

Perspectives
in tourism

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Encounters
between
the wretched
of the earth
and
the tourist

Freya Higgins -
Desbiolles

“The Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism is a Hong Kong based coalition of Regional Ecumenical Organisations and over seventy secular and faith-based groups. It seeks to unite people around collective efforts that negate the undesirable effects of modern tourism and, in its place, institute socially responsible and ethically oriented tourism. It believes that tourism must be based on justice and sustainability for host communities and that, therefore, tourism planning and practice must be democratised. ECOT advocates respect for the protection and dignity of the human rights of women, children, indigenous peoples and workers in the tourist trade. It opposes tourism projects that create environmental devastation.”

ECOT has eleven principal aims:

1. Focus on tourism and the effect it has on the lives of the people of the Third World and their natural environs.
2. Provide opportunities for the local people displaced and otherwise affected by tourism to express their views and concerns.
3. Work for gender justice and child protection in tourism.
4. Protect the rights of workers in the formal and informal sectors of the industry.
5. Denounce unfair practices in tourism and encourage action to change them.
6. Promote a good quality of tourist activity that is appropriate to the quest for a just, participatory, and sustainable society.
7. Empower indigenous peoples and support them in their attempts to get a fair price for their exposure to tourism.
8. Lobby against the violation of human rights related to tourism development projects at national and international level.
9. Provide research and information on the impact of tourism.
10. Engage in analytical study on the implications of globalization on the tourist trade and offer alternative paradigms for justice.
11. Advocate for just practices in tourist trade and to ensure that international trade mechanisms are in line with values of justice for the host communities.

Cover Picture: Roselle Solomon

Hostile Meeting Grounds

Encounters between the Wretched of the Earth and
the Tourist through Tourism and Terrorism in the 21st
Century

by

Freya Higgins-Desbiolles

Preface

No matter the conflict, at its roots, there is the palpable and conspicuous absence of justice. Afflicted and distressed groups often tend to turn to violence as their last resort. The state, on the other hand, argues that conflict is primarily a question of law and order. Disputes, they claim, need peaceful circumstances in which to be resolved. Not so the afflicted. In most cases they know they have tried, and failed, to win their demands through peaceful, democratic processes during which they have generally been brutalized and oppressed. They often end up turning to armed struggles and unorthodox means to win their demands. There follows a cycle of repression from the state and resistance from the aggrieved. Indeed, the term 'resistance' is what people fighting against state oppression claim they are into- not terrorism. Armed resistance, they claim, is their defence against state violence.

The slogan '*War is terror*' springs from an understanding that when justice is the bone of contention between opposing factions of a claim, then the solution is keep up a dialogue until justice is realized. For as long as the powerful keep their rein on power through state machineries, be they the police or army, private armies, security apparatus' or even para-military units, there will be resistance and some of it will assume violent forms.

The proponents of globalization would argue that the free flow of capital and resources is vital to make possible development and to multiply wealth. In the end, they argue, the wealth will trickle down to the very bottom. One part of this claim is true and proved right. Wealth has multiplied many times over- but only for the rich. Even the most sedate of sources tell us that in the last three decades or so, poverty has proliferated to levels hitherto unthinkable. Colossal wealth and mammoth poverty are the dominant realities of our world. Governments are rapidly losing control to the forced mechanisms of globalization- privatization of public and essential resources accompanied by the forced liberalization of economies to a point where countries are losing grip over their economies- indeed their very sovereignty.

The powerful want it all- oil, seaways, control of airspace, and oil (the major culprit), the forests, timber, land, roadways- it is an endless list. To get at this, they will stop at nothing. Not just that, they will guarantee that any attempts to block their moves are effectively blocked with all sorts of mechanisms, rules, and regulations. They, thus, legitimize their stranglehold on dominance. The self-imposed numbness of the weak and powerless is a sacrifice needed for eventual progress. Protest in any form is unacceptable because it supposedly diverts attention from the pathway to progress. Things must be peaceful, silent- as silent as the graveyard!

Having set up this dream world, they then proceed to claim their rights- rest, recreation, leisure, and travel to exotic destinations. This must be reasonably priced, hassle free, with

a good dose of psychological opium thrown in. They will sidestep the ‘wretched host’ and will encounter them only to buy up cheap bargains, trinkets, and the rest. In the post 9/11 era, they travel with more precaution, manage their choices with vigilance but with prejudice too. Today the poorest of tourism destinations are compelled to put in place tight security restrictions- even if they prove to be unaffordable just so the tourist can feel secure. No one seems to ask why there is terrorism, and if a war against terror will solve any problems at all. Justice and justice alone will bring peace. You cannot have a world where an infinitesimal minority own and control the bulk of the world’s resources. For as long as the world is asymmetrical, there will be no peace.

In this excellent analysis of the challenges of tourism in the 21st century, Freya Higgins-Desbiolles speaks to the issues outlined above with great conceptual clarity and political integrity. This publication in our perspective series *Hostile Meeting Grounds: Encounters between the Wretched of the Earth and the Tourist through Tourism and Terrorism in the 21st Century*’ is offered by the Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism to our readers as ‘must-read’ for all tourism activists. But not just them. For, the issues she raises have import for all those who seek a world of justice, where people can encounter each other freely and with the same level of opportunity and access.

