



More than an “industry”: The forgotten power of tourism as a social force

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Abstract

This paper argues that in the current neo-liberal era, the discourse of tourism as an “industry” has overshadowed other conceptualisations of the tourism phenomenon. An argument is developed that this discourse serves the needs and agendas of leaders in the tourism business sector. However, the author desires to revive an earlier understanding of tourism that predates the neoliberal era. Tourism is in fact a powerful social force that can achieve many important ends when its capacities are unfettered from the market fundamentalism of neoliberalism and instead are harnessed to meet human development imperatives and the wider public good. Examining the human rights aspects of tourism, investigating phenomena such as “social tourism”, exploring a few “non-western” perspectives of tourism and outlining some of the tantalising promise that tourism holds, this paper attempts to revive and reinforce a wider vision of tourism’s role in societies and the global community. It is argued that it is critical for tourism academics, planners and leaders to support such a vision if tourism is to avoid facing increasing opposition and criticism in a likely future of insecurity and scarcity.

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1. Introduction

Tourism is, without a doubt, one of the most important forces shaping our world (Cohen & Kennedy, 2000, p. 214). Economically, tourism is of growing importance to many nations and is recognised as the largest export earner in the world and an important provider of foreign exchange and employment (World Tourism Organization (WTO), no date). In particular, developing countries are encouraged to use it as a means of economic development that wreaks less damage than extractive industries (see, for instance, Russell & Stabile, 2003) and can be used to generate revenue for other developmental activities (Mathieson & Wall, 1982, p. 41). But, in addition to these economic values of

tourism, tourism offers social, cultural and environmental benefits that add to its allure. Tourism is argued to contribute to the well-being of tourists by giving them restorative holidays that fulfil many human needs (World Tourism Organization (WTO), 1999). Tourism is also acclaimed for its contribution to the preservation of cultures at a time when globalisation is arguably a force for cultural homogenisation (Cohen & Kennedy, 2000, p. 226). The growth in interest in ecotourism has demonstrated that tourism can be an important force for the restoration or conservation of environments (Richardson, 1993). Lastly, and perhaps the most important work with which tourism is credited, it is a force promoting peace and understanding between peoples (World Tourism Organization (WTO), 1980). However, despite this diversity of positive impacts that tourism is credited with, there is a current trend to limit its parameters to the economic and business domains,

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which severely restricts its capacity to fulfil these other invaluable potentials.¹ Tourism has succumbed to the effects of “marketisation”, which has been effected by the dominance of “neo-liberal” values in much of the global community. As a result of such dynamics, tourism industry leaders are able to harness tourism’s opportunities for their own private wealth accumulation and commandeer scarce community resources for their purposes. As a result, tourism’s full potential is squandered and its promise of many powerful benefits for humanity remains unfulfilled. This paper is an effort to remind those concerned with the tourism phenomenon, including academics, planners and practitioners, that tourism is much more than just an “industry”; it is a social force, which if freed from the fetters of “market ideology” can achieve vital aims for all of humanity.

2. Historical perspective

The ability of tourism to contribute to important social aims was recognised at the birth of the modern tourism phenomenon. Thomas Cook could be described as the father of modern, mass tourism. He utilised the then new railway technology to organise inexpensive journeys for the new working class created in the industrialisation process of the United Kingdom.² Although it took until 1850 for Thomas Cook’s amazing organisational skills and foresight to pay off in profits, Cook was motivated as much by philanthropic aims as business goals (Turner & Ash, 1975, p. 52). While it is well documented how Cook’s short train journeys in England expanded in scope and in industrial organisation to develop all-inclusive tours to the Great Exhibition in Paris in 1855 and then to destinations around the world such as India, Egypt and the Holy Lands (Swinglehurst, 1982; Turner & Ash, 1975, pp. 51–59; Urry, 2002, pp. 23–24; Weaver & Oppermann, 2000, pp. 64–66; for example), it is less well noted that a broad social agenda underpinned his efforts.

Turner and Ash claim Cook viewed the railway as “a great and beneficial social force” (1976, p. 52) and they quote Cook describing travel as “appertaining to the great class of agencies for the advancement of Human Progress” (cited in Turner & Ash, 1975, p. 53). Turner and Ash argue further:

¹Morgan and Pritchard have identified the gap between the economic perspective of tourism and the sociological one as one of the outstanding problems in the study of tourism (1998, pp. 4–5).

²Cook’s first effort was to organise train transport to get delegates to a temperance meeting in 1841 (Turner & Ash, 1975, p. 51). Recognising the hard drinking that the working class resorted to in their free time to offset the hard and dangerous labour they performed in factories, Cook wished to offer them more wholesome leisure activities.

He saw “excursionism” as an agent of democratisation, and in 1861 he demonstrated the sincerity of his democratic principles by organising an excursion of 1500–1600 people to support a working men’s demonstration in Paris. Cook made a loss of 120 pounds and described the venture as a “labour of love minus profit”. Nevertheless, a similar excursion was organised in the following year (1975, p. 53).

Turner and Ash characterise these efforts as a “promising beginning” for tourism (1975, p. 53) but conclude that “a politically aware tourism has shown no signs of materialising: one cannot imagine modern tour operators supporting the struggles of the French students and workers in any recurrence of the 1968 May riots” (p. 53).³ This discrepancy between contemporary tourism and its promising beginnings is, in fact, one of the points of Turner and Ash’s book, as they conclude: “tourism has proved remarkably ineffective as a promoter of equality and as an ally of the oppressed” (p. 53).⁴ But what has exacerbated this situation even more since the times in which Turner and Ash were writing is the dominance of the neo-liberal agenda which has arisen with the demise of the Cold War’s bipolar world and the resulting hegemony of the “Washington consensus”⁵ and its “market fundamentalism”. It is to the effects of these developments that this paper now turns.

3. The hegemony of the market

The demise of the socialist alternative that has occurred with the abandonment of communism by the Soviet Union and other nations of the Warsaw Pact has resulted in an extraordinary advance in the spread of the ideology

³In contemporary developments, it is equally difficult to envision such a “politically aware” tourism, such as Turner and Ash describe, “supporting the struggles” of the Palestinians, or the anti-Iraq War coalition, or with the agendas of the World Social Forum.

⁴In light of today’s thinking, what is really quite startling is that Turner and Ash can even posit that tourism could be expected to do these things. While the new drive for pro-poor tourism (PPT) could be argued to be an alignment of tourism with the needs of the oppressed, I would argue that it is not achieving the outcome Turner and Ash are referring to here. See footnote 22 for further explanation.

⁵The term “Washington consensus” was coined by John Williamson of the Institute for International Economics in 1990 for the increasingly common view held by financial players that economic and trade liberalisation were the keys to financial prosperity (Williamson, 2000). Thomas argues “by ‘Washington’ Williamson meant not only the US government, but all those institutions and networks of opinion leaders centred in the world’s defacto capital—the IMF, the World Bank, think-tanks, politically sophisticated investment bankers, and worldly finance ministers, all those who meet each other in Washington and collectively define the conventional wisdom of the moment” (1999, p. 225). The content of the consensus is that free markets and strict fiscal policies are the keys to future economic development.

of neo-liberalism.⁶ According to Stilwell, neo-liberalism's "core belief is that giving freer reign to market forces will produce more efficient economic outcomes" (2002, p. 21). In Stephen Gill's paper "Globalisation, market civilisation and disciplinary neoliberalism" he characterises the current era as an attempt to impose a "market civilisation" on global society:

The present world order involves a more "liberalized" and commodified set of historical structures, driven by the restructuring of capital and a political shift to the right. This process involves a spatial expansion and social deepening of economic liberal definitions of social purpose and possessively individualist patterns of action and politics (1995, p. 399).

