and more day by day, which underlined the need and importance of establishing Swedish national parks (Nordenskiöld, 1880). Through such statements, nature became seen as something in opposition to and threatened by humanity, and national parks were considered to be protectors of wild, untouched, and original nature with little human exploitation (paper I). Such notions were very much influenced by how the world's first national parks were depicted in the United States (Mels, 1999) – as wilderness archives that saved nature from the human world (Cronon 1996; Frost and Hall 2009c; Grusin 2004; Wilson 2019). Inspired by this, the early Swedish nature conservation movement also proposed that the first Swedish national parks should function as archives of pristine and original nature (Lundgren, 2009, 2011, 2013; Mels, 2002, 2020; Sundin, 1989). Once the parks were established, this notion remained firm, not least through the tourist association's yearbooks, which portrayed wilderness characteristics as one of the most important attributes that tourists should be searching for when visiting a Swedish national park. The tourist association encouraged tourists to experience wilderness and also published reports about nature and culture as divided. In relation to this, it was argued that culture was steadily encroaching and was a threat to nature, which made it challenging to locate original and wild nature untouched by the hand of humans. National parks became havens of such character, to which tourists could travel in order to experience the rarity of wilderness (paper I). According to Cronon (1996) who has problematized the notion of the non-human world as wild, the term 'wilderness' has come to represent

‘the last remaining place where civilization, that all too human disease, has not fully infected the earth. It is an island in the polluted sea of urban-industrial modernity, the one place we can turn for escape from our own too-muchness.’ (Cronon 1996, p. 69).

As I will continue to illustrate, this is exactly how the wilderness representations of the non-human world in Swedish national parks functioned between the 1870s and the 1940s. Often, they were embodied through descriptions of nature as wild, untouched, and authentic, but also through photographs of the non-human world with no visible human presence (paper I). Depicting the non-human as untouched by humans is an idealization of wilderness notions, in which a view impacted by humans (e.g., through visible buildings, roads, or other facilities) can never be considered beautiful in comparison to a 'wild,' 'natural,' and 'empty' view (Karlisdóttir, 2014). This is one feature that the early wilderness representations shared with the

sublime ones from the same period, which also centered around depicting nature with little or no human presence. This illustrates that several kinds of representations or characteristics could coexist, and often worked in conjunction, even though I present them as belonging to different ways of seeing. However, the wilderness representations were more focused on pristine and desolate characteristics than the sublime ones, which were more centered around beauty and grandeur. Furthermore, they were more dependent upon the presence of people since humans reinforced the sublime, while the wilderness representations rather focused on views containing no humans, and not necessarily on breathtaking vistas (paper I).

Figure 29. These photographs exemplify wilderness characteristics, where nature untouched by humans becomes embodied through a glacier, windswept pines on a beach, and a virgin forest. Top left: the area of Abisko in 1907 ©O. Sjögren. Right: Hamra National Park in 1912 ©Selim Birger. Bottom left: Gotska Sandön National Park in 1940 ©Karin Jansson.

Another aspect that the past representations of the non-human world as wilderness shared with the sublime ones was the prominence given to the northern parts of Sweden, which were seen as wilder than the southern ones. This fascination with the north became visible, for example, through the many photographs in the tourist association's yearbooks that depicted the mountain areas in the northern national parks (paper I). Picturing the north as wilder than the south is a classic example of how the north is assigned stereotypical attributes that makes it other and different

from the south, which creates a distanced relationship between the two (Maraud & Guyot, 2015; Ödmann et al., 1982). Such picturing reinforces the north as empty and unexplored, while diminishing and disregarding those northern places that have been victims of colonial possession for hundreds of years (Lundgren, 2011; Maraud & Guyot, 2016; Sörlin & Jørgensen, 2013). This focus on the north as wilderness can be exemplified through a report on the northern national park of Sarek, which was published by the tourist association in 1939 and thus is part of the empirical material in paper I. In the report, it was stated that Sarek smelled of ‘wilderness and loneliness, which is a scent that cannot be smelled everywhere’ and certainly not ‘along cleared paths or on famous outlook mountains.’ This made it appear as unique and worth searching for, not least because it was considered to represent an ‘unspeakable something, which exists in our country’s last wilderness’ (Möller, 1939, p. 346).