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September 2005

Hostile Meeting Grounds: Encounters between the Wretched of the Earth and the Tourist through Tourism and Terrorism in the 21st Century

It is now a cliché to note that travel and tourism have been severely impacted by the affects of the 11th September 2001 and the subsequent “War on Terror”. This polemical essay will expose some unpalatable truths about the contemporary state of world affairs when first world tourists are able to claim a right to tour through the rhetoric of the *Global Code of Ethics for Tourism* backed up by the might of their nation-states and others cannot even manage to ensure their own survival from one day to the next. Using Franz Fanon’s discussion of the “wretched of the earth” (1967), this essay will look at how the tourists and the “wretched” now meet with frequency of the playgrounds of tourism and the battlegrounds of terrorism. This essay will ask a series of questions to interrogate the accepted status quo which thus far has remained unchallenged. Such questions might include:

- Why have the initiatives supporting for the right to economic development been sidelined to the detriment of the majority of the world’s population (such as the New International Economic Order and the International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights)?
- Why would a Balinese academic claim that “the cleansing of the foreign evil was a good thing” in the aftermath of the Bali bombing on 12th October 2002?
- How can a tourism industry which has embraced sustainability continue to promote its growth and expansion relying upon transportation modes which are exacerbating global warming?

The “newest new world order” has attempted to emplace an “us” versus “them” attitude on the world’s community as the American government strategises its “War on Terror”. The resulting dichotomy is you are either a “tourist” or a “terrorist”, depending on whether you buy into the consumer role assigned to you in our marketised society or not. Yet there are other choices available if tourism and other societal forces are directed at serving the “common” or “public” good rather than being enslaved to the directives of the “market” (i.e. providing profits to a few). Ryan has examined the capacity of the precepts of “social tourism” to direct tourism towards both equity and sustainability (2001). Tourism is more than a simple industry; it is a social force, whose true capacities are currently being squandered by its bondage to the current market paradigm.

Introduction

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly" Martin Luther King, 1963

It is now a cliché to note that tourism has been severely impacted by the events of 11th September 2001 and its aftermath. It was on that day that American and United Airlines aircraft were used to attack the World Trade Center's Twin Towers in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Subsequently, one of the most pervasive questions asked is what meaning to attribute to these cataclysmic moments. While some have claimed it represents Huntington's prophesised "clash of civilisations", others maintained it was the act of madmen. This article asks if the space occupied by the tourists and the terrorists on these four aircraft represent new "meeting grounds", coining MacCannell's term (1992), which forewarn us the transformation of patterns of contact across the perilous divides and shaky bridges of globalisation and tourism. Using Fanon's characterisation of the "wretched of the earth" (1967), are the "empty meeting grounds" giving way to "hostile meeting grounds"? Are the marginalised and the poor realising the hollowness of the promises of development that emanate from both tourism and globalisation as they jostle with the privileged on the playgrounds of tourism and the battlegrounds of terrorism? These questions will be explored by examining a series of moments in recent history which are illustrative of these encounters and the dilemmas they illuminate. These include the maintenance of the right to travel but the abandonment of the right to development, the Bali bombing of 2002 which consolidated the war of terrorism as a war on tourism, the deaths during deportation of rejected asylum seekers and the oxymoron that is sustainable tourism in the current era predicated on endless growth. The conclusion drawn from this survey is that a battle is being waged to secure the "new world order" which pits supporters of the status quo against the myriad of opponents that it inspires due to its inequities and environmental damages. This results in an "us" versus "them" dichotomy which in effect separates the "tourists" from the "terrorists" according to whether you "buy into" the consumer role assigned to you in our marketised societies. However, tourism can be a force for change in the world if it is viewed as more than just an "industry" and its leadership rises to the challenges with which contemporary events present us.

The Meaning of September 11th

In terms of the loss of human life, the attacks of 11 September 2001 were shocking but not unprecedented in an age where high-technology weaponry can render large scale death and destruction (often at a distance).¹ Yet any discussion of

¹ In fact, an interesting comparison can be made to Saddam Hussein's gas attack on the Kurds of Halabja which resulted in some 4000 dead within two days in March, 1988. The US saw Saddam's Iraq as a bulwark against revolutionary Iran and it had been supporting him in the bloody eight year war with Iran (1980-8). The US and its allies failed to denounce or do anything about this terrorist

proportionality such as this statement implies was and is almost unspeakable. What was so shocking about these events recorded in acute detail and televised globally and then etched into our consciousnesses? Was it perhaps the weapons used, the sites attacked and the nation targeted? Terrorism has long been familiar but we had never even dreamed that the tools of our business and leisure, civilian airplanes, could be wielded as weapons against us so devastatingly. The World Trade Centre and the Pentagon are potent images of American power, one representing economic might that underpins the global trading system and the other representing military might which protects it. Lastly, there is the shocking fact that large-scale and swift suffering was brought to American soil which had remained largely free of fear in its own home. In the shock of the aftermath, as people strived to understand, numerous authorities claimed that these were the acts of madmen or the acts of criminals. Only later did a more coherent pronouncement evolve from the American President: "... an act of war was declared on the United States of America...these people can't stand freedom; they hate our values; they hate what America stands for".² New York City Mayor Rudolf Giuliani actually chastised those who called for a deeper examination of the roots of the violence.³ At a presentation to the UN's General Assembly he said:

Those who say we must understand the reasons for terrorism, come with me to the thousands of funerals we're having in New York City, thousands, and explain those insane maniacal reasons to the children who grow up without fathers and mothers and to the parents who have their children ripped from them

attack at the time in pursuit of its own national interests. It was only after the US committed itself to ousting Saddam's regime some fifteen years later that this incident has been used to denounce him as a terrorist and justify an invasion of Iraq in March, 2003. Admittedly, this example involves a domestic case of state-sponsored terrorism (if you do not accept the assertion of Kurdish nationhood). Alternatively, one can point to the US attack on Panama instigated to remove General Manuel Noriega for his role in drugs trafficking. An aerial bombardment of Panama City hit the shanty towns leading to the loss of 20,000 homes and perhaps thousands of people - we do not know because they were not important enough to quantify let alone name unlike the innocents of "9/11". Interestingly the innocent civilians killed in the invasion of Iraq have also not been important enough to count or name as the US military leadership said "we do not do body counts" (of Iraqis that is) and have left it to concerned civilians to try to account for the civilian toll (see <http://www.iraqbodycount.net/> which places civilian deaths above 10,000). Walden Bello has made the same point but with reference to mass killings conducted in World War II (Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Dresden, Hamburg and Tokyo), the Korean War and the Vietnam War, making the point that the US cannot claim the "...high ground in the current moral equation" (Bello, no date).

² President Bush, 13/09/01 at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010913-4.html>.

³ A diverse range of voices were calling for reflection. Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General, called for dedicated work towards development. Noam Chomsky said "The people in the advanced countries now face a choice: we can express justified horror, or we can seek to understand what may have led to these crimes. If we refuse to do the latter, we will be contributing to the likelihood that much worse lies ahead" (Mitchell & Schoeffel, 2002, p. xiii). Jean Baudrillard claimed that ultimately it is about globalisation "At a pinch, we can say that they [the terrorists] *did it*, but we *wished for it*, Terrorism is immoral. The World Trade Centre event, that symbolic challenge is immoral, and it is a response to a globalisation which is itself immoral" (2002, pp.5 and 12).

for no reason at all. Instead, I ask each of you to allow me to say at those funerals that your nation stands with America in making a solemn promise and pledge that we will achieve unconditional victory over terrorism and terrorists (van Wagendonk, 2001).⁴

This is perhaps a less crude way of saying what President Bush stated as “you are either with us or against us in the fight against terror”.⁵ This sentiment has been inflated to the category of the “Bush Doctrine”. The “Bush Doctrine” is very simple: “Every nation in every region now has a decision to make. Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists.”⁶ The message is unmistakably clear; there is no neutrality in this era. The world that was being constructed in the wake of the collapse of communism built on “consensual” commitment to free markets and globalised economies is looking perilously in danger, effectively symbolised by the replacement of the buzzword of “globalisation” with the buzzword of “terrorism”, as bombings and attacks occur along invisible faultlines, including Bali 2002, Madrid 2003, London and Egypt 2005. Tourism is not immune to these pressures and the luxury it has been afforded previously of sheltering behind the “neutrality” of “business” will no longer remain an option.

The hope of a multilateral system built upon the rule of international law is giving way to the dictates of a *pax Americana*.⁷ The United States made a positional declaration when it stated at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio that “the American way of life is not negotiable”, and it has followed through by opposing key environmental protocols such as Kyoto, undermining the development of international law with its opposition to being subject to the International Criminal Court and its re-dedication to militarisation by opposing the ABM treaty so that it can pursue its “Son of Star Wars” project, among others. “9/11” merely exacerbated trends already well underway as

⁴ This is a strong exhortation to not think, just feel the emotions well up and give vent to the guttural chant “USA! USA!”, the one that greeted President Bush’s speech at “groundzero”. And as is apropos of our consumer culture, rather than invite solemn reflection on these momentous events, both President Bush and Mayor Giuliani were inviting Americans, only a few days after the event, to go out and spend their way to this “unconditional victory” by patronising the Broadway shows, restaurants, bars and hotels who were feeling the economic pinch that the terrorist-inspired fear brought. This in fact reveals the hidden fragility of the global market system.

⁵ CNN, 6/11/01 at <http://www.cnn.com/2001/US/11/06/gen.attack.on.terror/>.

⁶ In addition, the “Bush Doctrine” is backed up with the threat of “preventative attack” from the US acting unilaterally (if it must). This is quite different from former “pre-emptive policy” which necessitated some proof of an eminent threat; this new policy merely requires a perceived threat to be identified by the US. See: <http://www.cooperativeresearch.org/wot/foreignpolicy/generalforeginpolicy.html>.

⁷ If you feel your interests coincide with the Americans’, *pax Americana* does not sound so threatening, nor does its previous epithet, global policeman. However the imperialism behind such a vision can be glimpsed by examining the writings on the “Project for a New American Century” (as if one was not enough; see: <http://www.newamericancentury.org>). Left wing critics have irreverently referred to the US as “globocop” (NI, 2003, p. 8).

American was already seeking to shape a world if not in accordance with its own image, certainly in accordance to its interests. Yet, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides the logic for the universal respect of human rights when it states: "...it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law" (UN, 1948). Could current dynamics in the so-called "War on Terrorism" be considered as rebellion against the tyranny and oppression of the *pax Americana* also known as the "Washington Consensus"⁸ and the "market fundamentalism" it has inspired, much as Baudrillard has suggested (2002)? Could it be that the failure of fifty years of rhetoric that promised that all of humanity would enjoy the security and prosperity of development has finally rung hollow? Could Fanon's class liberation text *The Wretched of the Earth* illuminate current events? And is tourism's role central to these cataclysmic events? These are the questions that concern this paper.