Stilwell claims that the neo-liberals advocate "free market" policies in order to unfetter capitalist economies from excessive interventions by governments in economic matters, the latter being a product of the policies of the "welfare state" supported since the 1950s and which neo-liberals view as stifling economic efficiency. With the rise of the "Washington consensus", these neo-liberal policies now have global reach as developing countries are urged to adopt such policies by international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the development banks.⁷ Stilwell claims that the outcomes from the implementation of neo-liberalism have not resulted in "small government" but instead "different government":

The economic activities of government are not reduced, only reoriented towards directly serving the interests of business; they become less concerned with progressive income redistribution and the amelioration of social problems arising from the operations of the market economy. The policies certainly create winners and losers whatever their effectiveness in relation to the dynamism of the economy as a whole: the removal of regulations protecting employment conditions predictably leads to more unevenness of employment practices and greater wage disparities; the relaxation of environmental controls leads to more environmentally degrading activities; and the withdrawal of redis-

tributive policies leads to growing problems of economic inequality and poverty (2002, p. 22).

Development analyst Susan George (1999) has referred to the early warning of economic historian Karl Polanyi in his 1944 work *The Great Transformation* against the folly of allowing the market system to place economic imperatives over social relations. She cautions:

...the whole point of neoliberalism is that the market mechanism should be allowed to direct the fate of human beings. The economy should dictate its rules to society, not the other way around. And just as Polanyi foresaw, this doctrine is leading us directly towards the 'demolition of society' (1999).

Clive Hamilton has described the central tenets of neoliberalism as beliefs that "...the central objective of government must be the promotion of economic growth and that markets must prevail" (2003, p. ix); the former he calls "growth fetishism". He states:

In practice, growth fetishism has been responsible for a historic transfer of political authority from the state to the private market. If growth is the path to greater national and personal wellbeing, should not those responsible for growth be encouraged at every opportunity? Growth fetishism therefore cedes enormous political power to business, and corporations are never reluctant to argue that, since they are creators of wealth, it is their interests that should be paramount to government (2003, p. 17–8).

In his explanation on how a force with such negative social and environmental impacts, receives so little resistance, Hamilton explains:

At its heart...globalisation is not so much about the deepening of economic and financial networks or the extension of the international reach of corporations; it is about the restless spread of the ideology of growth and consumer capitalism... While the motive force is the accumulation of wealth through profit seeking, the ideology draws its legitimacy from the core belief that human wellbeing is advanced above all else by increasing the quantity and quality of goods and services consumed by individuals. This gives privileged place to all activities and policies that promise an increase in the rate of economic growth. Parallel with this formal set of beliefs are cultural forms of behaviour that place enormous emphasis on consumption as the foundation lifestyle. This is why there has been so little resistance to globalisation... (2003, pp. 119–120).

The tourism sector is very important in these processes because the consumption of tourism experiences is a key "growth" sector in many contemporary economies. As a result, tourism has been radically changed by the hegemony of the market. There has been

⁶Also known as "economic fundamentalism" or "economic rationalism" (Stilwell, 2002, p. 21). Gill (1995) uses the term "market fundamentalism".

⁷In reference to the pressure that developing countries are under to adhere to the ideology of the Washington consensus, journalist Thomas Friedman has used the evocative term "Golden Straitjacket" (2000). He claims: "when your country recognises...the rules of the free market in today's global economy, and decides to abide by them, it puts on what I call the Golden Straitjacket...[which] is the defining political-economic garment of the globalization era... As your country puts on the Golden Straitjacket, two things tend to happen: your economy grows and your politics shrinks" (2000, p. 104–105). Friedman appears to be oblivious to the connotations of this term.

a great deal of valuable analysis in the tourism literature about such developments (including Brohman, 1996; Scheyvens, 2002; Mowforth & Munt, 2003; Reid, 2003). In his discussion of volunteer tourism, Wearing is highly critical of tourism operations within the neoliberalism context (2001 and 2002). He states:

Tourism in a free market economy can exploit natural resources as a means of profit accumulation, and consequently has been described as the commercialization of the human need to travel. The notion of unlimited gain has led to the exploitation of host communities, their cultures and environments.

Tourism perpetuates inequality, with the multinational companies of the advanced capitalist countries retaining the economic power and resources to invest in and ultimately control nations of the developing world. In many cases, a developing country's engagement with tourism serves simply to confirm its dependent, subordinate position in relation to the advanced capitalist societies –itself a form of neo-colonialism (2002, p. 238).

Brohman (1996) has thoroughly critiqued the use of tourism as part of the outward-oriented development strategies promoted by the neoliberally driven IFIs such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Such agencies pressure developing countries to adopt neoliberal policies as part of the structural adjustment programs that are a pre-requisite to obtain loans. Reviewing Brohman's work, Scheyvens has claimed "rather than encouraging domestic tourism or promoting tourism as a means of developing cross-cultural awareness, for example, for most Third World countries tourism is explicitly pursued as a means of earning foreign exchange" (2002, p. 24).

Clearly, contemporary tourism has accommodated itself to the hegemony of the market. In fact, contemporaneous with the rise of neo-liberalism, the mantra that tourism is an "industry" that is subject only to the rules of the marketplace has been repeated so frequently that to think otherwise is almost viewed as non-sensical. As the following section demonstrates, the discourse of tourism as "industry" has been developed for particular political purposes and has important effects, which are vital to recognise.

4. Tourism as an industry—the marketisation of tourism

Tourism is characterised as an industry in a great deal of publications ranging from newspapers to trade magazines to the various kinds of academic publications as well as by governments and business.⁸ While people

⁸For instance, tourism falls under the Australian federal government's Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources. Texts such as Knowles et al.'s *The globalization of tourism and hospitality* (2001)

more readily accept the notion of tourism as an industry today following years of hearing the term repeatedly, the academic debate remains unresolved. This is an outstanding issue mainly due to the diverse range of products and services that make up the "tourism industry" which are accessed by both tourists and non-tourists. As Sinclair and Stabler state:

It is a composite product involving transport, accommodation, catering, natural resources, entertainments and other facilities and services, such as shops and banks, travel agents and tour operators. Many businesses also serve other sectors and consumer demands, thus raising the question of the extent to which suppliers can be considered as primarily suppliers of tourism. The many components of the product, supplied by a variety of businesses operating in a number of markets, create problems in analysing tourism supply (1997, p. 58).

Leiper traces the development of the term "tourism industry" to the 1960s when modernising forces looked to industries as engines of economic growth (1995, p. 97). It is apparent that there has been a concerted effort made on the part of interested parties to gain widespread acceptance of the notion of tourism as an industry. Leiper contends that this is partly a result of a simile (tourism is like an industry) going wildly astray when extended as a metaphor (tourism is an industry) (1995, p. 99). However, there are more important agendas also behind the promotion of this conceptualisation. Davidson argues that tourism businesses reacted against the common notion of tourism as "fun and games, recreation, leisure, unproductive", which resulted in a failure of economists, economic developers and governments to take tourism seriously (1994, pp. 20–21). He argues that the struggle to have tourism accepted as an industry was waged for the following purposes: to win respect, to enable data collection and to create an identity and secure self-esteem for those working in the tourism "industry" (1994, pp. 21–22). Leiper argues that the "tourist industry" image was created to: secure broad public relations goals for organisations such as the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC); create pride and professionalism among employees; and establish clout wieldable in politics (1995, pp. 103–105).⁹ Davidson and Leiper convincingly reveal that the effort

(footnote continued)

discuss how these "industries" can strategise their benefits from globalising. *Tourism Talk*, an online tourism newsletter, describes itself as the "industry" magazine for Australia: see: <http://www.tourism-talk.com.au/>

⁹Additionally, Leiper argues that environmentalists also helped create the image of the "tourism industry" in order to make it a target worthy of their considerable opposition and criticism.

to gain widespread acceptance of the notion of tourism as “industry” was in part an attempt to gain considerable political advantage, which is pursued to obtain economic benefits.

One academic proponent of the notion of tourism as an industry is Stephen Smith. Smith laments the gap that exists between the researchers of tourism and the practitioners in the tourism business sector, which results from lack of awareness of tourism as a business on the part of the former (1988, p. 182). He offers an industrial definition of tourism, which he argues will rectify the poor regard that industry leaders, government officials and economists have for tourism by allowing comparability with other industries (p. 182). This definition is what he calls a “supply side” definition in that it shifts focus away from the tourists to the businesses who supply those tourists: “Tourism is the aggregate of all businesses that directly provide goods or services to facilitate business, pleasure, and leisure activities away from the home environment” (1988, p. 183). This definition leads critics to claim tourism cannot be an industry because it fails to produce a unique good or service (the usual criteria for an industry), because it produces a multitude and diversity of products and services. In response, Smith retorts that “the tourism product is the complete travel experience”, which is composed of the travel, accommodation, food and attractions a tourist uses (1997, p. 149).