This report also highlighted the importance of experiencing wilderness in solitude, whereby the national parks became portals through which tourists could travel to get in touch with wild nature while escaping humanity (paper I). Such an escape relates to the impulses of the Romantic movement of the 1700s and early 1800s, in which stressed city-dwellers left modernism and humanity behind to escape into the wilderness (Erlandson-Hammargren, 2006). This was also a typical element in the nature-based tourism of the time (Erlandson-Hammargren, 2006; Macnaghten & Urry, 1998) and, like the wilderness representations I have highlighted so far, this approach to nature rests upon two related dichotomies that are firmly situated within modern Western societies – the one between nature and culture, and the one between wilderness and civilization (Castree, 2014; Cronon, 1996). Through these dichotomies, the non-human and the human world are posed as each other’s nemesis (Rutherford, 2011). In one way, the establishment of national parks as wilderness archives into which one can escape are not only products of romanticism but can also be interpreted as products of white European imperial notions of the non-human world. Besides focusing on wilderness qualities, these also expressed a human ownership of nature by situating it as something that should be controlled by and adjusted to the needs and interests of humanity (Benson, 2012; Ford, 2012; Gissibl, 2012; Kathirithamby-Wells, 2012; van der Windt, 2012).

Between the 1940s and the 1970s, the frequency of wilderness representations decreased considerably and were only sporadically visible in policy and some of the tourist association’s yearbooks. However, alike within the sublime way of seeing, the wilderness representations did never vanish completely. Back then, wild areas were still considered to only remain wild as long as humans were absent, even as a visit to a national park was considered to bring tourists closer to the non-human world. In policy documents, it was stated that national parks composed landscapes in a natural

or largely unaffected state, which continued to underline the importance of approaching nature and humans as separate. This emphasis also became visible through the lists of candidates to become national parks, which all composed areas considered to have wilderness characteristics. The wilderness features of already existing national parks were also debated, as Garphyttan National Park and Ängsö National Park were criticized for being cultural products rather than natural ones. Both have meadows that were part of the reason to why they became national parks but during this period, it was even discussed that they never should have been assigned such high status of nature conservation since meadows require the hand of humans to flourish. Simultaneously, the few existing reports of the tourist association introduced a new dimension into the viewing of nature as wilderness, with an emphasis on exploring the wild attributes of nature through encounters with wild animals. If tourists were not able to spot a specific animal, their visit was considered not to have been successful. In 1959, for example, the tourist association published a text about virgin forests in its yearbook. The text concerned, among other places, Muddus/Muttos National Park and captured the desire to see animals. Several different animals residing in the national park were described, with a focus on seeing them. Especially, larger mammals were at the center of attention and not least the brown bear:

Positively, the bear tribe is large despite being in such a small area. The teddy bear himself is, of course, seldomly seen. He is a careful patron. Nevertheless, it is possible to spot evidence of his presence. One such example is his clawing after ant communities in the interiors of dry pines. (Olsson 1959, p. 245-247)

The longing to see animals (or traces of them) were not typical of the Swedish context, but were rather something that could be seen in relation to national parks in other parts of the world. In Canada, for example, tourism promoters of the late 1930s encouraged tourists to interact with different animals (Cronin, 2013). Within Western thought, animals are often lumped together as ‘all creatures of nature [...] that humans are not’ (Soper, 1995, p. 82). This understanding became visible within the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture as well. Not least via the strong focus on seeing animals, which makes them appear as beings through which tourists can get to know nature. That focus underscores the commodification of the non-human world, simultaneously as it underlines the approach of creating a division between an ‘us’ and a ‘them.’ Between the 1980s and the 1990s, most of the wilderness representations disappeared, but one that remained present in small scale was of wilderness as a tourist resource. The depictions of the national parks were few, but some reportages in the yearbooks and policy concerned wilderness charac-

teristics. For example, the tourist association explained that the association could offer tourists an experience of wilderness in the Swedish national parks. In the yearbook of 1986, it was even argued that the great wilderness areas in the northern national parks were Sweden's largest tourist assets. Above all, since they represented 'Europe's last remaining wilderness,' they offered intrinsic value for both Swedish and foreign tourists due to their untouched and original nature (paper I).

