Risks and Futures

Introduction

In this chapter we examine some contemporary and future developments within tourism. Especially significant are the interconnections between tourism and risk. When the first edition of this book appeared in 1990 there was little examination of risk except to consider the expert systems that Thomas Cook developed from the 1840s onwards. These were designed to offset some of the obvious risks of travel for each individual. However, since around 1990 there have been many new analyses of ‘risk’, mostly provoked by Beck’s *The Risk Society* (2002, first published in English in 1992). In this book, Beck is concerned not with ‘natural’ disasters but with the ‘person-made’ risks of industrial society. The nuclear radiation blown across much of Europe that followed the explosions at Chernobyl nuclear plant in 1985 is seen as symptomatic of a shift from an industrial to a risk society. In the risk society there are not only goods, but also many ‘person-made’ ‘bads’. This notion of the risk society and the spreading of multiple bads is applied to many of the environmental dangers of contemporary societies, of local pollution, of energy and resource constraints and changing climates. And especially from the September 11th terrorist attack onwards, part of the contemporary risk society is the bads and especially the fear of terrorism that generated much visual surveillance and control of mobile bodies in cities, resorts and airports.

We examine in particular whether and in what ways tourism itself is self-destructive, that it is using up or destroying the very preconditions of its own activity through generating powerful local or global risks or bads. These bads seem to stem from the exceptional development of tourism and travel from the early part of the nineteenth century onwards. Wordsworth’s poem *The Brother* begins:

> These Tourists, Heaven preserve us! needs must live A profitable life: some glance along Rapid and gay, as if the earth were air. And they were butterflies to wheel about Long as their summer lasted; some, as wise, Upon the forehead of a jutting crag Sit perch’d with book and pencil on their knee, And look and scribble, scribble on and look,

Buzard argues that this poem from 1800 ‘signifies the beginning of modernity … a time when one stops belonging to a culture and can only tour it’ (1993: 27). So begins the processes of looking, comparing, contrasting and collecting places that has so marked the last two centuries. Many places are now global icons, wonders of the world, worth seeing for oneself through travelling there. Touring the world is how the world has been significantly experienced for the past two centuries and especially since its mobilisation commenced around 1840 in Europe. Schultz describes in a 972-page book *1000 Places To See Before You Die*, a thousand places to gaze upon for oneself (2003). We examine in this book many different kinds of place that contemporary tourists seek to see for themselves. And tourists can collect and compare them with other places and obtain cultural capital from having been there and displaying this information increasingly via Web 2.0. Heaven preserve us, we might say, from all these tourists. Indeed, as the tourist gaze has gone global so it generates some powerful new configurations of risk in the contemporary world. These risks, or bads, include the effects upon the very places being visited, upon the supplies of oil that move people in and out of places, and upon the future conditions of life upon the planet. Before examining these risks we consider some strange intersections of risk and danger that stem from the proliferation of the tourist gaze and the many ‘compulsions to consume’ that it generates.

Risk and Danger

Although tourism is supposedly all about pleasure, this pleasure, this consuming of places around the world,
often involves disease, danger and death (see Urry, 2004). There are often strange combinations of pleasure and pain, risk and danger. First, this is because tourist places are often full of the ill and the dying. We noted in Chapter 2 the early history of resorts as spas. Many resorts remain as places for the ill to take waters and the air, to receive treatment and to convalesce. There are often high concentrations of nursing homes, the retired and the infirmed, especially as medical and fitness tourism developed widely. Contemporary Cuba has an interesting comparative advantage in contemporary medical tourism because of the legacy of its good communist health service.

Second, consuming other places often involves gazing at and collecting places of violent death. We have discussed how dark tourist sites include jails, war memorials, castles, extermination camps, sites of deadly battles and disasters and fortresses. Examples include Changi Jail in Singapore, West African slave forts, Nazi-occupation sites in the Channel Islands, Glencoe, Falls Road Belfast, Ground Zero, Egyptian pyramids, Dachau, Hiroshima, Pearl Harbor, Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans and Sarajevo’s ‘massacre trail’. There are also places to commemorate the death of iconic individuals. These include the grassy knoll in Dallas where JFK was assassinated, Gracelands, Jim Morrison's grave in Paris and the underpass where Princess Diana died (Lennon and Foley, 2000). Furthermore, bloodthirsty cultures are often converted into cultures that can be consumed and played with, as Vikings, Incas or Zulu warriors (see Bærenholdt and Haldrup, 2004, on Vikings).

These places of death, disaster and suffering have come to be performed as places of leisure, often charging an entrance fee, providing interpretation and selling various other services and souvenirs. Many of these places developed and continue because of well-organised enthusiasts and fans (Bærenholdt and Haldrup, 2004; Hui, 2008). These enthusiasts perform ‘work’ involving reciprocity and mutual aid. Emphasis is placed upon acquiring through networks arcane forms of knowledge about that place or person. Enthusiasts seek to keep ‘alive’ the memories of their particular race, religion, star, culture or peoples. Organised fans or enthusiasts bring this experience of death and disaster into the public eye, to make the world witness it through a public memorial gazed upon by visitors who are thus key to this public commemoration. Also such tourist performances keep those memories in the public eye and hence reduce the likelihood of ‘disaster fatigue’, as Pezzullo shows well in the case of post-Katrina New Orleans (2009).

More generally, there are many connections between the mobilities of people and illnesses. High rates of international mobility have generated new risks, such as syphilis, AIDS or SARS, which are diseases of mobilities of travellers and tourists, modern plagues according to Farmer (1999). ‘Sex tourism’ and sexual encounters between ‘guests’ and ‘hosts’ discussed in Chapter 3 have contributed to the geographical spread of sexual diseases such as AIDS, while SARS resulted from particular patterns of travel within the Chinese diaspora. Places are immensely vulnerable to the movements of illnesses and especially to the fear of illness that can overnight turn a tourist place into a place fearing death. Panic can cause visitors to shun that place, as partially happened to the English Lake District in 2001 when the idyllic countryside was full of burning carcasses of cattle that had been culled to slow down the spread of foot-and-mouth disease.