The notion of tourism as an industry has generated extensive debate and disagreement. Leiper argues that the promotion of tourism as an industry is “an economic image with political uses” (1995, Chapter 5). In particular, national tourism bodies such as the Tourism Council of Australia and Tourism Task Force seek to enhance the size of the tourism phenomenon (Leiper, 1995, pp. 105–109). They do this in order to secure greater public funding, favourable fiscal policies and political influence. Examining the case of Australia, Leiper concludes that these efforts have largely paid off but he challenges the wisdom of this success:

Has need become greed? While there have certainly been arguments supporting the opinion that governments should be sponsors of tourism promotion, because of the free-rider/market failure problems and other reasons, no study of costs and benefits to society at large has been prepared which adequately justifies the huge and rising expenditures on the promotion of tourism industries by Australian governments (at Commonwealth, State and Territory levels) over the past fifteen years. Perhaps some of the money would be better spent on something in tourism other than industry promotion, or for a quite different field of government policy beneficial to the

common wealth. These possibilities are one reason why investigating the scope of industries associated with tourism has more than academic relevance (Leiper, 1995, p. 109).¹⁰

In an increasingly competitive world, the notion of tourism as an “industry” is used to access support and resources that would otherwise be unobtainable. As Leiper indicates above, these resources could be used for other purposes such as education, health or other areas of economic development. The economic justifications for such support are debatable on the grounds of the jobs, foreign exchange, infrastructure and other outcomes that tourism does or does not deliver. While criticism has been levelled at tourism on such grounds as the low-skill, seasonal and fragile nature of its employment, or the economic leakages that it suffers, or the vulnerability and volatility of its markets (Mathieson & Wall, 1982, pp. 86–89; Weaver & Oppermann, 2000, pp. 266–272), this is not crucial to this discussion. What this work is focused upon is how the “tourism as industry” discourse limits analysis of the tourism phenomenon to its “marketised” attributes and privileges the interests and demands of the tourism business sector (also known as the “tourism industry”) while marginalising other important facets of tourism which will be addressed presently.

Despite the criticism levelled at the notion of tourism as an industry, the designation is no doubt here to stay. Particularly in this era of neo-liberalism, the economic and industrial discourse of tourism as “industry” serves purposes that will continue to motivate the beneficiaries of this platform. In fact much is at stake, when tourism development in this context requires financial investment, favourable political climates, expensive infrastructural support, subsidies and other support mechanisms. However, there are rival depictions of tourism that are worthy of attention as well.

5. Tourism as a social force—the transformative capacity of tourism

It is important to qualify the emphasis on tourism’s economic contributions by highlighting its other positive impacts,¹¹ which include improving individual well-being, fostering cross-cultural understanding, facilitating learning, contributing to cultural protection,

¹⁰Leiper views tourism as only a partially industrialised activity and argues that the promotion of it as an “industry” contributes to flawed policy making, inequity and advantage for particular sectional interest groups over others (1995). Davidson concurs, stating that exaggerating the industrial nature of tourism fails to “reflect the totality of tourism and serves to champion a few industries” (1994, p. 26).

¹¹This paper adds to a growing body of literature in this area already under development in the tourism field including: McLaren (1998), Wearing (2001), Wearing (2002), Scheyvens (2002), Reid (2003).

supplementing development, fostering environmental protection, promoting peace and fomenting global consciousness which contributes to the formation of global society (Cohen & Kennedy, 2000, p. 212 for the last point; WTO, 1999 for the former point). In the 1990s, many analysts acknowledged the power of tourism as a social force. Barnard and Spencer argue that “to ignore tourism in our accounts of culture contact in the 20th century is probably as great an omission as to ignore slavery in the 18th century or colonialism in the nineteenth” (1998, p. 602). Knowledge of tourism as a social force comes from those analysts who approach tourism from sociological, psychological or anthropological perspectives. Often their studies will examine the motivations of the tourists, the concerns of the host community or the societal impacts of tourism.

For instance, Graburn (1989), in examining the motivation to tour, uses Durkheim’s division of the sacred and the profane to situate modern tourism as “the sacred journey” or “the spirit quest” which serves to provide fulfilment lacking in ordinary daily lives. While Krippendorf (1987) locates tourism in the “industrial social system”, his work investigates the possibility for tourism to act as a social force. He envisions a “new tourism” that will accompany a societal shift against the uniformity of modern life and “may well become again a true discovery, a place of experiences and learning, a means of human enrichment, a stimulus for a better reality and a better society” (1987, p. 530). McKean boldly claims:

Underlying tourism is a quest or an odyssey to see, and perhaps to understand, the whole inhabited earth, the *oikumene*. Tourism can be viewed as not an entirely banal pleasure-seeking escapism (MacCannell, 1976), but as a profound, widely shared human desire to know “others,” with the reciprocal possibility that we may come to know ourselves (1989, p. 133).

From these brief quotations, it is evident that tourism is an important social force with transformative capacities and deserves considered analysis in this regard. This point is underlined in the words of the Manila Declaration on World Tourism of 1980:

Modern tourism was born out of the application of social policies which led to workers obtaining annual paid holidays, this in turn reflecting an acknowledgement of the human being’s fundamental right to rest and leisure. It has become a factor of social stability, mutual knowledge and understanding of man [sic] and peoples, and the betterment of the individual. Apart from its well-known quantitative dimension, it has gained a cultural and moral dimension which it is important to encourage and

to protect from negative distortions due to economic factors (WTO, 1980).¹²

See Fig. 1 for a contrast of the rival depictions of the purpose of tourism found within the “tourism as industry” and “tourism as social force” paradigms.

5.1. *Tourism and travel as a human right*

The psychological, social, economic and environmental impacts of tourism are so powerful that the right to travel and tourism have been incorporated in key international documents including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966, the World Tourism Organization’s Manila Declaration on World Tourism of 1980, Bill of Rights and Tourist Code of 1985 and the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism of 1999. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights has two passages that underpin the right to travel: articles 13(2) and 24. Article 13(2) states “Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country”, which O’Byrne describes as underpinning the human right to travel (2001, pp. 411–413). Combined with article 24, which states “everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay”, this fundamental document of international law is credited with situating travel and tourism as part of human rights. The justification for asserting such new rights can be gleaned from the words of the World Tourism Organization (WTO), which declares tourism’s potential value in “contributing to economic development, international understanding, peace, prosperity and universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all” (WTO, 1999). Making such important and varied contributions to the human good, tourism and travel are uniquely worthy among “industries” of elevation to a human rights status.¹³ The Manila Declaration on World Tourism states:

¹²Hultsman has argued that as tourism becomes increasingly recognised as an economic phenomenon, the application of ethics to tourism becomes more difficult (1995). He states: “The more important tourism becomes to the economy of a particular locale, the more its true spirit of an uplifting, uncontrived ... and intrinsically rewarding experience is in danger of being forgotten at the expense of the extrinsic value associated with the income derived from it. When the extrinsic value grows out of proportion to the intrinsic worth of tourism, the social and personal value of the experience may be reduced to the point to which ethical concerns—for the environment, indigenous peoples, and tourists alike—are of little, if any concern to service providers” (1995, p. 561).