6.5.2. A Revival of Wilderness Characteristics

From the beginning of the 2000s up until today, the approach of seeing the non-human world as wilderness is once again strongly present within the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture. Now, it is approached as an untouched world of little human presence filled with roaming wild animals. During this period, many of the past wilderness representations have been revived (papers I–IV), such as portrayals of the non-human world as original and pristine (papers II–IV), the overrepresentation of the northern national parks as areas of wilderness (papers II, IV), and also the longing to see wild animals (paper II–IV). While many of the southern parks are portrayed as open and safe to visit, the northern ones are portrayed as inaccessible wilderness areas of desolate and barren character. Hence, the northern parks and their non-human world become the frame for defining what Swedish wilderness is and should be. This becomes noticeable through photographs portraying 'untouched' mountain areas in the north of Sweden. In many ways, such photographs share attributes with the contemporary sublime ones (e.g., expansive views and magnificent mountains), but what is central to the wild representations is the lack of human presence, except for very few tourists. There are no houses, roads, or other facilities as far as the eye can see (papers II, IV).

Figure 30. These photographs were published in visitor information publications and are part of my empirical material in paper II. They exemplify wilderness characteristics of the present, which have a lot in common with those of the past. Here, pristine parts of nature are portrayed, where no humans or human presence are visible. Left: Abisko National Park ©Katja Kristoferson/Folio/ imagebank.sweden.se. Right: Töfsingsdalens National Park ©Marcus Elemerstad, Lst.

This focus on northern nature as desolate and pristine is also visible in the textual descriptions, which depict the north as Europe's last remaining wilderness that offers an escape from civilization. In one of the visitor information publications I have analyzed in paper II, for example, there is a text concerning Sarek National Park centering around this. It describes the nature of Sarek as uncompromising to visitors due to the absence of camping cottages and walking bridges for them to use (Emtenäs & Gustafsson, 2017). However, this uncompromising character is not portrayed as something bad but rather as desirable, because it contributes to the wilderness feeling. In relation to these depictions, tourists are portrayed as nothing more than temporary guests, which indicates that a human presence in the nature of the non-human world only functions if it is limited and controlled (paper II). In this way, the non-human is assigned wilderness characteristics and a contrasting relation to civilization, from which the national parks offer an escape (papers I, II, IV). A wilderness portrayal to which both the southern and northern parks are exposed centers around nature in the national parks as original, since it has had the opportunity to develop and evolve 'naturally' without being influenced by humanity (papers I–IV). In another visitor information guide from paper II, it is stated that Mudus/Muttos National Park is 'the land of large bogs and primeval forests, a preserved part of the Swedish taiga,' in which tourists 'can experience large untouched forests, wild waterfalls, and the solitude of the marsh plains.' They can also meet 'wildlife that is typical of the northern nature – where it has been left alone' [my transl.] (SEPA, 1997, p. 82).

Even though this example represents a northern context, the majority of the parks are depicted as incorporating pristine nature. However, there are also some exceptions, just like in the past. In one of the last yearbooks that the tourist association published, for example, SEPA's general director was quoted as arguing that Ångsö National Park and Garphyttan National Park are products of culture rather than nature. Just like in the past. Along with that argument, he claimed that those parks, due to their cultural characteristics, should never have become national parks (paper I). The instructive installations also embody the nature–culture dichotomy by telling a story about the national parks as hosts of pristine and original nature, which the tourists as cultural subjects can get to know and learn about if they engage with the instructive installations. These visualize correlations in nature and explain how it works, thus arranging it into a kind of natural encyclopedia 'presented in a way that seeks to reveal its plan or true self, but also to prescribe a kind of authenticity' (paper III, p. 12). In this way, the non-human world becomes measured, classified, and documented according to the norms of the natural sciences (papers II, III), which

often construct nature as something separate from humanity that is available for us to learn from and explore (Escobar, 1996).

