

Tourism: Past, Present, and Future

- “Plus ca change, plus c’est la meme chose”

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My research interest in tourism spans almost 50 years. In that time there have been some major changes in tourism, yet there are many misperceptions about the development of tourism, tourism research, and the influences bringing about changes in tourism.

The history of forecasting in areas such as social change is not good.

RCA head said television would not be a medium of entertainment (1955)
Original market for computers was anticipated to be five (IBM 1943)
Heavier than air flying machines impossible 1895.
No future in talking pictures (Warner, 1929).
Einstein saw no indication of nuclear energy 1932
Guitar bands (Beatles) on the way out, 1963

Three basic assumptions:

There is not much that is new in tourism
Tourism is very place specific.
We need to understand where we have come from and how we have got to where we are if we are to understand where we might be going in the future.

•An American tourist who did not much care for sightseeing or art and thought that two or three hours a day was too much time to spend 'on a pursuit in which he felt no pleasure, and saw very little utility'.did not want to leave Europe after six weeks unable to claim that he had not seen all that his fellow Tourists had seen. So ...

•“he ordered a private car and driver to be ready early in the morning, and driving through churches, palaces, villas, and ruins, with all possible expedition, he fairly saw, in two days, all that the others had seen during their crawling course of six weeks.”

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•One English gentleman who did not much care for sightseeing or art and thought that two or three hours a day was too much time to spend 'on a pursuit in which he felt no pleasure, and saw very little utility'.did not want to leave Rome after six weeks unable to claim that he had not seen all that his fellow Tourists had seen. So ...

•“he ordered a post-chaise and four horses to be ready early in the morning, and driving through churches, palaces, villas, and ruins, with all possible expedition, he fairly saw, in two days, all that we had beheld during our crawling course of six weeks.”

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Moore, 1792 in Hibbert,1972

- “It is common for authors to stress the recency of mass tourism, the volatile nature of tourism patterns, and the lack of precedents for current or future tourism phenomena. One reason for this is that few authors have placed their studies in an historical context”. Wall, in Hall and Lew 1997

Tourism Dynamics

There is a major paradox in tourism:

Great Inertia
and
Great Dynamism

INERTIA exists because of :

Habits;
Tastes ;
Preference for Constancy;
Investment (personal, corporate,
public)

DYNAMISM occurs because of:

Attitudes (corporate, media,
individual);
Technology;
Economics;
Politics

TYPES OF CHANGE:

Evolutionary: gradual, consistent, building
on existing structures, predictable, often
endogenous forces.

Revolutionary: sudden, variable, often
destroying existing structures/features,
unpredictable, often exogenous forces.

Tourism experiences both types.

Revolutionary changes:

Thomas Cooke in U.K. in the 1830s
Disney in Florida in the 1970s
Gambling in Atlantic City in 1976
Developer/entrepreneur activity in
Gold Coast (Australia) in 1980s
Gambling legislative changes in
Macau in 1990-2000

ISSUES OF TOURISM DYNAMICS:

- Change is mostly iterative
- Change is normally one way
- Change is or appears to be irreversible
- Change is often gradual and cumulative
- Change is often unintended and unanticipated

Tourism has growth and expansion as its most consistent characteristics of change

INTERNAL AGENTS : local effects

Redevelopment/rejuvenation
Regional developmen
Special events/promotions

EXTERNAL AGENTS :global effects

Politics: Euro; “Arab Spring”
Media: Tourism as fashion; celebrities
Climate Change: (via 1 & 2 above)
Economic conditions

REPORTED CHANGES IN TOURISM

Growth

Expansion into new areas

“New” tourism and new forms of tourism

“Greening” or “sustainability” focus

Heritage/culture focus

Reliance on WWW

Personalisation and experientialism

Apparent major triggers for change:

Conflict (war, terrorism);
Rise in oil prices/energy shortage;
Political change;
Catastrophe (tsunami, SARS, Avian Flu);
Government intervention;
Climate change.

Conflict:

Pattern appears to return to normal after terrorism in about 3 years if a single event, longer with repeated events. In the case of war, same time scale once hostilities have ended or even less for idiots in search of excitement. Subject to political intervention and media coverage and interpretation.