¹³However, it is obvious that this human right is not universally enjoyed. There is a clear divide between the first and third worlds in this respect, with the former providing the vast bulk of international tourists and the latter increasingly serving as their hosts. We have largely forgotten in this era of the ascendancy of the market that

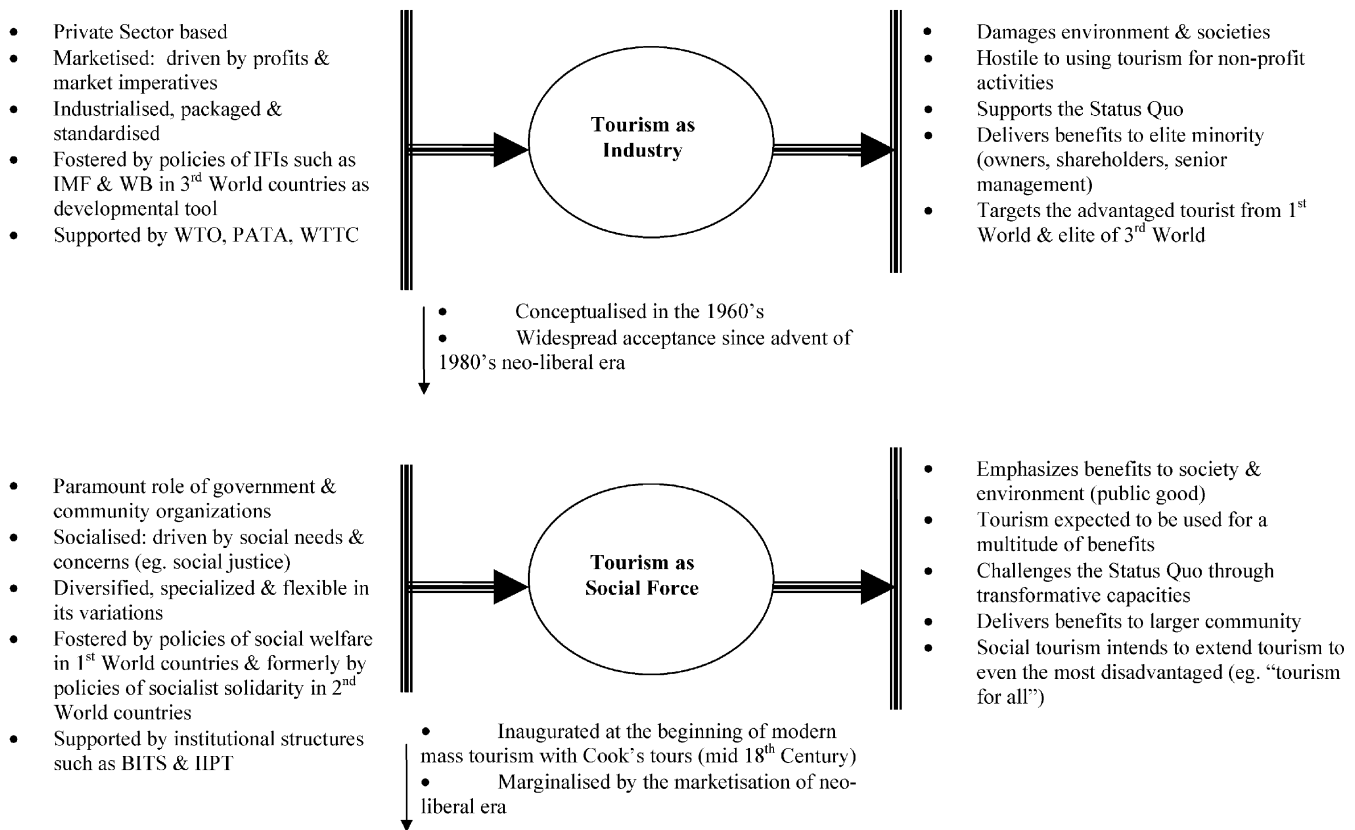


Fig. 1. Perspectives on the purpose of tourism: Tourism as an industry and Tourism as a social force (NB: specific tourism ventures may demonstrate characteristics of both phenomena).

Tourism is an activity essential to the life of nations because of its direct effects on the social, cultural, educational and economic sectors of national societies and their international relations. Its development is linked to the social and economic development of nations and can only be possible if man [sic] has access to creative rest and holidays and enjoys freedom to travel within the framework of free time and leisure whose profoundly human character it underlines. Its very existence and development depend entirely on the existence of a state of lasting peace, to which tourism is required to contribute (WTO, 1980).

(footnote continued)

important international tourism declarations acknowledged the need to bridge the divide between the first and third worlds' ability to fulfil the human right to travel and tourism. It is important to note that newer terminology calls the third world the "majority world" in light of the fact that the majority of the world's inhabitants are in developing countries. In order to assess current disparities between the majority and minority worlds, a look at the [United Nations Development Program \(UNDP\)](http://hdr.undp.org/docs/statistics/indices/stat_feature_1.pdf) website is helpful, for example their 2004 report on the Millennium Development Goals can be accessed at: http://hdr.undp.org/docs/statistics/indices/stat_feature_1.pdf. See Fig. 2 for an illustration of the impacts of such disparities on the fulfilment of the right to travel.

The 1985 Tourism Bill of Rights and Tourist Code reinforces the "human dimension of tourism" and reiterates the claims that tourism contributes to social, economic, cultural and educational sectors of national societies and improves the international community (World Tourism Organization (WTO), 1985).

The most recent code promulgated is the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (WTO, 1999), which follows in the line of its predecessors but adds value by enunciating the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in tourism. This code was forged in the new era after the demise of communism and the triumph of the "Washington consensus", and so, not surprisingly, its preamble states: "the world tourism industry as a whole has much to gain by operating in an environment that favours the market economy, private enterprise and free trade and that serves to optimise its beneficial effects on the creation of wealth and employment" (WTO, 1999). Also, reflecting concerns contemporaneous with its development, it acknowledges the need to balance economic development with environmental protection and alleviation of poverty, and thus is informed by the sustainability discourse of the 1990s. However, the code's passage on the right to travel found in article seven proves interesting. It not only reiterates the right

Table 1
Some milestones in the evolution of the human right to travel and tourism in the modern era

Timeline	Milestone	Detail of event
16–19th centuries	Travel for the Elite	Grand Tour used by European elite as educational experience
1841	Travel for the workers and masses	Cook's Tours are born when Thomas Cook organises rail journey between Leicester and Loughborough, UK
End of World War I	Passport as travel requisite	To consolidate nation states and deal with global war, passports become widespread (O'Byrne, 2000)
1948	UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights	Declaration which states the basic rights to travel, rest, leisure and paid holidays
1954	World passport initiative	Travel document for "world citizens" created by World Movement for World Citizens to enable the realisation of the right to travel as stated in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights
1963	International Bureau of Social Tourism	Organisation founded in Belgium chartered to promote "access to travel and leisure opportunities for all"
1976	UN's International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	Document which reiterates the rights to rest, leisure and paid holidays
1980	WTO's Manila Declaration on World Tourism	Document which states: "tourism is considered an activity essential to the life of nations ... Its development is linked to the social and economic development of nations and can only be possible if man [sic] has access to creative rest and holidays and enjoys freedom to travel"
1985	WTO's Tourism Bill of Rights and Tourist Code	Document which states: "the right of everyone to rest and leisure...periodic leave with pay and freedom of movement without limitation, within the bounds of law, is universally recognized. The exercise of this right constitutes a factor of social balance and enhancement of national and universal awareness"
1990s	Human Development Index drops in 3rd world	Human Development Report describes "unprecedented reversals of the 1990s" as development went backwards in dozens of countries (UNDP, 2004, p. 132)
1999	WTO's Global Code of Ethics for Tourism	Document includes Article 7 on the "Right to Tourism" which states "the prospect of direct and personal access to the discovery and enjoyment of the planet's resources constitutes a right equally open to all of the world's inhabitants". It also calls on the public authorities to support social tourism
September 11, 2001	Attack on USA and subsequent "War on Terror"	Implementation of universal right to travel is set back with tighter border security, travel advisories and heightened international tensions

to travel and tourism already stated in other key documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but it also advocates government support of initiatives such as "social tourism" and other processes to promote access to tourism for potential disadvantaged groups in their societies such as the poor and disabled.

It was not surprising that preceding codes and declarations, such as the Manila Declaration of 1980, contained similar statements and concerns because they were forged in the era where social welfare and justice were still on the agenda. It is surprising, though, that such rhetoric has survived into the era of marketisation under neo-liberalism.¹⁴ What this demonstrates is that the power of tourism as a social force and the right of all of humanity to partake of its benefits cannot be entirely dismissed in such vital protocols that are advocated as "global instruments". While the neo-liberal era demands that tourism's benefits are to be allocated according to

the "invisible hand" of the market, the discourse of tourism as a "human right" demands the involvement of communities and governments in ensuring a just distribution of its bounties (as well as its ill effects).¹⁵ See Table 1 for an outline of the evolution of the human right to travel in the modern era.