The strong presence of natural scientific knowledge in the instructive installations could be seen as a way of trying to assign the national parks both coherence and authority (paper III), since those sciences have traditionally been approached as producers of ‘objective’ facts, knowledge, and truth (Foucault, 1986; Rutherford, 2011). Thus, the installations refer to ‘the truth’ by offering tourists information and knowledge about how nature ‘actually’ works, thus giving tourists a chance to get to know the secrets of the non-human world. They also turn it into a space for humans to observe natural beings and phenomena in their original and correct environment, in which humans do not belong (papers II, III). The instructive installation in Dalby Söderskog National Park in Figure 31 is an example of this. It informs tourists about ecology and argues that ‘Everything in nature is connected! Earth, water, air, and fire set the prerequisites for all life. All of us who live on the earth are dependent upon each other!’ [my transl.]

Figure 31. This instructive installation illustrates to visitors how all life in nature is connected. I took this photograph during my fieldwork for paper III.

The example quotation that I just shared was originally written in capital letters and positioned at the middle top of the installation. In one way, it could be seen as an example in which the nature–culture dichotomy is challenged due to its focus on presenting all life on earth as connected. However, the rest of the information and knowledge presented through the installation position humans as beings who only

visit the national parks as temporary guests. The correlations between everything from water courses, fish, mushrooms, herbs, earth, mammals, the wind, insects, and dead wood are described. Humans are also mentioned as situated among these correlations, but not as beings who are part of and belong to nature, but rather as guests: 'Everyone benefits from spending time in nature. To gain insight into how nature looks and works, people need opportunities to explore it. Therefore, all visitors are warmly welcomed to the national park!' [my transl.].

As I described in relation to the past representations of wilderness character, the approach to nature as separate from humanity could be seen as a remnant of romanticism and European imperialism. These stances placed nature below humanity in a hierarchy (Horigan, 1988; Pratt, 1992), at least as long as it was not adopting the values and customs of the civilized man (Soper, 1995). Even though the contemporary wilderness representations I have identified through the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture could be seen as remnants of such thoughts, I think that there are some differences that need to be pointed out. For example, the wilderness characteristics are today seen as desirable in preference to the civilized and modern ones that the human world offers. Similarly to the past, wilderness attributes are still projected as one of the main tourist assets of the non-human world in the Swedish national parks. In relation to this, tourists seek and are promised an escape into the wild, which almost assigns it an elevated status (paper I, II, IV).

In fact, wilderness attributes have a long tradition of being part not only of discourses that separate the human from the non-human, but also of those proposing that the natural world is extraordinary and desirable (Castree, 2014; Cronon, 1996; Macnaghten & Urry, 1998; Oravec, 1996; Soper, 1995). Within this tradition, there is an emphasis on experiencing the pristine and original characteristics of nature, through which the non-human world becomes an exotic other that needs to remain untouched by humans (Hultman & Andersson Cederholm, 2006). Otherwise, it cannot continue to offer tourists interested in nature what they want – experiences that focus on wild and 'natural' landscapes only, since culture means nothing to them (Lund, 2013). Thus, nature in the Swedish national parks needs protection from human exploitation and is assigned an almost divine status, as it offers tourists an opportunity 'to interact with an extraordinary kind of nature that can only be found in a few areas of the country and needs protection from human presence and utilization' (paper II, p. 18). Such representations have long been part of what national parks have promised their visitors (Oravec, 1996) and could, in a sense, be seen as promises to travel back in time and experience original nature (paper I).

Yet another example of a contemporary wilderness representation that could be seen as a remnant of the past is the one centered around the longing to see wild animals. This can be exemplified through the tourists' Instagram posts, which are rich in portrayals of animals. Many tourists share photographs of animals, describe their characteristics, and list which animals they have seen or want to see, all of which underlines the importance of spotting animals during a visit to a Swedish national park (paper IV). This focus on seeing animals makes them appear to be beings through which the tourists can get to know the wilderness, simultaneously as it underlines the division between an 'us' and a 'them' (papers I, II, IV). Like the representations within tourists' Instagram posts, there is also a strong focus on encountering and seeing animals in contemporary visitor information publications. These are filled with photographs of animals and encouragement to spot them, since they enable tourists to gain a close connection to the wilderness (paper II). Similar encouragement is also present in many of the instructive installations in the parks, which share photographs of animals, provide explanations about where and how they can be seen, and present lists of animals for tourists to look out for (paper III). Such representations can also be seen as a way of expressing experiences and encounters with the wilderness of the non-human world (papers II, III, IV), as animals are often considered to be part of the wild (Cronin, 2011).