Third, tourist places have often been and imagined as places of danger, where crime and fears around personal safety are central. Rio shows such a hyper-concentration of tourism and criminality, where criminals from the favelas target tourists who provide a honeypot. There are many examples of the attraction of tourists for criminals, for mugging, prostitution, pickpocketing and illegal businesses relating to the addictions of visitors. Part the allure of the Caribbean is said to be that ‘danger’ is just around the corner, just beneath the veneer. Tales of pirates, Rastas, drugs and Yardies all contribute to the performing of ‘dangerous tourism’ in these paradise islands of the Caribbean (Sheller, 2003). There are various guidebooks for ‘dangerous travel’ (Schroeder, 2002: 73) as well as a BBC TV series called Holidays in the Danger Zone. And yet, as discussed in Chapter 6, enclavic tourist spaces such as tourist resorts, international hotels, shopping malls and theme parks represent an architecture of security explicitly designed to isolate consumers from places of danger and fear. In risky environments with many real or imagined bads, tourists often prefer the safety of the self-contained ‘camp’.
Fourth, tourism performances often involve putting the body into other kinds of personal danger since, as Sennett says, ‘the body comes to life when coping with difficulty’ (1994: 310; Macnaghten and Urry, 2000b). As noted in previous chapters, adventure tourism has developed as new versions of the tourist gaze, involving distinctly dangerous and moving tourist performances. These performances of bodily extremes include bungee jumping, off-piste skiing, paragliding, skydiving, whitewater rafting and high-altitude walking. Thomas Mann once wrote that modernity, and especially those ‘touring’ this world, is in love with the abyss (quoted in Bell and Lyall, 2002: 23). New Zealand has especially developed new performances of the abyss. There is an accelerating sublime where it is said: ‘Nature provides a site in which tourists indulge their dreams of mastery over the earth; of being adventure heroes starring in their own movies’ as they seek to cheat death (Bell and Lyall, 2002: 22). New Zealand is where ‘glorious vistas’ provide appropriate locations for the dynamic consumption of the ‘accelerated sublime’. This is how ‘New Zealand packages landscape for consumption’ (Bell and Lyall, 2002: 36). Other ‘youngish’ tourists put their body into ‘playful risk’ when chemically raving through the night and early morning (as in Goa and Ibiza) or drinking to excess (as in many package tours targeted at partying youths).

Finally, in this new century are the (imagined) risks and corporeal fears of terrorism and the widespread surveillance gaze that these risks and fears generate in the built environment. ETA terrorists in the Basque country especially targeted tourist areas such as their plan to bomb the Bilbao Guggenheim Museum. They used bombs directed against tourists as key in their campaign to secure Basque independence. But terrorism is increasingly global. Global terrorism seeks to challenge the global power of the USA and its allies, especially those in the Middle East. In this new world disorder, places that attract western tourists are the new target. Tourists are in the front line of this global warfare, as incidents in Cairo, Luxor, New York, Bali, Mombassa, Jakarta and Kashmir illustrate. Tourist places attract deadly visits from those seeking the mass sacrificial deaths of others. As one commentator wrote: ‘The Bombs in Spain Fall Mainly on the Tourists’ (http://slate.msn.com/id/112743/; accessed 02.12.10). Potential death and the fear of death now stalk many tourist places.

Tourist places can thus attract tourists and terrorists. Some of the time terrorists are tourists, intermittently transmuting into terrorists. The weapon of the weak is fear, to induce panic into those ‘innocent tourists’ playing away, doing what they are meant to do. ‘The new fear is bound up with radical uncertainty. Terror hits randomly … the new terror is blind and diffuse’ (Diken and Laustsen, 2005: 2). And yet it often hits the spaces of travellers and tourists. The new fear is like an epidemic, potentially striking at the airport, on the plane, at the hotel, in the nightclub, on the beach, at the petrol station, on the tourist bus, in the underground. To be a tourist is to be in the front line of the war on terrorism, potentially to die. In some sense at least, ‘Bin Laden has already won; his victory consists of creating an all-consuming fear’ (Diken and Laustsen, 2005: 14). This all-consuming fear is particularly evident in airports, those gateways of international tourism.

This new invisible enemy generates new forms of sophisticated ‘panoptic sorting’. International tourists need exceptionally refined systems of surveillance in order to keep them on the move. In the USA this requirement provoked an unprecedented event, the nationalising of airport security and the general development of control systems over the 550 million people who enter the USA every year (Diken and Laustsen, 2005: 3). The notion of inside and outside erodes; all are inside and outside simultaneously. Power, gazes and terror are everywhere. Indeed, tourists are now subject to the most intrusive monitoring, surveillance and regulation. In order to be a consumer in the global marketplace, tourists are subject to powerful and extensive systems and gazes of monitoring and regulation by the institutional gaze of corporations and states. Thus ‘soft targets’ of people ‘playing’ in tourist places are in the front line of the war on terror. And as both terrorists and tourists are ‘on the move’ and yet have to be kept ‘apart’, so gates, camps, sniffer dogs, cameras, face recognition biometric cameras, smart cards, iris recognition, satellites, listening bugs and Total Information Awareness are all part of the performances of contemporary travel and tourism. In order that one can enter paradise for a week, systems of personal security are morphing into a new Big Brother where gazing tourists are subject to omnipresent surveillance.
Cities and resorts increasingly share many characteristics with airports. New forms of surveillance, monitoring and regulation are being implemented as part of the global ‘war on terror’ in what has been called the ‘frisk society’. Technologies trialled within airports move out to become mundane characteristics of cities and tourist resorts, places of fear and contingent ordering within the new world order. Hence, Martinotti writes that airports and the like ‘are the places of the city we live in today. Non-places are nothing less than the typical places of the city of our times’ (1999: 170; Cwerner et al., 2009). Airspaces are typical of those ‘places’ that the global order is ushering in, showing many overlaps and similarities with towns and cities around the world. It is increasingly difficult to distinguish between airspaces and other places. The exceptional camp of the airspace has become the rule. Not only do passengers increasing fly around the world but the systems of both movement and securnitisation that make possible such travel also fly around, landing in many towns and cities. As Fuller and Harley state, ‘the airport is the city of the future’ especially when such cities are full of visitors, people from elsewhere who may or may not be ‘just tourists’ and need to be surveilled (2005: 48). It has been estimated that the average person in the UK is recorded over 300 times a day by CCTV cameras (Morgan and Pritchard, 2005). In Chapter 6 we argued that the flâneur was the forerunner of the tourist and that ‘he’ was able to be anonymous, to be in a liminal zone. But urban anonymity and liminality is now largely illusory in the face of the pervasive gaze of continuously running digitally based surveillance cameras:

the all-seeing, pervasive gaze of the camera puts at risk the opportunities for anonymity that the public sphere has traditionally aimed to provide. Sophisticated CCTV systems … coupled with databases and/or automatic identification software, unobtrusively register individuals and their movements – even in spaces and situations wherein one may legitimately expect to be an anonymous, unidentified member of the public. (Dubbeld, 2003: 158)

Tourists are now routinely captured by and subject to a powerful digital panoptic machine justified by the perceived risks of crime, violence and terrorism.