5.2. *Social tourism: a forgotten commitment to humanity*

The discussion of tourism and travel as a human right raises the little-known topic of "social tourism". While the market paradigm has dominated many developed nations' view of tourism for some time, there is another view of tourism that has a rich history in Eastern and Western European countries. Some of these countries have fostered the idea of social tourism as an obligation a state owes its citizenry and its society in order to fulfil the right to tourism espoused in such charters as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, discussed

¹⁴But because there is no mention of the New International Economic Order in this document (unlike the Manila Declaration), one can assume that each government's ability to fulfil its "social tourism" obligations to its citizenry and thus make real their citizens' exercise of their "right to tour" is dependent upon them obtaining sufficient levels of development.

¹⁵O'Byrne's discussion of passports and tourism mentions the development of a "world passport" in 1954 created by the World Government of World Citizens which in effect sought to enable this human right to travel and tourism in a world increasingly marked by borders and barriers; some six governments have accepted it de jure and 152 countries de facto (2001, pp. 412–413).

previously. Social tourism has different meanings in different contexts. The basic principle of social tourism is “access to travel and leisure opportunities for all” (International Bureau of Social Tourism (BITS), no date).

The precepts of modern social tourism were being laid early in the 20th century when the principle of paid leave for workers was adopted. For example, it has been noted that France’s trade unions, as early as the implementation of paid leave in the 1930s, were promoting not only the value of tourism for relaxation from work but also for development of the mind and the body (Ouvry-Vial et al., 1990 cited in Richards, 1996, p. 157). One form of social tourism developed in the socialist countries (or centrally planned economies as Allcock and Przeclawski (1990) prefer) to serve several needs. Unlike the tourism phenomenon in capitalist societies where tourism symbolised freedom, choice and individuality, in socialist countries belonging to the Warsaw Pact or the Council for Mutual Economic Aid, tourism was geared to serving socialist needs. These ranged from provision of rest and relaxation for the workers of socialist production in order to enable their future production, to fostering communist solidarity by touring fellow communist countries, to use of tourism as a method of fostering “socialist education” for youth (Allcock & Przeclawski, 1990, p. 4).

However, social tourism has extended beyond the socialist and centrally planned economies of Eastern Europe. As mentioned earlier, France has a long tradition of social tourism through the trade union movement. But France has been joined by other Western European states such as Germany, Switzerland, Portugal and the Scandinavian countries in subsidising transport, maintaining “social resorts” and funding youth camps, to name only a few. Even the United States of America, one of the main proponents of neo-liberalism, has social tourism schemes such as the youth camps of the Young Farmers Association which have been devised to ensure that rural youth have access to the learning and recreational capacities of tourism.

There is also an institutional structure to promote the values of the social tourism movement. The International Bureau of Social Tourism (BITS) is an umbrella structure for national social tourism organizations to cooperate on the development and promotion of social tourism. It was founded in 1963 in Brussels and now represents members from around Europe as well as the rest of the world and also twelve governmental authorities. BITS is also charged with representing the issue of social tourism to such bodies as the World Tourism Organization and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. BITS has formulated a strong argument for the right of *all* to tourism, travel and leisure on its website and exhorts governments in particular to move beyond “recognition

of the right” (perhaps better stated as “mere rhetoric”) to actual pragmatic programs to enable all to enjoy the exercise of their right (BITS, no date). In their Montreal Declaration (1996), BITS outlines the context that makes the promotion of social tourism so vital. This states that in today’s world:

- in which growth in the wealthiest countries is spasmodic, and whole sections of the population suffer increasing deprivation, resulting in serious social unrest,
- in which advances in science and information technologies go hand in hand with a reduced workforce, opening up as yet undreamed-of social and cultural opportunities,
- in which large economic alliances are formed, operating according to their own free-market logic,
- in which some countries experience rapid growth, opening up to the possibility of domestic tourism,
- in which other countries, and even whole continents, are trapped in appalling poverty,
- in which the right to a search for meaning is claimed everywhere,
- in this world, tourism is growing rapidly. We are witnessing spectacular increase in business and leisure travel, the opening-up of borders, the diversification of destinations, and new means of communication and transport (International Bureau of Social Tourism (BITS), 1996).

This declaration asserts that the “subjugation” of tourism to the service of human needs must be vehemently pursued in such a context, so that the ethos of access to travel and leisure opportunities for all becomes realised (1996). In the era of neo-liberalism, we forget that tourism’s purpose is to serve human needs and not only to deliver profits to the business sector or economic growth for governmental accounts. Certainly tourism is not about economic development for its own sake, as seems to be the ideology of a tourism sector subject to the “growth fetish”.¹⁶

However, finding references to social tourism initiatives in the tourism literature is exceedingly difficult. A look through several dozen textbooks and journals in search of any reference to social tourism yields surprisingly few results.¹⁷ This perhaps indicates just how

¹⁶Perhaps an example of growth fetishism in tourism is the Queensland Government’s tourism development plan entitled *Strategy for Growing Tourism* released in 2001 (see: <http://www.dtrft.qld.gov.au/tourism/growing-tourism.asp>).

¹⁷A rare and recent exploration was provided by Ryan in a journal article in which he investigated the utility of social tourism precepts and stakeholder theory to make sustainability more meaningful (2002). Connell is also recommended for an exploration of how social tourism initiatives can be used by universities in their efforts to implement policies of social responsibility (2000).

dominant the neo-liberal paradigm has become in the tourism context, for one would expect that at least the anthropological and sociological tourism literature would find some interest in the social tourism phenomenon. It cannot be helpful to have such a title as “social tourism” at a time when the socialist alternative is largely viewed with contempt. One suspects that the decision of the BITS to consider a change of title from “social tourism” to “tourism for all” is a reaction to this unfortunate situation (see *International Bureau of Social Tourism*, 2002, p. 3). Finally, social tourism is not yet sufficiently advanced to realise the promise of “tourism for all”. At the moment, the mantle of obligation to fulfil the precepts of social tourism is given to governments and this blocks the likelihood that such rights will be truly universally provided, as many developing countries are still unable to meet their citizens’ most basic needs let alone fulfil a right to travel.¹⁸ Therefore, the precepts of social tourism cannot be implemented universally until the fulfilment of the right to development is honoured, as demanded in the concept of the New International Economic Order (NIEO) (discussed momentarily) and as outlined by such agreements as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.¹⁹

In addition to social tourism with its emphasis on enabling the disadvantaged to fulfil their right to travel, there is a diversity of other “tourisms” which are revealing of tourism’s full capacity as a social force. Tourism has been attributed with facilitating the healing of rifts in divided societies by fostering contact between peoples. For instance, this author has previously described the phenomenon of “reconciliation tourism” in Australia where the tourism encounter is utilised in bringing non-Indigenous Australians into contact with and learning from Indigenous Australians in an effort to promote reconciliation between these communities (see Higgins-Desbiolles, 2003, 2005). Wearing has described “volunteer tourism” as “experiences that make a difference” within a tourism sector “that seems to represent consumer capitalism at its worst” (2001, p. ix). In volunteer tourism, tourists use their holidays and money to participate in work projects focused on environmental and social development in the communities they visit; examples include the environmental conservation of Earthwatch Tours and the house-

building tours of Habitat for Humanity. The International Institute for Peace through Tourism (IIPT) promotes peace tourism in its global summits and its other activities.²⁰ Scheyvens has described the phenomenon of “justice tourism” as tourism that is both equitable and ethical and is based on the premise that “travellers can be part of the liberation process” (2002, p. 104).²¹ Perhaps the ultimate example of “justice tourism” is the reality tours offered by the American non-government organization Global Exchange. This organization has developed a number of itineraries around the world to show where the current dynamics of economic globalisation are creating unjust effects in order to educate their tour participants about the “reality” of our world, foster solidarity between the visitors and the visited and perhaps as a result contribute to a movement for justice and equity that will change these dynamics (see: <http://www.globalexchange.org/tours/>).²²

An important question remains; how significant are these socially transformative kinds of tourism? In his analysis of volunteer tourism, Wearing notes that many alternative tourism sectors, including the very strong ecotourism niche, are subject to “data collection shortcomings” (2001, p. 6). One reason for such circumstances is the fact that definitional difficulties hinder reliable data gathering and certainly a similar difficulty would confront research into the phenomenon of “tourism as a social force”. Importantly, consumer surveys in the United States and United Kingdom

²⁰This non-governmental organisation (NGO) was founded by Louis D’Amore in the 1980s. It has however been the subject of angry criticism over its failure to use its access to global tourism industry leaders to advocate for social justice. Navaya ole Ndaskoi of Indigenous Rights for Survival International turned down an invitation from the IIPT to speak at its second African conference in 2003 saying “the conferences are, I like to believe, most certainly the triumphs of the powerful, the rich, and those expecting perks” suggesting that the activities of the IIPT is driven by tourism industry interests and not the justice agenda that would be expected of such an NGO (see <http://www.ogiek.org/faq/maasai.htm>).