Positioning and Methodology

As MacCannell's *Empty Meeting Grounds* inspires this work, I heed his concern to deal with the demands of scholarly objectivity when addressing the political nature of tourism. He asserts:

The one path that still leads in the direction of scholarly objectivity, detachment, and neutrality is exactly the one originally thought to lead away from these classic virtues: that is an openly autobiographical style in which the subjective position of the author, especially on political matters, is presented in a clear and straightforward fashion. At least this enables the reader to review his or her own position to make the adjustments necessary for dialogue (1992, p. 9-10).

I will follow his example in facilitating a useful exchange on what is a political domain by revealing my positioning. I am a humanist with cosmopolitan leanings. I am an American who gained critical insight into my country of birth by both travel and Peace Corps service, experiences which sent me on the trajectory of expatriate and "global soul". I am politically interested and hold degrees in politics and international relations.⁹ I am a reluctant and late-blooming activist who gained

⁸ The 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 nature of the consensus is that free markets and strict fiscal policies are the keys to future economic development.

⁹ My Masters thesis focused on management of terrorism in the European Union in the aftermath of the Schengen Agreement's implementation of free movement of people.

insights into the injustices, inequities and sufferings both from the books I read during my studies, experiences in my journeys and specific meetings in my life path. These include my involvement with the Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal community of South Australia, the Circle of Friends based at my university who formed to try to persuade the Australian government to release an asylum-seeking family from their desert detention centre and my long-term involvement with “global education”. I am a new Australian citizen who is disappointed at my poor timing of migrating to this country just as the Howard government led it on a backward looking path away from multiculturalism and reconciliation. I am also a lecturer and a researcher in the tourism discipline who brings a concern with social justice to this field of endeavour. This brief auto-biography will contextualise the broad-ranging nature of this polemical essay and the inspiration of its uncomfortable questions. I have already begun to explore these issues in a magazine article written shortly after 11 September 2001 (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2001) and in a brief exchange with David Beirman on an online travel news magazine, eTurbo news.¹⁰ The format of the polemic essay is selected to facilitate the raising of challenging questions that have remained largely unasked in the realm of academic discourse. Thus it is an attempt at opening the dialogue that MacCannell invites in the quotation above, for surely dialogue across divides is what is called for in the “hostile meeting grounds” created in the aftermath of “9/11”.

The Wretched and the Rich

With awareness of Gates’ warning against a “too uncritical appropriation” of Fanon (1992, p. 465), this paper dares to ask if his classic work of revolutionary philosophy *The Wretched of the Earth* (1967) might illuminate contemporary events. The text is dated¹¹ - the peoples of the third world¹² have almost universally thrown off the yoke

¹⁰ This exchange started with Beirman’s recommendation in a featured article that the tourism industry should “keep at arms length from the UN” because it is both ineffectual and “a forum for the crudest excesses of bigotry” (The UN was a topic of discussion as the World Tourism Organization was in the process of joining the UN as a specialised agency) (Beirman, 2003a). I responded in the next issue in their “sound off” section disagreeing with this stance saying that tourism is more than just business and must engage with global political issues (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2003). He then replied in the “sound off” section three days later (to which I was unaware until only recently) in which he stated “I find it extraordinary that she should not regard tourism itself primarily as anything other than a business” and “I was also disturbed to note that she quotes a Balinese academic for allegedly praising the Bali bombing as a means to rid Bali of unwelcome mass tourism” (something I do again in this paper); he closed by stating that I am only one of a handful of academics among the many he has “encountered” who would subscribe to such views, thus attempting to marginalise me and quarantine my controversial ideas (Beirman, 2003b).

¹¹ *The Wretched of the Earth* by Frantz Fanon (1967) was written while he served as a psychiatrist at an Algerian hospital during its bloody war for freedom from France in the 1950s. Much of its content is specific to this conflict and to this historical era of liberation from colonialism. However, its philosophical basis holds wider relevance and interest.

¹² This paper uses the unsatisfactory but well familiar terminology of “first” and “third” worlds to represent the divide between the “developed” and the “developing” nations in the global community.

of colonialism. Capitalism has won the epic battle against socialism and the market guides us all, first and third world alike, down the path of “progress” and “development”. What value has Fanon now? Post-September 11th does his characterisation of the “wretched of the earth” hold resonance? After all, bin Laden and his team of hijackers were by no means poor and without privilege. Important analysts such as terrorism expert Walter Laqueur have been at pains to point out that the connection between terrorism and poverty is spurious (2003, pp. 11-29). But the point is not that the terrorists do or do not come from the “wretched”, because logically contemporary terrorists need to be educated and able to blend in on the global “meeting grounds” thus making more likely their middle class roots; and alternatively, the poor are bound in the grip of grim survival and so their struggle is more localised. What Laqueur is missing is that terrorism by its very nature is an appeal to the hearts and minds of others- whether to instil terror or inspire support.¹³ Thus it matters whether justice that has been repeatedly promised is still continually and insultingly denied.