And at the same time places of terror become new places upon which to gaze. So Ground Zero or the Falls and Shankhill Roads in Belfast are now on the tourist map, waiting for visitors to come (in Belfast there is a ‘Troubles Tour’). Places of death transmute into places for visitors, appearing on ever-new tourist itineraries, part of the consumption practices of dark tourism. In the aftermath of September 11 there were calls for American ‘patriotic tourism’, to make sure that Americans got on those planes and went to places to play, to show the enemy that they could not win, that the fear of death could be defeated. As noted, a record number of tourists flocked to New York in the aftermath of September 11.

Positional Competition

We now turn to some other bads generated by the globalised tourist gaze. We consider first the generation of congestion, overcrowding and local environmental degradation, topics of debate since the 1960s in much of the ‘west’. Mishan wrote of ‘the conflict of interest … between, on the one hand, the tourists, tourist agencies, traffic industries and ancillary services … and all those who care about preserving natural beauty on the other’ (1969: 140). He cites Lake Tahoe, whose plant and animal life was destroyed by sewage generated by the hotels built along its banks. There are countless other examples of such localised environmental damage caused by tourism development, especially documented by NGOs such as Tourism Concern (http://tourism-concern.org.uk/; accessed 11.06.10).

Mishan maintains that there is a conflict of interest between present and future generations stemming from how travel and tourism are costed. The cost of the marginal tourist takes no account of the additional congestion costs that they impose. These congestion costs include the generally undesirable effects of overcrowded beaches, a lack of peace and quiet, the noise of air flights, the destruction of the scenery, the damage to plant and animal life and so on (Verbeek, 2009). Moreover, many tourists will know that there is nothing to be
gained from delaying a visit to the place in question. Indeed, there is a strong incentive to go as soon as possible – to enjoy the unspoilt gaze before the crowds get there. Thus ‘the tourist trade, in a competitive scramble to uncover all places of once quiet repose, of wonder, beauty and historic interest to the money-flushed multitude, is in effect literally and irrevocably destroying them’ (Mishan, 1969: 141). Especially, Mishan says the ‘young and gullible’ are taken in by fantasies dreamt up by the tourist industry (one wonders what his views of contemporary Ibiza or Goa might be: D’Andrea, 2007).

The spread of mass tourism does not democratis travel. Tourism is an illusion which destroys the very places being visited. This is because geographical space is limited. Mishan says: ‘what a few may enjoy in freedom the crowd necessarily destroys for itself’ (1969: 142). Unless international agreement is reached, the next generation will inherit a world almost bereft of places of ‘undisturbed natural beauty’ (1969: 142). Mishan perceptively advocated the banning of all international air travel! Allowing the market to develop without regulation destroys the very places which are the objects of the tourist gaze.

Beckerman clarified two points here (1974: 50–2). First, concern for the effects of mass tourism is basically a ‘middle-class’ anxiety (like much other environmental concern); and second, most groups affected by mass tourism do in fact benefit from some aspects of it, including pioneer visitors who find services available that would have been unobtainable.

However, key here is Hirsch’s thesis on the social limits to growth and the positional economy (1978). He notes that individual liberation through the exercise of consumer choice does not make those choices liberating for all because of the positional economy. All aspects of goods, services, work, positions and other social relationships are scarce or subject to congestion or crowding. Competition is therefore zero-sum: as any one person consumes more of the good in question, so someone else consumes less or gains less satisfaction. Supply cannot be increased, unlike material goods where economic growth can generate more. People’s consumption of positional goods is relational. The satisfaction derived by each individual is not infinitely expandable but depends upon one’s own consumption compared with that of others. There is ‘coerced competition’ where people do not really have a choice. They have to participate and consume more even though at the end of the consumption process no one is better off; that is: ‘one has to run faster in order to stay still’ (see Schwartz, 2004).

Much tourism demonstrates this positional competition. The Mediterranean coastline is absolutely scarce and one person’s consumption is at the expense of someone else. Also there are many holiday destinations which are consumed not because they are intrinsically superior but because they convey taste or superior status. For Europeans, the Far East would be current examples, although these will change as mass-tourist patterns themselves alter. Further, there are many tourist sites where people’s satisfaction depends upon the degree of congestion. Hirsch quotes a middle-class professional who remarked that the development of cheap charter flights to such a previously ‘exotic’ country means that: ‘Now that I can afford to come here I know that it will be ruined’ (1978: 167).

However, in this book we have shown that it is unclear just what is meant by consumption in much tourism. Is it the ability to gaze at a particular object if necessary in the company of many others? Or is it to be able to gaze without others being present? Or is it to be able to rent accommodation for a short period with a view of the object close at hand? Or is it the ability to own property with a view of the object nearby? The problem arises because of the centrality of the ‘gaze’ within tourism. The scarcities involved in tourism are complex. One strategy of the tourism industry has been to build new developments which permit greatly increased numbers to gaze upon the same object, such as all bedrooms in a hotel having a ‘sea view’ or cruise ships redesigned so all rooms look outwards.

There is a further important distinction here relating to scarcity. We can distinguish between the physical carrying capacity of a tourist place and a place’s visual capacity (Walter, 1982). With physical carrying capacity it is clear when a mountain path literally cannot take any more walkers since it erodes and disappears. Nev-
ertheless, there are thousands of other mountain paths that can be walked along and so the physical scarcity only applies to this path leading to this view, not to all paths along all mountains.

The notion of visual capacity changes this. Walter is concerned here with the subjective quality of the tourist experience (1982: 296). Although the path may still be physically passable, it no longer signifies the pristine wilderness upon which the visitor had expected to gaze. Thus its visual carrying capacity has been reached, but not its physical capacity. Walter cites the example of an Alpine mountain. As a material good the mountain can be viewed for its grandeur, beauty and conformity to the idealised Alpine horn. There is almost no limit to this good. However, the same mountain can be viewed as a positional good, as a shrine to nature that people wish to enjoy in solitude or in a small team without other tourists being present. Such solitary ‘consumption’ demonstrates supposedly good taste (see Bourdieu, 1984). This is a ‘romantic’ tourist gaze in which people expect solitude, privacy and a personal, semi-spiritual relationship with the object of the gaze (see Chapters 2 and 8).