Within contemporary forms of nature-based tourism, the longing to see and encounter wild animals is very much alive. Hence, it is often emphasized that a visit to a nature-based tourism destination is not successful if a certain animal is not spotted (Bertella, 2016; Lemelin, 2006; Rutherford, 2011). My empirical materials mirror this as well (paper IV). Several of the Swedish national parks are known for being hosts to specific animals, such as Sonfjället National Park that is associated with its population of brown bears. There is also one park, Björnlandet National Park, which has a name that gives the impression that it has a close relation to a particular animal. In Swedish, Björnlandet means 'Bear Country' and the longing to see bears while visiting the park is present in the representations of many Instagram posts of tourists. Several of them write about the desire to spot a bear, but also that it never happened. Besides encountering animals, the representations in tourists' Instagram posts also emphasize the thrill of finding traces of animals. One of the tourists who wrote about the desire to see a bear in Björnlandet National Park explained that she did not see a bear but did see bear droppings, which she described as also being an exciting discovery (paper IV). This focus on seeing animals, or traces of them, positions them as creatures to be experienced by tourists (Lemelin, 2006). This implies that through

a visit to a Swedish national park, tourists are invited to come close to and experience the world of wild animals – almost like in a zoo, but without the cages and fences.

Figure 32. The focus on seeing animals in the national parks is reminiscent of zoos' centering around letting tourists see animals as a way of experiencing the wild. The two top photos and the middle photo are part of my empirical material and underline the longing to see animals. Top left: Gotska Sandön National Park, paper II ©Klas-Rune Johansson/IBL. Top right: Söderåsen National Park, paper IV ©Mia Fahrenholz (@mia_fahrenholz on Instagram). Middle: Abisko National Park taken by me during my fieldwork for paper III. The two bottom photos are taken from the website of the largest zoo in the Nordic countries – Kolmården. These illustrate how gazing towards animals is a central activity for tourists visiting Kolmården. Even though the photos from my empirical materials have different compositions, they also encourage tourists to gaze towards animals. Bottom left: ©Kolmården/Rickard Monéus/Parks and Resorts. Bottom right: ©Beatrice Graalheim/Parks and Resorts.

In the majority of the contemporary empirical materials that I have studied, animals are solely depicted as objects to look at, and not as subjects with feelings, agency, and personalities (papers II–IV). This visual orientation contributes to making them into distant and foreign beings for humans to consume (Urry & Larsen, 2011). Approaching animals as belonging to the wilderness world, while functioning as attractions for tourists to explore through gazing, promotes a relationship built on the assumption that we are different and belong to different worlds. It also assigns humans a privileged position as knowing and feeling subjects with the right to interpret other beings, while no agency remains to the animals themselves (paper II, IV). In contemporary times, many human societies assign animals human attributes to make them appear human-like and more relatable for us (Murray & Heumann, 2016; Soper, 1995). Such attribute assigning is never unproblematic, but it could make animals appear ‘more human,’ which in a sense could be seen as an attempt to position them as equals to ourselves (Clayton & Myers, 2009; Murray & Heumann, 2016). The nonexistence of such attempts in my empirical material further reinforces the divide between the world to which wild animals ‘belong’ and that of humans.

Summing up, the wilderness representations position cultured and civilized human beings in contrast to the wild beings and environments of the non-human world. In contrast to the sublime, this world cannot be grasped or explored by the tourists themselves. To understand how the original and pristine nature really works and to familiarize the foreign humans, they need to be guided by the natural sciences, which rationalizes the non-human world. This educating orientation is in many ways tied to the one that I highlighted in relation to seeing the non-human as an edutainment arena for tourists, but simultaneously stands in contrast to it, because the wilderness representations portray the non-human world as a space that should only be experienced by small number of tourists in order to preserve its pristine and original characteristics. It is by no means a place for mass tourism.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Closing Reflection