Fanon’s “wretched of the earth” know their situation; “... on the level of immediate experience, the native, who has seen the modern world penetrate into the furthestmost corners of the bush, is most acutely aware of all the things he does not possess” (1967, p.58). Fanon claims that the colonised he spoke of knew that their oppression could only be overturned by a resort to violence; “we have seen that it is the intuition of the colonized masses that their liberation must, and can only, be achieved by force” (p. 57). Does the new form of domination (whether called neo-imperialism, *pax Americana* or the Washington Consensus) require a similar resort to violence? Today, the people Fanon talks about, “the wretched of the earth”, are not only acutely aware of what they do not possess, they are increasingly aware of their loss of ability to ensure their own survival as they are induced to grow cash crops for export, supply cut flowers to the rich nations and serve the rich tourists, all in an effort to appease the IMF and World Bank and alleviate crippling debt regimes irregardless of the effects such activities have on their subsistence capabilities, cultural survival,

One must recognise that there exists a first world within the third and a third world within the first; most of the nations of the “second world”, i.e. socialist, have now merged into the third world category.
¹³ My definition of terrorism is the use of violence or the threat of violence against one target in order to instil terror and to influence the opinions or actions of third party others for a political purpose. It is this act of influence on a third party and its political nature which distinguish it from ordinary crime. Frequently in the past, the goal of terrorism had been to influence governments, and so many terrorist acts were committed against politicians, state institutions or other symbols of the state (such as assassinations, kidnappings and bombings). However, with the growth in democracies during the 20th century, terrorists have increasingly used terror against civilians as leverage against the governments who are accountable to them. I would argue that the rampant pace of globalisation now means that terrorists can see their actions as occurring on a global stage. Could the hearts and minds of the “wretched of the earth” be the new battleground that the terrorists seek to seize?

ecological integrity and children's future.¹⁴ I will not elaborate on this when activists and analysts such as Vandana Shiva, Amartya Sen, Walden Bello, Anita Pleumarom, Arundhati Roy, Deborah McLaren and others have contributed much insight.

Sartre, in his preface to Fanon's text, states that Fanon lays bare concealed liberal hypocrisy that not only is the prologue to the liberation of the oppressed but also can enable the oppressed to regain their humanity by facing the unpalatable truth of oppression (1967, pp. 12-3). Is our world not cursed by a similar hypocrisy which enables us to comfortably continue our consumerist endeavours while intolerable suffering occurs not very far from us in our "global village"?¹⁵ Such hypocrisy includes the idea that starving people in the Third World can climb their way out of poverty by catering to rich tourists from the First World (a la the "Sustainable Tourism – Eliminating Poverty" (ST-EP) program of the World Tourism Organization (WTO)). Or that ecotourism can save environments, deliver development and spiritually uplift while using jumbo jet aircraft for transporting ecotourists (ego-terrorists?) to the last "pristine" and "untouched" wildernesses remaining on our heavily burdened planet. Lastly, we all can get on the market "merry-go-round" and fulfil our consumer duty to keep the economy growing by spending continuously and still have the natural environment to enjoy on our holidays despite our best efforts to suck economic profits out of every last ounce of it. This is patent nonsense. Quotes could be garnered from the likes of David Suzuki (a scientist), Herman Daly (an economist) or David Korten (globalisation analyst), but perhaps the words of the United Nations Environment Program are authoritative enough to convince. The UNEP's *Global Environment Outlook 2000* claimed:

The continued poverty of the majority of the planet's inhabitants and excessive consumption by the minority are the two major causes of environmental degradation. The present course is unsustainable and postponing action is no longer an option (UNEP, 1999).

If the link between environmental destruction, poverty and over-consumption was not confrontational enough, Dr Klaus Toepfer, Director of the UNEP stated "a ten-fold reduction in resource consumption in the industrialised countries is a necessary long-term target if adequate resources are to be released for the needs of developing

¹⁴ This does not even take into account the lessons that peoples of the third world can draw from Iraq where a crippling sanctions regime and an unjustified invasion have led to the deaths of thousands of civilians.

¹⁵ Or even worse, we go to tour this poverty and suffering in our perverse voyeurism. Examples include "war tourism" (thanks to recent violence, destinations abound from Serbia, to Afghanistan to Iraq), "terrorism tourism" (it was reported in 2003 that Gush Etzion Tourism Association of Israel was organising tours focused on the US market to introduce the "world of terrorism" and a chance to train with the experts from the Israeli Defence Forces, see O'Loughlin, 2003) and lastly, the "poverty tourism" well described by Hutnyk, 1996.

countries” (Kirby, 1999). But not only do President Bush’s words of 1992 (“The American way of life is not negotiable”) forewarn us that Toepfer’s words are unlikely to have any meaningful effect, but the consumers around the world who have bought the dream of the “American way of life” in both the first and third worlds present powerful obstacles to such change. Globalisation analyst Leslie Sklair has called this phenomenon the “culture- ideology of consumerism” and it is one of the main pillars that upholds the dominance of “capitalist globalisation” (2002).¹⁶ We have all, almost, literally “bought” into the system.¹⁷ Tourism is an integral component of this system as its uptake as a “cultural-ideological” practice has not been difficult to advance since it is touted as delivering peace, development, conservation as well as consumer happiness simultaneously.

Tourism as Ideology: the Right to Travel

While much of the discussion of tourism focuses upon its ability to provide fun and/or fulfilment (Butcher, 2003) or focuses upon its characteristics as an “industry”(Smith, 1988; Gee et al 1997), some critical analyses focus on the ideological dimension of tourism (MacCannell, 1992; Goldstone, 2001; Mowforth and Munt, 2003, for example). A tourism management text provides the following definition of tourism:

Tourism can be defined as the theories and practices of travelling and visiting places for leisure-related purposes.