Barthes characterises this in the Guide Bleu as ‘this bourgeois promoting of the mountains, this old Alpine myth … only mountains, gorges, defiles and torrents … seem to encourage morality of effort and solitude’ (1972: 74). Walter discusses a good example of the romantic gaze, namely, Stourhead Park in Wiltshire, which illustrates:

the romantic notion that the self is found not in society but in solitudinous contemplation of nature. Stourhead’s garden is the perfect romantic landscape, with narrow paths winding among the trees and rhododendrons, grottoes, temples, a gothic cottage, all this around a much indented lake. … The garden is designed to be walked around in wonderment at Nature and the presence of other people immediately begins to impair this. (1982: 298)

By contrast, the ‘collective’ tourist gaze is not like this. Walter describes a different Wiltshire house and garden, Longleat where there is:

a large stately home, set in a Capability Brown park; trees were deliberately thinned … so that you can see the park from the house, and house from the park. Indeed the house is the focal point of the park … the brochure lists twenty-eight activities and facilities. … All this activity and the resulting crowds fit sympathetically into the tradition of the stately home: essentially the life of the aristocratic was public rather than private. (1982: 198)

This house was designed as a public place; other people make such a place. The collective gaze thus necessitates large numbers of other people, as were once found in the English seaside resorts discussed in Chapter 2. Other people provide atmosphere, indicating that this is the place to be. We have also noted that this is also the case in major cities, whose uniqueness is their cosmopolitan character. It is the presence of people from all over the world (tourists in other words) that gives capital cities their distinct excitement. Large numbers of other tourists do not only generate congestion, as the positional good argument would suggest (see Chapter 8).

Thus Hirsch’s arguments about positional competition mainly apply to tourism characterised by the romantic gaze as well as the anthropological gaze. Where the mediatised gaze and collective gaze are to be found and performed there is less of a problem of crowding and congestion. And indeed Hirsch’s argument rests on the notion that there are only a limited number of objects which can be viewed by the tourist. Yet in recent years, as described in this book, there has been an enormous increase in the objects of the tourist gaze, far beyond Mishan’s ‘undisturbed natural beauty’. Part of the reason for this increase is that contemporary tourists are often collectors of gazes and appear less interested in repeat visits to the same site.

We have discussed how the contemporary tourist gaze is increasingly signposted, identifying the things and places worthy of one’s gaze. Such signposting identifies a relatively small number of tourist nodes so con-
centrating most tourists within limited areas. Walter says ‘the sacred node provides a positional good that is destroyed by democratisation’ (1982: 302). He favours the view that there are ‘gems to be found everywhere and in everything … there is no limit to what you will find’ (Walter, 1982: 302). We should, he says, get away from the tendency to construct the tourist gaze at a few selected sacred sites, and be more catholic in the objects at which we gaze. This has somewhat occurred in recent years, particularly with the development of industrial, rural and heritage tourism, film-induced tourism and adventure tourism, as examined above. However, Walter’s analysis of the class character of the romantic gaze is persuasive:

professional opinion-formers (brochure writers, teachers, Countryside Commission staff, etc.) are largely middle class and it is within the middle class that the romantic desire for positional goods is largely based. Romantic solitude thus has influential sponsors and gets good advertising. By contrast, the largely working class enjoyment of conviviality, sociability and being part of a crowd is often looked down upon by those concerned to conserve the environment. This is unfortunate, because it … exalts an activity that is available only to the privileged. (Walter, 1982: 303; see also Butcher, 2003)

So there are complex connections between congestion, taste and place. Those who value solitude and a romantic gaze do not see this as merely one way of regarding nature. Rather they attempt to make everyone sacralise nature in the same way (see Wood and House, 1991, on the ‘good tourist’ and, by contrast, Butcher’s critique of the ‘new moral tourism’: 2003). Romanticism involved in the early emergence of mass tourism has become widespread and generalised. The more its adherents proselytise its virtues to others, the more this in effect undermines the romantic gaze: ‘the romantic tourist is digging his [sic] own grave if he seeks to evangelize others to his own religion’ (Walter, 1982: 301). The romantic gaze is an important mechanism thus helping to spread tourism on a global scale, drawing almost every country into its ambit as the romantic seeks ever-new objects of that solitary and lonely gaze. This includes more recently eco-tourism developments, such as eco-lodges located within virgin rainforests or upon islands in the Great Barrier Reef, which demonstrate ‘environmental good taste’. Positional competition is thus a powerful mechanism for spreading tourism worldwide.

In the next section we turn to a different critique of tourism and a different set of risks. Positional competition and the romantic gaze are part of the process by which another risk is being generated, a risk that may turn out to be very powerful in its effects. This is that global tourism is centrally implicated in the using up of a crucial resource, not of ‘natural beauty’, but of the energy used to move, build, heat, cool and entertain all those billions of visitors moving around the world. Those visitors do not pay the full costs of the oil especially, or its carbon consequences, which actually seem to make the world go round (see Elliott and Urry, 2010).

Oil

Today’s global economy and society is deeply dependent upon, and embedded into, abundant cheap oil. Most industrial, agricultural, commercial, domestic and consumer systems are built around the plentiful supply of oil that is remarkably versatile, convenient and was, during the twentieth century, cheap. Without it there would be no global tourism and corporeal tourist gaze. ‘Oil powers virtually all movement of people, materials, foodstuffs, and manufactured goods – inside our countries and around the world’ (Homer-Dixon, 2006: 81). It became vital to virtually everything that moves on the planet (Kunstler, 2006). The world-wide transport sector has a dependency on oil of at least 95 per cent. There has been an annual average growth rate of oil production of more than 2 per cent (Leggett, 2005: 21). ‘Cheap’ oil lubricates most areas of social, industrial, military and commercial life. Oil is, moreover, bound up with dirty politics (Bower, 2009). Central to its development has been the power of its vested interests. Leggett describes the ‘Empire of Oil’ as more powerful than most nation-states (2005: 12, 15; Bower, 2009). We can talk of the ‘carbon military-industrial complex’ that seeks to develop and extend major carbon-based systems, such as the car system; the developing of
distant, specialised leisure and tourism sites visited from afar; and aeromobility with its multiple airspaces. These complex interests directly and indirectly fund climate change scepticism and lobbying against regulation and intervention in energy markets (Urry, 2011). Apart from Norway, most oil states are authoritarian, corrupt and highly unequal. Such states are the indirect source of much terrorism throughout the world and especially in the Middle East.