Rise in oil prices/energy shortage:

In 1970s some changes, but most effects felt in changes in journeys to work and in short/middle distance recreation travel in North America, with less effect in Europe. 2005, fuel surcharges, little apparent effect on travel, but problems for some travel operators in terms of costs. Possible long term effects when peak oil happens.

Political change:

End of cold war and communism in Europe created a much larger market and more destinations. End of apartheid had little global effect. Doi Moi has opened Vietnam to investment and development. "Open" China will be larger player.

Catastrophes:

Similar to terrorism, relatively short term effects if single event, once infrastructure has been restored and area remarketed. Vulnerable to media interpretation and coverage, e.g Spain and Sri Lanka.

Government intervention:

The public sector is not very successful in changing tourism patterns, probably because tourism development is dominated by the private sector and highly personal as a phenomenon. This rarely initiates tourism, it mostly modifies or attempts to alter existing development.

Climate Change:

Little evidence of changes to date, when sea level rises submerge some islands it will have at least a local effect. Unlikely to have major global effects except in very long term, other than perhaps in political and economic terms.

However,

“These are not the forces you are looking for.”

(with apologies to George Lucas)

Because they are superficial in effect rather than fundamental

SO:

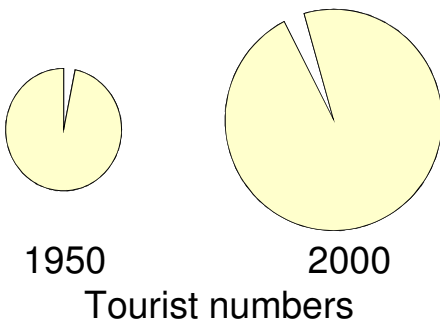
if what might be thought to be major triggers of change do **not** cause long term significant change in tourism, what might be those major changes and what might cause them?

MAJOR CHANGES IN TOURISM?

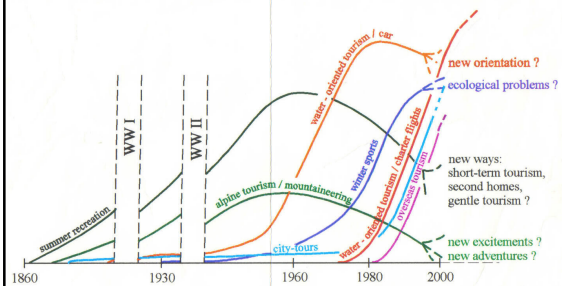
- Growth;
- Rise in standards and expectations;
- Growth in additional holidays;
- Merging of tourism with leisure and recreation, and with retirement;
- Increasing appeal of health and experiential holidays.

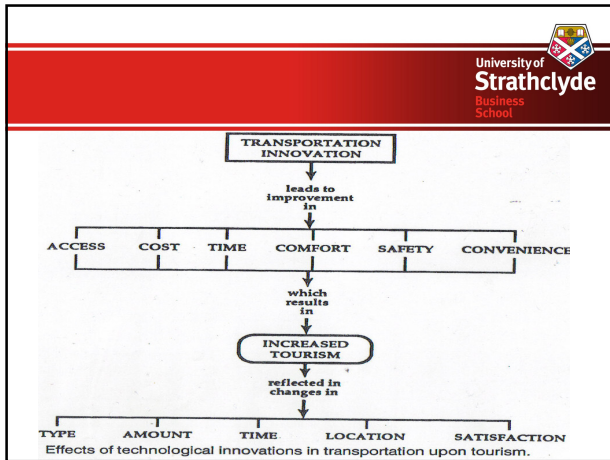
MAJOR CHANGES IN TOURISM cont.?

- Segmentation and niche markets;
- Changing role of WWW, IT, and intermediaries;
- Growing appeal of SE Asia;
- Increase in cruise tourism;
- Increase in sport-related tourism;
- Rise in sustainable (?) nature-related tourism.
- Spreading into new locations due to improved transportation technology and accessibility



European Tourism Products - A Product-Cycle Approach





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FORCES OF CHANGE

In the context of tourism change, there are clearly both positive and negative forces that influence the nature and dimension of such change. Some forces affect primarily destinations, others affect tourism in a much more fundamental way. Technological change, for example, affects tourism at all scales and time periods.