Tourism comprises the ideas and opinions people hold which shape their decision about going on trips, about where to go (and where not to go) and what to do or not do, about how to relate to other tourists, locals and service personnel. And it is all the behavioural manifestations of those ideas and opinions (Leiper,1995, p. 20).

This innocuous definition illuminates the ideology behind contemporary tourism and travel. The “theories”, “ideas”, “opinions” and “practices” that Leiper refers to could be taken at one level to relate to our social practices of dividing leisure from work, the beliefs about what are appropriate “re-creative” activities and personal desires and

¹⁶ In fact it is the aspiration to live the “American dream” on the part of ordinary people around the globe that has allowed the rise of American hegemony through the “Washington Consensus” (while the actual agenda has been pushed by the “transnational capitalist class” (to use Sklair’s terminology). If Baudrillard is right and the meaning of “9/11” does represent a war over globalisation rather than a “war on terrorism” (2002), what we are seeing now is an abandonment of the tactic to obtain acquiescence to the market agenda through the promise of the “American dream” for a tactic to obtain acquiescence through the threat from the “American war machine”.

¹⁷ So being “anti-American” or “anti-globalisation” does nothing to alleviate the problem, because we are all implicated. Our task is not to imagine how we are going to convince the Americans to not invade Iraq or to cut back on its own consumption or ratify the Kyoto protocol, but rather we must convince ourselves to do without (the “live simply, so others can simply live” philosophy). The former is perhaps much easier for most non-Americans to engage with than the latter.

actions that collectively comprise the larger phenomenon of tourism. However at another level, Leiper's definition can be read to refer to ideological attributes that adhere to contemporary tourism such as the practice of first world tourists wielding their financial power to holiday in third world locations, the belief that tourism is subject to individual preferences and not properly the subject of "moralisation" (Butcher, 2003) and particularly, a conceptualisation of a "right" to tourism and travel. Because holiday time has been legislated and compensated for in many first world countries since the early years of the twentieth century, many of their citizens view travel as a right rather than as a privilege. This has led to the right to travel being 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 Tourism 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, section 2 states "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country" (UN, 1948), which O'Byrne describes as underpinning the human right to travel (2001, p. 411-3). 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" (UN, 1948), 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) who declare 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. However, it is obvious that this human right is not universally enjoyed and there is a clear divide between the first and third worlds in this respect, resulting in 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 important international tourism declarations acknowledged the need to bridge this divide between the first and third worlds' ability to fulfil the human right to travel and tourism. 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*, (emphasis added, WTO, 1980).

The more 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 all of the various stakeholders in tourism. This code was forged in the new era brought with 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 optimize 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 in that it not only reiterates the right 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 disabled, youth, seniors and families. While 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 at the height of the Cold War when the rhetoric of the first world’s commitment to third world development was used in the ideological struggle for the hearts and minds of the third world, it is surprising that such rhetoric has survived into the era of the Washington Consensus. But 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 to make conditions possible to fulfil such obligations. The only statement this code makes about obligations to development in the countries of the third world is a call that “multinational enterprises of the tourism industry should not exploit the dominant positions they sometimes occupy...they should involve themselves in local development, avoiding, by the excessive repatriation of their profits or their induced imports, a reduction of their contribution to the economies in which they are established” (WTO, 1999, article 9). Thus this code effectively abandons the agenda of development through tourism to market forces. The debate about whether the free market delivers development is the key debate of our times and the statistics that are rolled out by the World Bank with its *World Development Indicators* and then refuted

by opponents is not essential to this argument.¹⁸ It is intuitive that a universal right to tourism and travel have no real meaning when the vast majority of the world's population must struggle to secure their own survival, including finding the means of subsistence, accessing safe drinking water, ensuring adequate health to subsist and trying to maintain culture and family on the land to which one belongs. This contrasts strongly with the experience of wealthy, first world tourists who can travel to places of poverty or danger in order to enhance their status as "intrepid" travellers or to "find themselves" again. Should these tourists get into trouble in the tour zone- war zone (or battleground- playground), the full apparatus of their rich state is called upon to diplomatically protect their interests, to medivac them out of harm's way *toute de suite* and to financially compensate them for any losses they might incur (subject to the provisions of their insurance policies).¹⁹

In his discussion of the "empty meeting grounds" of tourism, MacCannell sees a dichotomy between those travellers who use the tourism encounter to construct dialogue with others and those travellers who want to travel the world but with all the accoutrement and comforts of home. The latter he describes as "...an overturned nomadic consciousness in which the ultimate goal of travel is to set up sedentary housekeeping in the entire world, to displace the local peoples, or at least to subordinate them in the enterprise, to make them the 'household' staff of global capitalists" (1992, p. 66). The former represent the hope of tourism's contribution to a better world and demonstrate that any assertion of a "right" such as the right to tourism also entails an accompanying "responsibility", i.e. a necessity to utilise the privilege to achieve a meaningfully beneficial outcome. The latter are perhaps responsible for the "empty meeting grounds" of tourism transforming into "hostile meeting grounds" as the "wretched" and the "rich" encounter each other on an ideological site where the pleasures of the "rich" are paid for by the sufferings of the

¹⁸ Though I would commend Sklair's treatment of these issues in his globalisation analysis where he presents his argument that development has given way to the aims of capitalist globalisation; a system which by its very nature causes "class polarisation" (vast disparities between groups) and a crisis of ecological unsustainability (2002; see pages 48-53 where he specifically addresses the indicators of development/underdevelopment).