7.1. Shapeshifting Nature

In this dissertation, I have identified four overarching ways of seeing the non-human world, which approach it as: 1) an edutainment arena for environmentally conscious tourists, 2) as national heritage and a trademark, 3) as a sublime world with primary beauty and grand characteristics, and 4) as an original and pristine wilderness. These ways of seeing, including the representations upon which they rest, are part of and contribute to constructing the discourse on national park nature. By unraveling, making visible, and problematizing these ways of seeing as enabled by the practice of Swedish national park tourism and its visual culture, I have thus also provided glimpses of that discourse, its dimensions, and developments. Up until now, however, those glimpses have not been clearly spelled out. When reflecting upon what they provide in terms of an understanding of the discourse on national park nature, I contend that they have both demonstrated the coherences that it possesses and also revealed its spaces of dissension – its points of contradiction (see Foucault, 1982). My approach to organizing the discursive formations of representations into ways of seeing could in one way be seen as a demonstration of coherences within the discourse, as I have grouped together similar representations that depict specific characteristics of the non-human world. However, that organization has also revealed ambivalences within and among the representations and ways of seeing. Since ambivalences can reveal significant points of conflicting interest within the discourse, they are just as important to consider as the coherences (see Foucault, 2001). Within the discourse on national park nature that I have provided glimpses of through my tracing of ways of seeing, I can identify eight prominent ambivalences:

- Portrayals of the non-human world as an inviting and open national heritage available to all kinds of tourists meet depictions of it as an elitist and inaccessible space that is only reachable by a small number of tourists
- Portrayals of the non-human world as a sublime wilderness located far away from humanity meet depictions of it as an accessible space to which tourists can easily travel in order to consume nature
- Portrayals of the non-human world as an untouched place in need of protection from human exploitation and environmentalism as an activity that keeps human intrusions away meet depictions of it as a place to which tourists can come to escape human society in order to explore ‘real’ nature and evidence of environmentalism
- Portrayals of the non-human world as a foreign place where humans do not belong except as temporary guests meet depictions of it as a popular learning arena for humans where they can get in touch with nature

- Portrayals of the non-human world as a natural scientific laboratory meet depictions of it as a tourism arena
- Portrayals of tourism in the non-human world as an activity that could harm the non-human meet depictions of it as an environmental act that contributes to nature conservation
- Portrayals of the non-human world as untouchable and out of this world meet depictions of it as a ready-made world that becomes illuminated through educational investments influenced by the natural sciences
- Portrayals of the non-human world as something aesthetic that should be consumed in romantic ways meet depictions of it as a rational encyclopedia that should enlighten tourists

As becomes visible through this list, many of the ambivalences contain the same – or related – ingredients, which underlines that all of them are connected and become affected by each other. What they have in common is that they render the non-human world the character as a shapeshifter that can assume different and even contradictory forms. At one moment, it can appear as a pristine wilderness where there are no visible signs of humanity, before shapeshifting into the complete opposite: an exploited space filled with instructive installations, facilities, designated trails, and tourists. At yet another moment, it can be presented as something dreamlike an untouchable with breathtaking features that should be consumed through gazing at extensive panoramas, before it once again shapeshifts into a ready-made world that is presented as something rationally packaged that should be consumed through engagement with instructive installations. Some of the listed ambivalences come into being primarily among representations within one way of seeing, while most of them come into being when representations from several ways of seeing are brought into relation with each other. The final one in the list, for example, becomes noticeable when relating representations of seeing the non-human world as a sublime vista of grandeur and beauty to representations of seeing the non-human as an edutainment arena for environmentally conscious tourists. The sixth listed ambivalence, of tourism as an activity that could either harm the non-human world or function as an environmental act, becomes very noticeable in the way of seeing that approaches the non-human as an edutainment arena for environmentally conscious tourists. That way of seeing visualizes the ambivalence clearly; it has been present since before the first national parks were established and has thus been a central component in shaping that way of seeing.