²¹Scheyvens claims justice tourism “builds solidarity between visitors and those visited; promotes mutual understanding and relationships based on equality, sharing and respect; supports self-sufficiency and self-determination of local communities; and maximises local economic, cultural and social benefits” (2002, p. 104).

²²While some might emplace pro-poor tourism (PPT) on such a list of transformative tourisms, I do not think this is appropriate. Currently PPT is described in the following way: “PPT is not a specific product or niche sector but an approach to tourism development and management. It enhances the linkages between tourism businesses and poor people, so that tourism’s contribution to poverty reduction is increased and poor people are able to participate more effectively in product development” (http://www.propoortourism.org.uk/what_is_ppt.html). This is obviously not an agenda for systemic change in support of social justice but instead, like many sustainable tourism and corporate social responsibility policies, a program of minor reforms for a marketised tourism sector to deflect criticisms and prevent unwanted regulation. See Briedenham, 2004 for insights into such dynamics.

¹⁸But as Barkin has pointed out in his examination of Mexico, even the more wealthy developing countries which could utilise social tourism as “an instrument for environmental management and social well-being” do not do so because the neoliberal agenda sees “public policy... driven by the service providers organised to respond to the demands of the tour operators who focus their efforts on the most profitable segments of the globalised market” (2000).

¹⁹However, it must be recognised that a universal fulfilment of the right to tourism and travel would entail grave environmental consequences, which would have to be addressed.

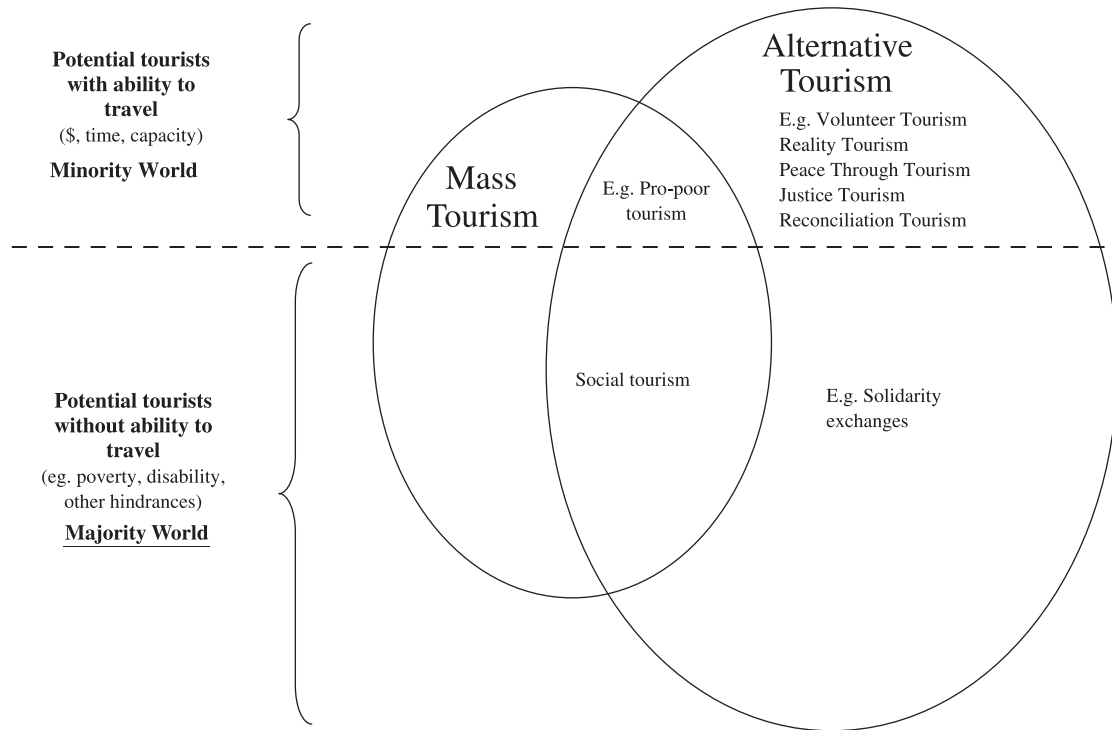


Fig. 2. Suggested contributions to transformative experiences from main tourism sectors with discrepancies in the facilitation of the fulfilment of the right to travel between the privileged of the “minority world” and the disadvantaged of the “majority world”.

appear to identify a growing interest and support for sustainable and ethical tourism (Stueve et al., 2002; Goodwin and Francis, 2003).²³ However, the quantitative estimation of the size and import of the phenomenon presently under discussion awaits further debate and clarification of its composition and research into its demand, supply and impacts attributes. Nonetheless an impression remains from the available evidence that the transformative capacities of tourism are significant and worthy of such further study. See Fig. 2 for a proposed illustration of the tourism sector’s contemporary contributions to transformative experiences and the discrepancies in the facilitation of the fulfilment of the right to travel for the privileged of the “minority world” and the disadvantaged of the “majority world”.²⁴

²³Evidence exists of a market niche interested in socially responsible tourism. Stueve et al. (2002) claim their “geotourism study” indicates “...that there are at least 55.1 million Americans who could be classified as ‘sustainable tourists’ or ‘geotourists’ and in particular specify a “good citizen” demographic segment. Goodwin and Francis (2003) review surveys conducted by British agencies Voluntary Service Overseas and Tearfund, which demonstrate an increase in consumer demand for responsible tourism experiences. In their most recent tourism plan, the South Australian Tourism Commission has delineated such consumer trends as “search for community”, “save our world”, “healthy living-well being”, and “anchoring” (described as a search for meaning and spirituality) which it has designated as presenting “opportunities” for product development (2002, pp. 8–9).

²⁴As the preceding discussion suggests and Fig. 2 illustrates, the majority of experiences of a tourism as social force nature provided by contemporary tourism are available only to the privileged tourists of

5.3. *Alternative perspectives: “non-western” understandings of tourism*

The contemporary, “western” understanding of tourism comes from a rather narrow set of experiences and philosophies, which results in its emphasis on a highly individualistic and marketised tourism. In the mainstream tourism literature it is difficult to find academic contributions to the critique of tourism that approach the topic from a “non-western” perspective. One outstanding example is Inayatullah’s “Rethinking tourism” (1995) which utilises, in addition to pacific and futures analysis, an Islamic perspective, which is used to “deconstruct” tourism. Inayatullah claims an Islamic perspective centralises the phenomenon of pilgrimage and in particular the *hajj*, or pilgrimage to Mecca, which

(footnote continued)

the “minority world” (meaning 1st world tourists and the elite of the 3rd world). Social tourism is one of the rare market segments that offers tourism’s transformative capacities to the disadvantaged, but not necessarily to the “poorest of the poor” in the “majority world”. Solidarity exchanges organised by NGOs and churches between the 1st and 3rd worlds could be classified as a form of tourism as a social force open to a few leading activists and campaigners from the majority world. Note that Fig. 2 argues that mass tourism experiences can contribute to the transformative experiences of tourism but, as pictorially represented, are arguably less likely to do so than the alternative experiences described in this paper; one small example from the mass tourism sector is perhaps the message of the “It’s a Small World” exhibit of Disney World.

is one of the central pillars of Islam. Inayatullah describes it thus:

Within ... the Islamic world, all Muslims had to travel, they had to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. Indeed, travel or the accumulation of wisdom, *ilm*, was the essence of Islam. Travelling, visiting wise people, finding holy sites, was an integral part of life ... the self travelled to gain spiritual knowledge ... travelling, indeed was a microcosm of the spiritual journey of the Self (1995, pp. 411–412).