Oil was central to the twentieth century, but it is now both running out and contributes massively to rising carbon emissions and hence to changing climates. The peak oil hypothesis states that extracting oil reserves has a beginning, a middle and an end. And at some point it reaches a maximum, with the peak occurring when around half the potential oil has been extracted. After this peak, oil becomes more difficult and expensive to extract. Oil production typically follows a bell-shaped curve. This does not mean that oil suddenly runs out, but the supply of oil drops and prices rise, sometimes dramatically in the form of spikes as in the middle years of the 2000s. After peak oil, the extraction process within a particular field becomes very much less profitable. Some suggest that global peak oil occurred as early as the late 1990s. Others estimate that it peaked in 2004 or 2005 (Deffeyes, 2005; Strahan, 2007). More optimistic predictions, such as that of the International Energy Agency, locate peak oil in the 2020s.

The largest oilfields were discovered over half a century ago, with the peak of oil discovery being 1965. There have been no really vast discoveries since the 1970s. Three to four barrels of oil are now consumed for every new one that is discovered. The peaking of oil in the USA, which is where the global addiction to oil-based car and air transport first developed, occurred in 1970. So over the long term oil will be increasingly expensive and there will be frequent shortages because of falls in its per capita availability. There is not enough oil to fuel worldwide systems of global travel and consumption that need, with ‘business as usual’, to double by 2050 (Homer-Dixon, 2006: 174). Thus ‘industrial civilization is based on the consumption of energy resources that are inherently limited in quantity, and that are about to become scarce … in the end, it may be impossible for even a single nation to sustain industrialism as we have known it during the twentieth century’ (Heinberg, 2005: 1).

Thus the ‘petroleum interval’ in human history could turn out to be only a brief (twentieth) century or so of Easy Oil. Oil supplies are concentrated among few countries and this increases the likelihood of uneven and problematic supplies. And oil interests, both corporations and states, consistently exaggerate the size of their reserves, upon whose estimates official global figures depend. And there is the fastest-growing economy in the world. From 1999 to 2004 China’s oil imports doubled. Peak-oil researcher Kunstler estimates that at the current rate of growth in demand China will consume 100 per cent of the currently available world exports of oil within ten years. And this assumes no growth in demand elsewhere in the world and no fall off in global production (Kunstler, 2006: 84).

Not having sufficient oil to sustain rising levels of global economic growth, travel and consumption will generate significant economic downturns, resource wars and lower population levels. The probable peaking of oil has already had major economic and social consequences that could be a harbinger of the future. The worldwide economic and financial crash of 2008 was partly activated by the speculative building and risky funding of extensive tracts of ‘marginal’ suburbs and related shopping and leisure developments within the USA. The oil-surplus period of the late 1980s and early 1990s led to oil trading at only $10 per barrel (in 1998). But by mid-2008, the price per barrel of oil rose to over $135. This led many of those suburbs and related leisure facilities to be no longer viable since residents could not continue to live there; and this flight from the suburbs had the direst of knock-on effects upon the financial system worldwide.

As oil prices peaked banks collapsed and had to be bailed out. Various consequences for travel were that airlines began to file for bankruptcy, car manufacturers recorded reduced sales, especially of larger models (13 per cent decline in 2009), the USA was no longer the world’s largest car market as iconic firms filed for bankruptcy, slower driving speeds were recorded around the world, Detroit looked increasingly like a bombed-out city, many speculative leisure and tourism developments folded, and international travel and tourism plum-
meted (see Dennis and Urry, 2009; Urry, 2011).

The main exception to this is China as both destination and as source of both domestic and especially international tourist. Here, in 2006, an editorial in the China Daily exhorted the Chinese to ‘unleash consumption’ and this not only generated the world's largest car market, but also hugely increased the number of Chinese visitors worldwide. China has in 30 years come to be central to global tourism, although during the Maoist period up to the mid-1970s mobility was seen as a bourgeois vice. Many destinations across the globe report that they are redesigning themselves to cater for Chinese visitors, the numbers having increased fivefold since the beginning of the new century. Such developments can be seen in Bali where the carvings on statues are now of Buddhist rather than Hindu gods, in France where Chinese tourists are the largest category of visitors, in the USA where Marriott hotels are introducing Chinese breakfasts, and especially in Hong Kong and Macao where post-socialist Chinese tourists are learning to develop consuming bodies within hotels, casinos, shopping centres, arcades and so on (see Simpson, 2009; Anderlini, 2010; Nyíri, 2010, on the new cultures of Chinese mobility).

So tourism uses much oil, this oil props up unequal and corrupt regimes, such regimes generate terrorism, and so the tourists are at risk of being bombed in those tourist sites that are intermittently visited by terrorists. Oil makes the world go round, but this is a world of both tourism and terrorism. And that lubrication of the world through oil may well be slowing down. Travel is likely to become increasingly expensive, which makes the long-term growth in international tourism less likely.

Climate Change

On top of the peaking of oil there are the likely future consequences of climate change. Twentieth-century capitalism seems to have resulted in global temperatures rising by at least 0.8°C. This appears to result from higher levels of greenhouse gases in the earth’s atmosphere (IPCC, 2007; Stern, 2007). Greenhouse gases trap the sun’s rays. As a result of this ‘greenhouse’ effect the earth warms. Moreover, such greenhouse gas levels and world temperatures will significantly further increase over the next few decades. With ‘business as usual’ and no significant reductions in high carbon systems, especially of travel, the stock of greenhouse gases could treble by the end of the century. The Stern Review states that average temperatures may rise within a few decades from between 3°C and a staggering 10°C (rather than the 6°C most analysts suggest). There could be a 5–20 per cent reduction in world consumption levels (Stern, 2007: 3). Even a temperature worldwide increase of 3°C overall is beyond human experience and would change temperature patterns, rainfall, crops, animals and life worldwide.