However, it also permeates all the other ways of seeing, because they all touch upon representations concerning nature as something that is tourism-oriented and

simultaneously worth preserving from human intrusion. In contrast to this ambivalence, not all of them are explicitly presented in the empirical materials I have analyzed, but rather come into being through my problematizing analysis in this dissertation. Despite this, they should not be approached as external truths located outside of the discourse, but rather as emerging from points of tension within it that can only become visible through critical analyses (see Foucault, 1982). Such points illuminate tensions within the established ways of seeing and might remain invisible if not facing problematizations. When approaching my list of ambivalences, there is one tension that permeates them all – the tension between the opposing interests of saving and using the non-human world. As I have illustrated through my drawn insights, an intensified use of the non-human as a tourism arena is considered to help tourists get to know both nature and the importance of nature conservation. This is believed to enhance their interest and thus turn them into environmentally involved activists who will spread the word about the importance of saving nature through conservation once they get home.

This reflection might give the impression that I am only focusing on seeing the non-human world as an edutainment arena for environmentally conscious tourists, but once again, even though the ways of seeing nature as sublime, a wilderness, or a nationalist heritage and trademark have other orientations and focuses, they are all permeated by the ontological and epistemological stances that national park nature functions as a fragile world in need of protection that can shapeshift into a viable tourism arena. Even though tourism has been a central component in the establishment of many national parks around the world (Boyd & Butler, 2009; Grusin, 2004; Lundgren, 2009, 2011; Medina Somoza, 2009; Mels, 1999; Roe, 2020), the parks simultaneously have a long history of separating the human realm from the natural and, in one way, the whole idea of preserving nature in national parks could be seen as an attempt to keep human exploitation away (Boyd & Butler, 2009; Ford, 2012; Grusin, 2004; Jones, 2012; Patin, 2012b; Sharpley, 2009). Consequently, the interests in using nature and saving it rest on different notions. This makes them ambivalent but, interestingly, they are presented as compatible within the discourse on national park nature and the four ways of seeing I have identified.

The presentation of the interests of saving and using nature as compatible corresponds to a current tendency within ecotourism and nature-based tourism, in which the environmental movement approaches them as two forms of tourism that are supportive of and contribute to nature conservation (Fletcher, 2014; Holden, 2016). Similarly, the ways of seeing that I have identified construct Swedish national parks as institutions that are saving the non-human world from the degradation that humanity is creating in other parts of the natural world, while their tourism becomes

the only form of human exploitation that is accepted. This implies that, on the one hand, the discourse projects a desire to preserve nature and save it from human exploitation, but, on the other, there is a proposed need to use it based upon the premises of tourism and enable tourists to get to know it. Thus, the interest in knowing is also involved in this tension. Knowing does not necessarily stand in contrast to saving or using nature, and in this case, it is almost used as a bonding agent between the two opponents. Within the various representations and ways of seeing, it is emphasized that tourists need to get to know the non-human world in order to understand the importance of saving it. All of this suggests that the interest in knowing provides coherence between the contradictions involved in the tension between saving and using the non-human world. This could be interpreted as meaning that the discourse is trying to translate the ambivalences into a coherent whole in order to overcome them. This translation, which unites the interests in saving, using, and knowing the non-human world, projects a semblance of compatibility but also involves a selective approach that closes its eyes to inherent contradictions. Hence, the ambivalences are toned down and the tension made invisible.

This implies that the historical conflict around exploiting and preserving nature that arose between the tourism movement and the nature conservation movement, which previous research has identified as the main reason why the Swedish national parks lost their tourism orientation so early (Fredman & Sandell, 2014; Lundgren, 2009, 2011; Zachrisson et al., 2006), is very involved in and can be noticed through these ambivalences. As I have illustrated, this tension became embodied in past representations of the non-human world, while being totally invisible in a contemporary context. Nowadays, it is not projected as a conflict but rather as a whole consisting of two united, noncontradictory interests that are glued together by a third one. This presentation is anchored in the intensified tourism that the parks are currently facing. Presenting tourism as something that could harm the non-human world and in opposition to nature conservation would surely make it more difficult to turn the tourism endeavors into a central part of the Swedish national parks. This implies that creating such coherency is vital for the current tourism intensification in the Swedish national parks.