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Positive forces

- In tourism positive forces could be those enabling a destination to reach a state short of stagnation/decline, and allow it to remain there (perhaps in the mythical “sustainable” state).

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Negative forces

Negative forces could be seen as those which either **prevent** a destination from reaching the consolidation phase or more likely, which cause it to **overdevelop** and enter decline.

Forces of Change may be in conflict

- Forces may act in different directions depending on circumstances. Changes in consumer taste, for example, may be both positive and negative depending on the type of tourism



INFLUENCES ON CHOICE IN TOURISM

- Technology of all types
- Awareness of opportunities
- Cost and availability of travel
- Independence in arrangements
- Media
- Economic situation (personal and national)
- Security (avoidance of catastrophe)
- Personal situation (life stage)
- Government intervention

ERAS IN TOURISM

CLASSICAL	? – 1000 A.D.
HISTORICAL	1000 A.D. – 1800
INDUSTRIAL	1800- - 1914
MODERN	1914 – Present
FUTURE	Present - ?

CLASSICAL ? – 1000 A.D.

KEY FEATURES

- Conflict
- Classical world influence
- Religious influence
- Poor and slow transport, very limited mobility
- Overall poverty
- Overall little or no free time.
- Life spatially limited

CLASSICAL cont.
TOURISM FOCUS



Change (environment, setting, climate)

Health

Social

TOURISM CHARACTERISTICS

Very limited to elite affluent few

Very little commercial development

Seasonal response

Own facilities (villas, summer estates)

Close to centres

HISTORICAL 1000 - 1800



KEY FEATURES

Conflict

Religion (Crusades, Reformation)

Exploration (new world, navigation)

Improved but still poor and slow transport, limited mobility

Mass underclass with little money or time

Life spatially limited but awareness of wider world

HISTORICAL cont.
TOURISM FOCUS



Change (setting, climate)

Health (spas, country)

Culture/knowledge (Grand Tour)

TOURISM CHARACTERISTICS

Social/image (Bath)

Seasons (social and natural)

Increasing numbers travelling to pleasure

Provision of commercial properties/facilities for travel

INDUSTRIAL 1800 - 1914



KEY FEATURES

Conflict reduced (post Waterloo)

New World influence

Industrial Revolution

Urbanisation

Mass market appears

Transport revolution (steam power on water and land)

Improvements in mass health, education, income and time

INDUSTRIAL cont.
TOURISM FOCUS



- Pleasure
- Change from normal pattern of life (concept of holidays)
- Destinations

TOURISM CHARACTERISTICS

- Polarity between mass and class in all aspects
- Transport operators involved in development
- Organised tourism offerings
- Seasons determined more by work (formal holidays)
- Widespread commercialisation in opportunities

MODERN 1914 - Present



KEY FEATURES

- General peace after 2 world wars
- Materialism/commercialisation/marketing
- Transport revolutions (car, airplane)
- Communication revolution (radio, television, computing)
- Mass affluence
- Time from work established (holidays with pay)
- Disappearing stability and loyalty, increasing ad hocery
- Political influences more widespread (EU, new countries)

MODERN cont.
TOURISM FOCUS



- Pleasure (hedonism)
- Image/prestige/collecting and experiential activities

TOURISM CHARACTERISTICS

- Mass (behaviour, volume)
- International with wide choice of opportunities, destinations
- Commercialisation/marketing
- Independent choice but governmental controls
- Immediacy (Speed in travel, arranging, being satisfied)
- Integration/Packaged offerings (all or part of holiday)

FUTURE Present - ?



KEY FEATURES

- Spatial limits reached except for space
- More private provision for affluent
- Private space (home) improving but public places (towns) deteriorating in quality, security and desirability
- Greater international controls
- Possible resource scarcity
- Continued migrations of people
- Greater influence of media

FUTURE cont.
TOURISM FOCUS

- Pleasure (hedonism)
- Image (health, green?)
- Experiences (natural and created)

TOURISM CHARACTERISTICS

- Mass but individual (behaviour, volume)
- Global, diverse places but more similar
- Governmental control over many elements
- Importance of hubs
- Greater emphasis on activities than place



ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN TOURISM

Increased and increasing in importance in influencing perceptions and attitudes towards leisure and tourism.