The scientific evidence for climate change is less uncertain than when the first Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report appeared in 1990. By the 2007 Report the IPCC declared that the warming of the world’s climate is now ‘unequivocal’, based upon extensive observations of increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice and rising global average sea levels. The Report further shows that carbon dioxide is the most important of the human-produced or anthropogenic greenhouse gases. Its concentration levels exceed by far the natural range identified over the past 650,000 years. Carbon dioxide’s high and rising levels thus stem from ‘non-natural’ causes. There are many elements of global warming: an increase in arctic temperatures, the reduced size of icebergs, the melting of icecaps and glaciers, a reduced permafrost, changes in rainfall, reduced bio-diversity, new wind patterns, droughts, heat waves, tropical cyclones and other extreme weather events (Lovelock, 2006; Pearce, 2006; Lynas, 2007; Monbiot, 2007).

Through the IPCC, the organised actions of thousands of scientists around the globe have transformed public debate and this is even reflected in various movies, including The Day after Tomorrow (2004), An Inconvenient Truth (2006) and The Age of Stupid (2009). The Pentagon announced that climate change will result in
a global catastrophe, costing millions of lives in wars and natural disasters and is a much greater threat to
global stability than terrorism.

However, there is still significant uncertainty as to the scale, impact and speed of future climate change over
the next century. The Global Climate Models used to predict rates of greenhouse gases and temperature in-
creases contain many ‘unknowns’. The IPCC Reports are based on reaching a complex scientific and political
consensus and thus do not factor in all the potential and uncertain feedback effects. These feedback effects
in turn depend upon whether people will fly, drive cars, travel in high-speed trains, go to mega-events such
as World Cups, heat/air condition their homes/hotels, desalinate their water or develop space tourism (see
recent carbon footprint calculations of all these in Berners Lee, 2010). If they do, temperatures will increase;
and as temperatures increase over the next few decades, these will probably trigger further temperature rises
as the earth’s environmental systems cannot absorb the original increases. The most dramatic of these pos-
tive feedbacks would involve the whole or partial melting of Greenland’s ice cap. Climate change thus pro-
duces further climate change. Recent ice core research shows that in previous glacial and inter-glacial peri-
dods abrupt and rapid changes occurred in the earth’s temperature. Earth does not engage in gradual change
(Pearce, 2007). Rapid changes have been the norm not the exception. Moreover, temperatures at the time
of the last Ice Age were only 5°C colder than they are now. And in the Arctic recent increases in temperature
have been really marked, with feedbacks creating local warming of 3–5°C over the past thirty years.

Thus various diverse yet interconnected changes within the earth’s environmental systems could create a vi-
cious circle of accumulative disruption. The World Health Organization calculated as early as 2000 that over
150,000 deaths are caused each year by climate change. The planet will endure, but many forms of human
habitation, especially those that involve being regularly and extensively ‘on the move’, may not. And the first
places to disappear may be those tourist resorts built on or by the beach, including the Maldives where plans
to relocate their population from the islands are already advanced (Amelung, Nicholls and Viner, 2007; Beck-
en and Hay, 2007).

In the next section we briefly consider what the world and tourism may be like in 2050, given the interdepen-
dence between declining availability of oil (and gas), changing climates and continued huge growth in popu-
lation. Will there still be a powerful tourist gaze by the middle of this century (see Smart, 2010; Urry, 2011: ch.
9)? We consider three scenarios for 2050.

Futures

The first possibility for 2050 is a future of hypermobility and hypertourist consumption. Resource shortages
and the effects of climate change actually turn out to be less significant, at least for those in the rich North
whose patterns of movement and consuming food, objects, places and services gets even more extensive,
frequent and utterly part of their ‘persona’.

This is a ‘hyper’ world, people are ‘always on’, with messages and individual media continuously streamed
to miniature intelligent devices, especially when ‘on the move’, which people would be much of the day and
night. Average citizens are travelling four to five hours a day, so overcoming the notion of a constant and
limited travel time. New kinds of fuel and vehicles overcome limits of space and time. Personalised air trav-
el would be common through the use of third-generation biofuels or hydrogen. Cars would be unfashionably
stuck on the ground as a Corbusier-inspired future beckons everyone to the skies, including regular flights
into space with Virgin Galactic. Regular trips into at least inner space would be common. The final frontier
would indeed be overcome as space tourism is privatised and the long decline of the idea of space travel
comes to be reversed (Dickens and Ormrod, 2007: ch. 5).

In this scenario most people study elsewhere, they migrate frequently, they regularly meet and re-meet with
family, they often see long lost friends, they go shopping on the other side of the world, and some go on hol-
idays to the moon. Because people seek to do these things with other people who are geographically distant and are themselves constantly moving, so they travel and communicate very frequently and over very long distances. There is an enormous burden of fast travel and constant communications in order to keep up with colleagues, friends and family. Underlying this scenario is the way that social status is derived from high levels of extraordinary consumerism and especially from long-distance machine-based movement and the discovery of new tourist sites. It is presumed here that fast travel and the tourist gaze remain powerful ‘positional goods’. Consumption here is conspicuous so that the fast car, access to a private plane or ownership of a holiday apartment are meant to be seen, commented upon and generative of status. Travelling long distances and having far-flung connections with those in other societies are the major bases of status, except of course for those who are forced to be migrants or exiles.

Electronic communications do not substitute for physical travel but enhance it and provide further ways in which consumption is made conspicuous and enhancing of status. In this highly connected world, social life and work are intense, and the boundaries between them blurred. Even low-paid service workers are so used to being ‘always available’ and holidays are no longer a break. This is a ‘Star Trek’ vision of the future with many on ‘holiday’ much of the time.

The second scenario is what many environmentalists argue for, namely a worldwide reconfiguration of economy and society around the idea of ‘local sustainability’. This Schumacher model would involve a network of self-reliant (and probably also semi-isolated) communities in which most people would live, work and mostly recreate. This involves a dramatic global shift towards lifestyles more local and smaller in scale. Friends would have to be chosen from neighbouring streets, families would not move away at times of new household composition, work would be found nearby, walking, cycling and public transport replace cars and planes, education would be sought only in local schools and colleges, the seasons would determine which and when foodstuffs were produced and consumed, most goods and services would be simpler and produced nearby, and almost all travel would be localised with very little ‘tourism’ as such.

It would be unfashionable to live and bring up children in anything apart from such ‘compact cities’ or undertake travel to faraway places, especially for tourist pleasure. Status attributions would be re-localised and long-distance mobility would be a positional bad, not a good. This scenario depends upon new kinds of ‘friendship’, on choosing to know mostly those who live close by and can be walked or cycled to. People would be unperturbed by a lack of long-distance travel and connection. Long-distance travel and forms of mass tourism based on ‘choice’ and ‘convenience’, cars and planes, would be uncommon and a source of low status.