While pilgrimage is not unique to the Islamic faith, what is perhaps striking is how central religious travel is to fulfilling obligations of the Islamic faith. Instead of the hedonistic focus of a great deal of contemporary, marketised tourism, this Islamic “tourism” is geared to spiritual growth and fostering of solidarity among the community of believers within the *ummah*. Inayatullah charges: “the West ... manufactures tourism services and the idea of tourism itself, which we have suggested is not a universal concept but a particular idea of a specific culture” (1995, p. 412). Inayatullah’s contribution is valuable to any discussion of contrasting perspectives on tourism because he reminds us that most tourism discourse emerges not only from the neo-liberal economic paradigm but also from a narrowly “western” set of experiences.

Berno’s (1999) analysis of the understanding of tourism held by the local people in the Cook Islands offers another insight into non-western interpretations of tourism. She discusses the values and spirituality behind Polynesian hospitality, including generosity, reciprocity and *aroa* (a value full of complex meanings but possible to distil to love, kindness and generosity), which can be seen as an alternative value system supporting their engagement with tourism. While her work shows that many Cook Islanders in the more urbanised areas do engage with a more “western” notion of tourism based on market exchange, the concept of *aroa* is still strong in the more rural and underdeveloped regions of the islands. Similarly Maori tourism in New Zealand/Aotearoa has been discussed in terms of *manaakitanga*, or Maori values of hospitality (Barnett, 2001). This demonstrates that there are many other cultural systems and that people from other cultures will make their accommodation to tourism based on their own cultural values about the proper relationships between peoples.

Another perspective is Allcock and Przeclawski’s analysis of the tourism phenomenon in the socialist countries of Eastern Europe in the *Annals of Tourism Research* (1990). They argue that, despite the predominance of Marxist ideology in intellectual life, thinkers from these societies offered independent analysis not only divergent from Marxist precepts but also divergent from their non-socialist colleagues in the “West”:

the independence of [their] values does not always consist of a convergence with the ideas of Western social scientists, especially those who treat tourism mostly or exclusively as an economic phenomenon, or who are interested only in recreational functions. There is often a sense among intellectuals from these countries that they are looking for a “Third Way.” This alternative is to provide systematic solutions to problems by turning their backs on the inheritance of central economic planning and its associated political and ideological structures, but at the same time by avoiding a mere mimicry of Western models ... This search for a “Third Way” extends also to the field of research in tourism (Allcock & Przeclawski, 1990, p. 6).

The perspectives that leaders from the centrally planned economies had developed could have provided alternative perspectives to their western counterparts about the role of tourism in society. However, the dynamics of the momentous change that swept Eastern Europe in the early 1990s did not allow for such cross-fertilisation as the “East” either bought into the “market” (or was “brought” into the “market”) without pause for such “cross-civilisational” conversations.

This brief highlighting of some non-western perspectives of tourism and its possibilities indicates that tourism is a cultural practice that will hold differing meaning in differing societies. Upon reflection, it makes sense that tourism relies upon human relationships, hospitality, sharing and cross-cultural communication so that its meanings will be diversely interpreted by the world’s diverse cultures. The narrowing of western analysts’ understandings to only its market aspects is not universally accepted and diversity is still evident. However, it should be of concern that the trends towards economic globalisation mean that such diverse interpretations of tourism are threatened with replacement by the marketised view of tourism as multinational tourism corporations, IFIs such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank and governments promote market values in countries throughout the world. In such circumstances, concerted effort may be necessary to ensure that tourism’s capacity to fulfil a diversity of human values remains attainable.

6. Tourism—bigger than business

While it must be recognised that contemporary tourism holds the attributes of an “industry” because it is composed of businesses that create tourism products and services that are sold to tourists through market mechanisms, it must also be acknowledged that it is unlike other, more conventional industries. For conventional industries the product or service is brought to the

consumer; whereas for tourism, the consumer is instead brought to the product or service, that is, the tourism destination. So, unlike traditional exports, the tourism industry imports tourists and takes their money off of them by selling them products and services at the destination. The tourists' act of consumption is enjoying the scenery, people, culture and activities of the host community.

If one thinks of conventional industries and their products, there is something disconcerting about the terms "consumer", "consumption", "product" and "commodity" being applied to the people, places and things located at the tourist destination. Are they "consumed" as a bottle of Coke is consumed? If one thinks of the worst excesses of tourism like the environmental damage of golf tourism and the social damage of sex tourism, it is not difficult to view them as "consumptive" activities and this is one source of much criticism of tourism (see for instance Turner & Ash, 1975; Krippendorf, 1987; McLaren, 1998). Perhaps this is why Davidson is uncomfortable with labelling tourism an industry when he states:

Tourism is a social/economic phenomenon that acts both as an engine of economic progress and a social force. Tourism is much more than an industry. Tourism is more like a "sector" that impacts a wide range of industries. Tourism is not just businesses or governments – it is people. Supporting rational tourism growth and development needs to be viewed in this broader context (1994, p. 26).

Because tourism is about people, ways of living and whole environments, it cannot be treated as manufacturing or resource extraction is treated. It necessitates ethical thinking which is only now being more comprehensively explored in the tourism field (see Smith & Duffy, 2003). But because in the era of neoliberalism most people view tourism as an "industry", particularly the people in the "industry" itself, tourism operates on this industrial view of the tourist destination's people, scenery, culture and activities as commodities to be sold to the tourist consumer with all of the logic of profit extraction and exploitation that this entails.²⁵

7. The promise of tourism

Since the advent of the neo-liberal era, many have forgotten the agenda set for tourism in the promotion of equity between the countries of the developing and

developed worlds (then called the North–South debate). Thus, in his analysis of tourism for UNESCO in the mid-1980s, Ascher (1985) still advocated the idea that tourism cooperation between the countries of the developed and developing world needed to be assessed according to their contributions to the establishment of a New International Economic Order (NIEO). The New International Economic Order was demanded by the newly independent countries of the developing world as a systemic program to bring just relationships to an increasingly interdependent but very unequal world.²⁶ During a period between the 1970s and the 1980s the demands for the NIEO were listened to with some attention as the developing countries exerted their power and influence.²⁷ Tourism was an important component of the vision of the NIEO. For example, the Manila Declaration of the WTO in 1980 declared in its opening statements:

Convinced ... that world tourism can contribute to the establishment of a new international economic order that can *help to eliminate the widening economic gap between developed and developing countries* and ensure the steady acceleration of economic and social progress, in particular of the developing countries

Aware that world *tourism can only flourish if based on equity* ... and if its ultimate aim is the improvement of the quality of life and the creation of better living conditions *for all peoples* (WTO, 1980, emphasis added).

While the 1999 Global Code of Ethics for Tourism contains a much-diminished vision of tourism's role, the WTO is unable to completely divorce the tourism enterprise from such goals of equity through development as expressed above. However, its wording is less commanding and more admonishing. It reads:

As an irreplaceable factor of solidarity in the development and dynamic growth of international exchanges, multinational enterprises of the tourism industry should not exploit the dominant positions they sometimes occupy; they should avoid becoming

²⁶Some have argued that this new order was required to redress the exploitation and underdevelopment that developing countries experienced through the colonisation process, which had enriched the developed nations and created the disparities. While developed countries were willing to give some development aid to help to alleviate this problem, developing nations argued that a just economic order was required and not the "charity" of development aid (Mazrui, 1977, p. 371) which was "bestowed" by the "benevolence" of the giver (and thus subject to their continuing goodwill).

²⁷The developing countries concentrated the attention of the developed countries through the lessons taught by the OPEC oil embargo of 1973, the formation of a coalition under the banner of the Group of 77 when these countries flexed their muscles as a bloc in such fora as the General Assembly, and the dynamics of the Cold War when they were courted for their loyalties by both sides of the bipolar divide.