ABILITY:

- To stimulate interest in activities and places
- To create interest in activities and places
- To reduce interest in activities and places



ASPECTS OF THE MEDIA

- Uncontrollable and unavoidable but - capable of manipulation
- Potential immense coverage
- Unpredictability of direction
- Issue - Attention cycle



A new wave of holiday shoppers floods the high streets of Europe

As the Chinese economy booms, its citizens are venturing further afield for their breaks in ever-greater numbers, writes Jane Macarthey in Beijing

IF IT'S Switzerland, it must be Switzerland. If it's Paris, then get up in the morning, sit on the terrace, sip your coffee, then sit on the terrace, sip your coffee... The holiday market is being transformed as the Chinese economy booms, its citizens are venturing further afield for their breaks in ever-greater numbers, writes Jane Macarthey in Beijing.

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So what can we conclude?

Tourism responds to triggers on a place specific rather than a global basis and location is important.

Most change is incremental and reactive...and predictive?

Participants are only partially "rational" and have very incomplete information.

Problems: Past, Present and Future

Lack of Capability - to determine level of appropriate (sustainable) development

Lack of Ability - to manage tourism and control its development

Lack of Realization - that tourism does cause impacts and cannot easily be reversed

Lack of Application - that tourism is dynamic, causing and responding to change.

Lack of Agreement – by all players involved over nature and levels of development, control, and direction.

Future Trends In Tourism?

More of the same as a result of inertia and current investments?

Increasing sampling of destinations with reduced return visitation to any one?

Reduction in one holiday a year model?

Increasing movement to the exotic periphery in the search for prestige and the unique?

Future Trends In Tourism cont.?

Permanent residence and retirement in amenity locations with multiple holidays to other locations?

The location increasingly becoming the setting rather than the attraction?

Increasing interest in activities-based tourism rather than the location itself?

Future Trends In Tourism?

Most growth will come in “new” areas and actual numbers continue to decline in “old” destinations and perhaps from “old” origins
There will always be an affluent minority who will participate in tourism, their demands may be more extreme.
Business tourism will remain distinct from pleasure tourism and continue to grow.

Definite? Trends:

Western societies have an aging population but the elderly continue to behave as if they were still young. Pension problems may affect their travel.
Oil will run out sometime, alternatives?
New destinations will find it harder to establish a long term future
China and India will swell tourist numbers

Short term “forecast”(1-5 years):

Minimum change with slight growth.
Cost/inconvenience will grow in travel.
Europe’s share of tourism arrivals continues to decline, SE Asia’s share increases. Other areas remain as is.
Cruise market continues slow grow.
Exotic areas continue to appeal.

Medium term (6-15 years) forecast

General patterns continue but slower growth from western markets.
Cruise market peaks or declines.
Some supporting sector failures.
Increasing reaction against large scale identical developments but fewer and fewer alternatives for the mass.

Long term (15+years) forecast

Basic patterns maintained.
If oil shortage with no replacement, decline in many long haul travel and destinations.
End of democratisation of tourism?
Increase in pursuit of rarity/prestige.
Less seasonality.
Tourism even less distinguishable from leisure and recreation than now

Implications:

Stability and inertia win out over dynamism (**assuming no global disaster/ catastrophe**).
Changes will occur on the “margins” for locations and forms of tourism and most will be place specific.
Reversions to “normality” after turbulence may take longer than at present because of globalisation and integration.

Implications (cont.):

Both linear and chaos models are applicable to tourism, depending on location and form.
Tourists will demand more personal and specific features/holidays, but destinations will continue to become more similar.
The most affluent generation ever grew up with tourism and take travel and tourism for granted but the next generation may not be so fortunate and face higher costs and less choice.

The future will happen despite and even because of our efforts in similar ways to the way it has developed since the beginning. It will be driven, as in the past, by availability of discretionary income, time, and mobility.

“Plus ca change, plus c’est la meme chose”

Thank-you

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