¹⁹ These brief sentences remind me of a television show which brilliantly presents this contrast quite poignantly. *Worlds Apart* is an American series which recently aired in Australia. It shows four American families travelling to other parts of the world for an experience of "another world". I recently viewed one where a well-to-do New York family spends nine days with a rural family in India. While the Indian hosts were by no means poor, the American visitors found the difficulties in obtaining water, the endless work to be done, the lack of "proper" sanitation and the general struggle for daily survival to be confronting initially. By the end of the visit, both families had bonded very strongly and their shared experiences had a profound impact on all. However, at the end of the nine days, the Americans boarded their plane for their return to their luxurious lifestyle without a thought for the possibility of a reciprocal visit from their new Indian friends. The ideological assumption behind this show that it is the "rich" who visit and are moved by the "wretched", gives pause for cynicism on the rhetoric of tourism as a force for peace and tolerance.

“wretched”. We have somehow forgotten in the market era that a truly universal notion of a right to travel and tourism could only be predicated on a foundation of a right to development for all.

Transits, terrorists, tourists and the wretched: Airports as icons of our world

Airports and airlines have long been subject to the attention of terrorists for a number of reasons, including their symbolic value as a state asset, their high media value and the fact that their transportation capacity can be used to good effect. Examples include the attacks on airports in the 1970s and 1980s including Israel’s Lod airport in 1972, Athens and Rome airports in 1973, Orly airport in France in 1983 and Madras airport in India in 1984. Terrorists have also attacked planes with bombs and rockets, including an Air India flight over the Atlantic in 1985, a Pan Am flight over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1983, a UTA flight over Niger in 1989 and an El Al flight at Mombasa airport, Kenya in 2002. At the height of the terrorism of the late 1960s and early 1970s, terrorists hijacked planes for escape to friendly countries or political leverage against enemy governments; examples include the spectacular event of September, 1970 when the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) held three planes and their passengers at Jordan’s airport and the collaborative effort of the PFLP and the Baader-Meinhof gang of Germany who together hijacked an Air France plane which was diverted to Entebbe, Uganda and led to a famous raid by Israel’s special forces in 1976. Lastly, the al Qaeda terrorists turned hijacked planes into potent and symbolic weapons to wield against the Twin Towers and the Pentagon, which were both actual and symbolic targets. That airports and airlines are contested spaces must be readily apparent from this brief outline despite their ordinary and mundane appearances to most users at most times.

But airports and airlines are also contested spaces in less spectacular fashion as the “wretched” and the “rich” transit past each other in their travels. We know how the “rich”, both tourists and business people, frequently use the infrastructure of airports and airplanes in their globe-trotting through our “global village”. What may be less familiar is how these same facilities are used to “deport” the less desirable globetrotters, the unwanted asylumseekers and economic migrants. As globalisation’s favours and famines fall unevenly across the breadth of the globe, individuals and families are forced to leave their homelands in search of asylum or survival in other lands, sometimes resorting to airplanes and airports if they are fortunate,²⁰ oftentimes forced into leaky and dangerous boats, unsafe cargo crates and perilous trucks and other road vehicles. However, when they arrive at their destination anticipating haven and opportunity, they sometimes find themselves greeted with hostility, bureaucratic

²⁰ This is not the case for those that use the technique of stowing away in the undercarriage of planes. Africa has recently provided many such cases but one example is the sixteen year old who froze to death as the plane went from Brazzaville, Congo to Paris in 2003.

mazes and perhaps ultimately rejection and deportation back to their origin. In fact, some rejected asylumseekers have died in forced repatriation back from whence they came, accidentally suffocated through the sedation drugs, pillows and duct tape that have been used to silence them, as they are detained on the back rows of airplanes, so that they do not “discomfort” the “rich” who are the proper clients of these services.²¹ I have long thought about the difference between the “wretched” and the “rich” as they use these “meeting grounds” of the airport, as asylumseekers dream of greeting their loved ones one day at this airport as they join them for asylum in their chosen country; in contrast the “rich” tourists or business people buzz about the airport with their trainers on or their laptops in tow, completely oblivious to the privilege that they are enjoying and complaining about the inconvenience of security measures or the tediousness of long journeys and their jet lag. The airport and the airplane are in fact “hostile meeting grounds” as the “rich” and the “wretched” jostle for access to use them for the fulfilment of their right to travel, even if they rarely actually “encounter” each other in the process. In Australia, where the government has abandoned many of its obligations under the Refugee Convention, and makes asylum a very arduous status to obtain, the refugee supporters who have taken up the moral conscience of a nation have organised anti-deportation awareness-raising rallies at major airports such as Melbourne’s and petitioned airlines such as Qantas and Malaysian Airlines to not cooperate with the government’s efforts at forced returns of rejected asylumseekers. These anti-deportation rallies are an attempt to make visible those “wretched” that the “rich” do not want to see, as it might make their enjoyment of their right to travel a little less comfortable.²² These encounters across the “hostile meeting grounds” of the airport and airplane between “rich”, “wretched” and now “activist” are a microcosm of the dynamics of our world and are as disturbing and illuminating as the events of “9/11” even if less spectacular. Recently it was reported that France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom are cooperating on an initiative to create a specially

²¹ For example, Mariame Guru-Hagos of Somalia was asphyxiated during deportation from Paris to Johannesburg in 2003. In 1999, Aamir Mohamed Ageeb of Sudan suffocated under a motorcycle helmet during deportation from Frankfurt airport, Khaled Abuzarifeh of Palestine suffocated under a gag during deportation from Zurich airport and Marcus Omofuna of Nigeria suffocated because of a taped mouth during deportation from Vienna (see: <http://www.united.non-profit.nl/pdfs/listofdeaths.pdf>).