Kunstler predicts that the twenty-first century will be much more about staying put than about going to other places (2006). In an extreme post-peak oil scenario, cars would be a luxury, creating resentment among those unable to drive. This could lead to vehicles being vandalised or drivers subject to abuse. Kunstler maintains that the future will involve comprehensive downscaling, downsizing, re-localising and the radical reorganisation of lifestyles. He states that:

Anyway one might imagine it, the transportation picture in the mid-twenty-first century will be very different from the fiesta of mobility we have enjoyed for the past fifty years. It will be characterized by austerity and a return to smaller scales of operation in virtually every respect of travel, tourism and transport. It will compel us to make the most of our immediate environments. (Kunstler 2006: 270)

Many forms of life are locally centred and concentrated. Because much movement is local, so feet, the bicycle and new low-carbon forms of transport are found alongside some motorised forms.

This scenario could develop in response to dramatically decreased availability of cheap energy and increased global contestation. Intense economic crisis could generate a global push towards local sustainability and a local sense of place with a marked de-globalisation of the tourist gaze except through virtual travel on the internet. Values of community and eco-responsibility could come to be viewed as more valued than those of
consumerism and unrestrained tourism mobility. As a result, many international tourism systems, of places and transport, would fade away.

In the third scenario, climate change, oil, gas and water shortages and intermittent wars would lead to the substantial breakdown of many of the mobility, energy and communication connections that now straddle the world and are the ambivalent legacy of the twentieth century. In this decivilising future there would be a plummeting standard of living, a re-localisation of mobility patterns, an increasing emphasis upon local ‘warlords’, relatively weak national or global forms of governance and little tourist travel because of risks and environmental and cultural bads. There would be no monopoly of physical coercion in the hands of legitimate national states. Tribal and other wars within countries would be increasingly common, making travel and tourism hazardous.

It is likely that many infrastructural systems would begin to collapse and there would be increasing separation of production and consumption between different regions. These ‘warlords’ would control recycled forms of mobility and weaponry, with increasingly localised recycling of bikes, cars, trucks and phone systems. Much of the time they would not be working. Cars and trucks would rust away in the deserts or would be washed away in floods. Certain consequences of climate change may partially rectify themselves as oil and other resource use declines and overall world population would plummet (see recent post-oil ‘warlord’ dystopias Sarah Hall's *The Carhullan Army*, 2007, and Marcel Theroux's *Far North*, 2009).

Systems of secure long-range mobility and tourism would disappear except for the super-rich who will congregate in ‘policed’ enclaves or camps. As in the medieval epoch, long-distance travel would be risky and probably not undertaken unless armed. Mass tourism would disappear. The rich would travel mainly in the air in armed helicopters or light aircraft. Each warlord-dominated region would potentially be at war with their neighbours, especially for control of water, oil and gas. With extensive flooding, especially of the seaside places of twentieth-century excess, extreme weather events and the break-up of long-distance oil and gas pipelines, these resources would be fought over and defended by armed gangs. Some cars and trucks will remain but they would mainly be rusting versions from previous decades. Enormous efforts and skills need to be deployed to keep these wrecks moving and to stop them being commandeered. The use and re-use of cars in current developing societies indicates the kind of improvisational, tinkering car culture that would probably develop.

The movie *Mad Max 2* depicts this future of a bleak, dystopian, impoverished society facing a breakdown of civil order resulting from oil shortages and where power rests with those able to improvise new mobilities, including short-term flight. Under this scenario, life, as already prefigured in parts of the poor South of the world, would be less mobile, and nasty, brutish and ‘shorter’.

None of these scenarios is simply desirable and without cost for the tourism industry and especially for the wider society. The perpetual-motion future is rendered doubtful because of the lack of future energy source and the many dire consequences of carbon emissions. The second future could only support a much smaller population worldwide, while the third would involve many lives that would be nasty, brutish and short. In order to overcome deficiencies of each of these scenarios there are various strategies that should be developed (see Smart, 2010, for related arguments).

First, we need somehow to dispense with the ‘exotic gaze’ which drives so much contemporary tourism and instead favour discourses, schemes and funding which develop what we might term a ‘local gaze’, to keep people in places rather than roaming across the globe. And when people do travel longer distances, this need to be undertaken collectively and where possible by sustainable higher-speed trains. Relatedly, we need to reduce the scale of signposting so that people instead search out and find ‘treasures’ that are within their ‘backyard’, not imagining that the exotic and distant is necessarily better. Somehow the effects of the internet need to be focused upon revealing the pleasures of the nearby and yet also developing software and experiences that can substitute corporeal travel with virtual travel. Overall, localised patterns of visiting and
meetings should be rediscovered and this would be facilitated by a more general rejection of the idea of the tourist gaze, or what Heidegger refers to as an object ‘ready to hand for the viewer’ (Smith, 2009: 627). Also what needs development are forms of virtual meetingness that effectively substitute all or at least most of the emotional pleasures of being present with others face-to-face, body-to-body, or being in some other place or event. The internet and Web 2.0 need to strengthen localness and no longer global choice and corporeal travel. Further, the power of carbon interests needs to be radically offset through taxing and regulation while ‘public’ transport and new sustainable forms of ‘personal’ transport needs much funding and subsidising. This is probably the most challenging of requirements in a world of enduring neo-liberal capitalism. And paralleling this would be, for planning and architectural guidelines, to favour place distinctiveness and low-carbon, bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly cities rather than placelessness, de-localised postmodern theming (discussed in Chapter 6) and ‘automobility dominated cities’ within contemporary design and planning (Dennis and Urry, 2009, develops this kind of innovation in detail).

But it could just be that the perpetual-motion future is already on a slippery slope to something else. In the twentieth century one place in particular symbolised such a place of motion and excessive consumption and its rise and it potential fall may index something important about the future of tourist places and the tourist gaze worldwide (although it may just be like the normal rise and fall of tourists resorts, as discussed in Chapter 2).

Dubai

In the epoch since the 1980s, what some call neo-liberalism, many new design- and-themed places of tourism and consumption excess developed, some of which were examined in Chapter 6. Davis and Monk (2007) provocatively refer to these places as ‘evil paradises’, examples including Arg-e Jadid, a Californian oasis in the Iranian desert; the $40 billion 2008 Olympics in Beijing; Palm Springs gated community in Hong Kong; Sandton in Johannesburg; Dubai; Las Vegas; and Macao. The last of these involves a $25 billion investment oriented to providing leisured gambling for the 1.3 billion Chinese (Simpson, 2010).