²⁵I view tourism as a similar sector to health and education, which have also been subjected to marketisation during the neoliberal era. We somehow know instinctively that education and health are "invaluable" as they concern people and the public good and we therefore resist the extremes of wholesale marketisation. I would advocate a similar attitude to tourism.

the vehicles of cultural and social models artificially imposed on the host communities; in exchange for their freedom to invest and trade which should be fully recognized, they should involve themselves in local development, avoiding, by excessive repatriation of their profits, or their induced imports, a reduction of their contribution to the economies in which they are established. Partnership and the establishment of balanced relations between enterprises of generating and receiving countries contribute to the sustainable development of tourism and an equitable distribution of benefits of its growth (WTO, 1999).

These are the only words in this entire document that address the topic of tourism's role in equitable development and these merely form a weak request for multinational tourism corporations to commit themselves to the development agenda and to foster partnerships with local enterprises. Because the logic of these corporations is profit maximisation and returns to shareholders, it is not certain that their cooperation in the development enterprise can be secured. It is imperative that the concern for tourism development and promotion is returned to its purposes for fulfilling human values and human needs and is not simply left to the goodwill of the market. Perhaps Inayatullah's analysis using Islamic values, discussed previously, offers a better tool for benchmarking the worth of tourism than this Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. He proposes the following list of questions to interrogate tourism:

How does tourism affect the distribution of wealth? Does tourism create conditions where economic growth is sustaining? Does tourism reduce structural violence (poverty, ill-health and racism caused by the system) or does it contribute to the further impoverishment of the periphery? Does tourism reduce personal direct violence? Can we create types of tourism that enhance individual and social peace? Does tourism create the possibilities for cultural pluralism, that is, conditions where one culture understands the categories of the other culture...? Can knowledge of the Other reduce intolerance, creating the possibility of a multicultural peaceful world? Does tourism help create economic democracy? Is tourism progressive? Is there a progressive use of resources, from physical to mental to cultural-spiritual? (Inayatullah, 1995, p. 413)

But perhaps the ultimate promise of tourism is its ability to foster what could be called a "cosmopolitan awareness" that fosters the feelings of respect and interdependency, which will be increasingly required by our global society. In their brief analysis of tourism

within their text on global sociology, Cohen and Kennedy contend that tourism:

contributes to the growth of globalism – a more intense feeling of common membership of the human collectivity. It does this by exposing us directly to a multicultural world where the boundaries between societies and between insiders and outsiders are becoming increasingly blurred (2000, p. 212).

Tourism's ultimate capacity as a social force is this ability to foster contact between peoples who increasingly need to understand each other and cooperate harmoniously in a world where space, resources and options are shrinking quickly. While "justice tourism" with its emphasis on solidarity obviously contributes to this process, the other less "ideological" tourisms are also perhaps playing their part in making their small contributions to globalism as the tourists come to know themselves, their own societies and the host societies they visit through the tourism process. While not all tourists are interested in these "higher aims",²⁸ this does not mitigate the fact that a considerable and growing proportion are. Similarly, tourism may possess attributes that are indicative of an "industry", but this does not negate the fact that it is much greater than this; in fact tourism is a potent social force whose only limits are enlaced by the limits of our imaginations to harness its powers for the public good.²⁹

8. Conclusion

This discussion has been concerned with the tendency in the present era to distil tourism's essence to its barest market attributes. It has argued that, while tourism

²⁸It is clear that not all tourists will want to use their touring for such "higher aims" because the use of tourism for rest, relaxation and hedonism are significant features of the phenomenon. Such a reality is revealed by Ryan et al.'s (2000) assessment of the educational promise of ecotourism which they formed from their research in the Northern Territory which found that most visitors were only seeking enjoyment and not education in their ecotour. They state: "tourists tour for reasons of change and relaxation—rarely are they lay anthropologists, botanists or environmental scientists" (2000, p. 161).

²⁹The words of the 1980 Manila Declaration on World Tourism highlight perhaps the strongest vision for tourism: "In the practice of tourism, spiritual elements must take precedence over technical and material elements. The spiritual elements are essentially as follows:

- The total fulfilment of the human being.
- A constantly increasing contribution to education.
- Equality of destiny of nations.
- The liberation of man in a spirit of respect for his identity and dignity.
- The affirmation of the originality of cultures and respect for the moral heritage of peoples" (WTO, 1980).

possesses the attributes of an “industry”, it is much greater than this and it is a particularly important social force. Examining the human rights aspects of tourism, investigating phenomena such as “social tourism”, exploring a few “non-western” perspectives of tourism and outlining some of the tantalising promise that tourism holds, this paper has attempted to revive and reinforce a wider vision of tourism’s role in societies and the global community. While the discussion has remained largely within the realm of the conceptual, it holds insights, which can be put to pragmatic purpose by academics, planners and practitioners. For instance, all three of these contributors to tourism development could advocate and support the promotion and expansion of social tourism within their communities. That this is feasible within the bounds of contemporary societies is supported by the fact that the Australian Labor Party (ALP) included social tourism as a key part of its tourism policy platform in the 2004 federal election campaign.³⁰ Academia could support such efforts by identifying the tangible and intangible benefits such a progressive policy could deliver the entire community (not just the business sector) through research.³¹ In fact, this paper suggests a fruitful program of future research, which could gather empirical data and qualitatively and quantitatively clarify the phenomena described largely conceptually here.³²

The reasons that such a vision and agenda are imperative are perhaps best illustrated by the words of Reid who charges that “the tourism sector is tied closely to the globalising force which pursues profits over justice” and suggests that the violence of “September 11” is indicative of a rejection of the values of neoliberalism and exploitation (2003, p. 3).³³ In

³⁰In its policy statement released in September 2004 “Creating opportunities for Australian tourism”, the ALP proposed that the federal government subsidise the domestic educational travel of Australian high school students, which would deliver benefits to a struggling domestic tourism sector and provide social outcomes for the Australian community.

³¹The fact that the forces of neoliberalism have impacted on the academic and research sectors resulting in pressure to focus their resources and skills on industry-directed research makes this broad social agenda more difficult to attain. For example, in Australia the creation of the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre has been driven by a neoliberal agenda of the federal government to direct tourism research to serving industry needs. Relatedly, tourism education in the tertiary sector is increasingly being geared to making students “industry ready” which could be achieved at the expense of the critical analytical skills required of a socially responsive tourism graduate.

³²For instance, to indicate the level of dominance of neoliberal values in tourism research, academic journals could be analysed through content analysis for discourse from the “tourism as industry” and the “tourism as social force” paradigms.

³³The tourism sector is now subject to the scrutiny of the “anti-globalisation” movement. At the 2004 World Social Forum (an annual meeting organised by a coalition of new social movements concerned

recognition of such tensions, Reid’s work on tourism planning is “about the achievement of distributive justice through the development of tourism” (2003, p. 2). If the proponents of the tourism sector do not wish to face concerted criticism, opposition and resistance in a world increasingly characterised by insecurity and tension, then contemporary dynamics require a radical rethinking. The marketisation of tourism evident in the “tourism as industry” discourse has overshadowed awareness of the transformative capacities of tourism as a social force and a resulting outcome is a diminishing of tourism’s potential as a result of this intellectually myopic vision. If tourism continues to wreak the environmental and social damages that attend its marketisation processes and it fails to deliver on its promise to fulfil the universal right to travel and tourism espoused in its lofty pronouncements, then the opposition that Reid envisions is highly likely to eventuate. Support for tourism’s fullest potential is no idealistic pipe-dream but a pragmatic and highly recommended strategy for a forward-thinking tourism industry leadership.

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(footnote continued)

with globalisation’s impacts) held in Mumbai, India a Global Summit on Tourism was held in which tourism was subjected to intense scrutiny and put on future agendas for this gathering. The theme of the tourism session was “who really benefits from tourism?” and a slogan “democratise tourism!” was invoked”. One NGO participant, the Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism (ECOT) called for the WSF to advocate for a tourism that is “pro-people” (Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism (ECOT), 2003).

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Further reading

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