The attempt to encourage people to get to know the non-human world and realize the importance of saving it by using it as a commercialized arena relates to spheres within the environmental movement where people's lack of connection to the non-human world is proposed as one of the driving forces behind the human degradation of nature. This attempt is grounded in the nature–culture dichotomy and projects humans as beings who have lost their bond to (and thus their concern for) the non-human world, which can only be regained if they get to know nature

(Fletcher, 2014, 2016). This approach places the responsibility on individuals, instead of problematizing the impact of the global capitalist economy, of which tourism is a significant part. With its structure built upon growth and expanded resource extraction, capitalism has influenced many industries to look upon the non-human as nothing more than a material resource, and has thus contributed to the human degradation of nature (J. B. Foster, 2000). Even though enjoying the non-human world as a tourist in the Swedish national parks is not as physically damaging as other practices, it still has productive effects with implications for how we position ourselves on this earth. Seeing the non-human as a tourism destination, which I have highlighted, risks allowing humans to approach national parks as though they were nothing more than distanced amusement parks providing commercial experiences, because more focus is directed towards the non-human world as a tourist resource than as a living world inhabited by a myriad of non-human beings and made up of multiple environments (Tschida, 2012). This means that those beings and environments appear primarily as materials for humans to exploit, while they are deprived of an active role through which they can express their agency (Cronin, 2011; Rutherford, 2011).

Simultaneously, encountering nature and humans as separate could lead people to feel disconnected from the non-human world, instead of integrated counterparts to it, which could make it challenging for them to understand the importance of involving the needs of non-human beings and environments, instead of always placing human interests and needs first (Bird Rose, 2015). This implies that, in one way, tourism in national parks could increase people's interest in the non-human world and help them to cherish the other beings with whom we share this planet. It thus has the opportunity to function as something that could contribute to questioning the existing boundaries constructed by the nature–culture dichotomy (Cronin, 2011). Nevertheless, approaching national park tourism as something that nurtures environmentally friendly behaviors requires a care and respect for the non-human world that enables it to be more than just a shapeshifter that changes its clothes according to our tourism-based interests and needs. This is especially the case if that tourism is projected as something that is intended to reach an almost mass-tourism character, where it is planned to hugely increase the number of visiting tourists. Together with the directed branding initiatives and intensive marketing signaling to tourists that they 'must' visit the Swedish national parks, this risks making the non-human world into nothing more than a heavily exploited realm that becomes degraded by the footprints of tourists, rather than gently introduced as a world of which we are a part, filled with beings to whom we are kin. In relation to this, we need to reflect upon:

[to] what extent nature should be preserved primarily for its 'intrinsic' qualities, to what extent it should be preserved because of our human dependencies and interests; to what extent our interests can be claimed to include an interest in the preservation of the intrinsic worth of nature, and so forth. (Soper, 1995, p. 176)

When introducing this dissertation, I shared three quotations from researchers who have inspired me to think otherwise about nature by problematizing it while paying attention to national parks, tourism, visual culture, and ways of seeing. These quotations emphasize the importance of critically approaching nature as a social construction instead of a self-identical quality that only exists within the borders of national parks, while humanity exists outside of them (Grusin, 2004). They stress that national park nature and ways of seeing it are products of a visual organization influenced by human values in relation to the non-human world, the environment, and non-human animals (Cronin, 2011). They also underline the position of the national parks as discursive, meaning that the parks and their tourism produce, limit, and shape discourses on national park nature as well as the human relationship to it (Patin, 2012b). Inspired by this, I have problematized nature as something self-identical and have approached the national parks and their tourism as visual and discursive devices that shape our ways of seeing the non-human world. In other words, I have provided a critical analysis and reflection upon the identified ways of seeing, in which I have traced their representations, the ontological and epistemological stances upon which they rest, and their implications. Through this closing reflection, I have also contributed with something that has been limited in previous studies of similar kind – I have illustrated the importance of problematizing ambivalences within ways of seeing and the discourses to which they are tied. When something is presented as cohesive and uncomplicated, such problematizations around ambivalences can contribute with important insights that could extend our understandings of discourses, ways of seeing, and their complexities. In other words, such problematizations can create windows where once there were walls (see Foucault, 1988a). The one I have presented here, on the identified ways of seeing as ambivalent, has created a window to understanding Swedish national park nature as a shapeshifter.

Closing Reflection

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