These are places of high carbon ‘consumption’. Their speculative development is often only made possible by large infrastructural projects involving celebrity architects. The associated new transport systems are typically paid for by public money. Building such places involves the profligate consumption of water, oil, power and building materials in order to build on reclaimed land (Macao, Dubai) or in the desert (Las Vegas, Gran Scala, Abu Dhabi). Such sites are highly commercialised with many simulated environments, more ‘real’ than the original from which they are copied. Gates, often digitised, prevent the entry and exit of local people and those visitors who do not have signs of good credit. Norms of behaviour are unregulated by family/neighbourhood with bodies being subject to many forms commodifying experience. Such themed places are beyond control by the neighbourhood with unregulated modes of consumption and only pleasure and not guilt unless insufficient consumption occurs. Indeed, these places are sites of potential mass addiction of especially gambling, alcohol, over-eating and related forms of criminality. Such zones come to be globally known for their consumption excess and for the huge flows of visitors and often workers.

In the last years of the last century and in the early years of this century Dubai has been the leading exemplar of such excess. Drilling for oil began there in 1966 but relatively soon the oil began to run out and a gigantic tourist, leisure, sporting, real-estate and consumption economy replaced it. Instead of being an oil producer, over 90 per cent of Dubai's revenue is now non-oil related (Davidson, 2008: 1). It is a huge consumer of oil. This is used to build islands, hotels and attractions in what has been the world's largest building site, to transport in and out very large numbers of visitors and workers, and to provide spectacular cooled environments for visitors where average temperatures are over 40°C. Dubai thus consumes energy, including for the air conditioners blowing full blast into the open air to make gardens cooler and for the indoor ski resort where sub-zero temperatures are maintained in the middle of a desert, even in summer. Not surprisingly, Dubai ranks just
second in the global league table of per capita carbon emissions, beaten only by its neighbour, Qatar (see Schmid, 2009, for much detail here).

The Dubai skyline reveals dozens of megaprojects on the go. These include two palm-island developments extending the coastline by 120 kilometres; a string of new islands shaped like the world; vast shopping complexes; a domed ski resort and other major sports venues; the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa; the world's largest hotel, the Asia-Asia with 6,500 rooms; and the world's first 7-star hotel, the Burj Al Arab with 100-mile views (Davis and Monk, 2007; Davidson, 2008; Schmid, 2009). This is a place of monumental excess needing massive amounts of oil. It had been Dubai's ambition to be the number one luxury-consumer paradise, especially for Middle Eastern and South Asian visitors. As such, 'it must ceaselessly strive for visual and environmental excess' (Davis, 2007: 52). Dubai has achieved this through architectural gigantism and perfectibility, with many massive simulacra for play, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Taj Mahal, the Pyramids, and a snow mountain, simulacra more perfect than any original. This is a place of over-consumption, of shopping, eating, drinking, prostitution and gambling. Guilt in what is nominally an Islamic country is not to consume to the 'limit'. And as befits a paradise of consumption, its official national holiday is the celebrated Shopping Festival, a month-long extravaganza. It is the iconic place of consumption excess for visitors and also rich locals. This was a place where nature could not be allowed stand in the way. If there were no beaches, beaches were made, crafting them so that the Gods could see the shape of a palm tree or a map of the world. So much money, so fast, it was impossible to keep up with Dubai and its overcoming the limits of nature in the most inhospitable of environments.

But the peaking of oil and the effects of climate change, with rising sea levels and turbulent weather, may mean that this Arabian Las Vegas will slide back into the sand from where it had come. This is like many other beach locations and resorts which also depend upon massive energy use but which could be washed away by rising sea levels and floods (Amelung, Nicholls and Viner, 2007). This was close to occurring in the highly successful if unequal tourist city of New Orleans in September 2005, a place also built by the sea and partially below sea level and threatened by extreme weather events. Hurricane Katrina showed what happens to those living in a major rich city when an extreme event washes away many resources of those forced to live near the sea. TV pictures showed how whole populations are ‘disposable’, with bloated corpses of the black poor displayed on the billion or so TV screens around the world. Katrina also showed the vulnerability of oil supply to localised flooding. The world's refineries were already working to maximum capacity and so were unable to raise production when the Mississippi refineries shut down and so shortages were common and oil prices soared. This in turn contributed to oil-price spikes in the mid-2000s that brought down many subprime mortgages and related financial instruments during 2008; and this meant that many real-estate tourist developments around the world stalled towards the end of the decade. It is typical of the tourist industry, however, that some of the locations of financial collapse are new sights of the tourist gaze, with one firm running a ‘Scandals and Scoundrels Tour’ around Wall St (Clark, 2010).

In that financial collapse the hubris that is Dubai would seem to be leading the way. Its astonishing growth has gone into reverse. Dubai did not actually make anything. Its money for all that building had been borrowed. The luxury was built on the backs of foreign workers, toiling away in forms of modern bondage hidden away from the tourist gaze. Over a million men and women from across Asia turned Dubai from a sleepy village into a shimmering Arabian Las Vegas. Expats now are fleeing and leaving their cars bought on credit at the airport, thousands of construction workers have been laid off, there is a predicted 60 per cent fall in property values, half the construction projects are on hold or cancelled, the population is shrinking and Dubai needed to be bailed out by a $10 billion loan from Abu Dhabi (http://www.cnn.com/2009/BUSINESS/12/14/dubai.10.billion.bailout/index.html; accessed 05.03.10). Journalist Paul Lewis pronounced: ‘Too high, too fast: the party's over for Dubai’ (2009; Schmid, 2009).

Is this history of the rise and fall of Dubai a forerunner of the history of the global present as in the next few decades the spreading of the tourist gaze comes to a shuddering halt or even a reversal beginning in an Arabian desert? Was the tourist gaze on a mass scale a feature of the twentieth-century hubris that will gradually
disappear once the oil begins to run down and sea levels rise further? The decline and fall of Dubai may thus be the start of a much more general decline in the significance of the tourist gaze. Will there still be a relatively widespread and common ‘tourist gaze’ operating away in 2050?

- tourism
- tourist gaze
- oil
- positional goods
- climate change
- travel
- mass tourism

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