²² This effort is not always embraced by the targets of enlightenment. Recently the Australian series of the Big Brother reality show was thrown into turmoil when a young housemate used his eviction to make a silent protest against the government’s treatment of asylumseekers by holding a sign that read “free the refugees”. He refused to chat with the shows hostess as is custom and received boos from the audience for his actions. The media buzzed in the following days with criticism of Merlin’s “stunt” with public opinion declaring him a little odd but with no discussion of the issue. Merlin also had to apologise to children in the audience watching his eviction show for “upsetting” them with his protest. This one incident illuminates how the media works to support the “culture-ideology of consumption” by anesthetising us to any interest in “real” issues by drip feeding us on a diet of consumer desires, inane gossip and fruitless play. The ironies abound in this incident as the last thing that “reality” tv wants to give its consumers is any look at any uncomfortable reality. Also interesting is that the reality show participants are voluntarily detained and the asylumseekers are involuntarily detained, both perhaps similarly traumatised in their seeking of improvements in their life situation.

chartered airtservice for deportations of “illegal immigrants” nicknamed “Migrant Air” in order to keep such encounters out of our consciousness and off our consciences making the operations more economical as a “bonus” (Travis 2005, p. 7).

Bali’s Hostile Meeting Grounds

The Bali bombing of 12 October 2002 marked an attack on a major tourism site as Paddy’s Bar and the Sari Club located at Kuta Beach were decimated by a suicide bomb attack conducted by supporters of Jemaah Islamiah (JI). The devastation was remarkable and 190 people died,²³ among them 88 Australians. This event impacted on Australians particularly strongly who have long viewed Bali as its slice of the “pleasure periphery” as it has offered inexpensive holiday packages of the mass variety. Kuta has long conjured a particular image in mind as a place for young, particularly Australian, tourists to sun by day and party by night; Picard quotes the 1990 Lonely Planet guide book as stating “Kuta is a good place to get a suntan, definitely a good place to get pissed and supposedly a good place to get laid” (1996, p. 80). Because of the presence of comparatively wealthy tourists who seek a variety of hedonistic pleasures, including drugs and sex, Kuta has attracted migrants from around Indonesia who seek wealth from the opportunities that this offers, including the “Kuta cowboys” who provide “romance tourism” services to young women on holiday. It is this “playground” that the JI terrorists decided to make their “battleground” in their war against Western decadence. As the “War on Terror” heated up and southeast Asia became a focus, al Qaeda trained, JI terrorist Hambali decided to target bars, cafes or nightclubs “frequented by Westerners” for bombing (Neighbour, 2003). While it is not fashionable to listen to the terrorists, Imam Samudra gave thirteen reasons for the Bali bombing²⁴ and rationalised the selection of these particular sites at Kuta: “the reason I chose Paddy’s and the Sari Club in Jalan Legian, Kuta, Bali as targets for the jihad bombing is because I saw a lot of foreigners there engaged in immoral acts; and that place is the biggest centre of immoral

²³ An interesting footnote can be made that a young Indonesian woman named Endang was severely injured in the blast, while her husband was detained in Baxter detention centre in South Australia (an Iranian man without legal status in Indonesia who came to Australia by boat seeking asylum) and their two children stayed on Java with family. She was not medivac-ed to Australia for emergency treatment and he was not allowed transit to Bali to be with her, so she died without her family. South Australian magistrate Brian Deegan lost his son in the Bali bombing and during his involvement with those issues learned of the Sannaki’s family’s plight (father “detained” and children without him). He offered to sponsor the children’s visit to South Australia if they could get temporary visas in order for the family to have a brief reunion after years apart without success. However, when the Sannaki children were photographed holding hands with the Australian Prime Minister in his brief visit to Bali a year later, circumstances quietly shifted. Before long, the family was reunited and living out in the Australian community with permanent protection visas. This is a singular incident with many quite amazing intersections and full of rich meanings for understanding dynamics within our global village (see: Gearin, 2003).

²⁴ These included such reasons as opposing the “US army of the cross and its allies”, revenge for the 2001 bombing of Afghanistan, Australia’s role in East Timor, Muslim suffering in such diverse places as Kashmir, Bosnia and Ambon and Jewish and Christian occupation of two Islamic holy lands (for the full statement and complete list see Samudra, 2002).

activities in Bali, compared to other places” (Samudra, 2002). In the aftermath of these devastating bombs, Bali and Kuta have undergone some startling transformations. Bali has changed from Australia’s “pleasure periphery” to an offshore part of Australia²⁵; the major national newspaper *The Australian*’s headline read “Special edition – Carnage hits Australia’s Holiday Island - Terror hits home” (Greenlees, 2002, p. 1). Kuta has changed from a rather notorious and seedy playground for tourists to a battleground for terrorists. Another transformation is underway as the site of the two clubs is becoming a battleground monument for more serious and contemplative tourists with the building of a memorial in 2003; a similar, yet different Australian appropriation of this Balinese space

Another more metaphorical battle was soon raging on the implications of this event for tourism. Ten days after the bomb attack, *The Australian* carried an interesting article under the headline “Cleansing of foreign evils a ‘good thing’” (Ellis, 2002, p. 4). Here it was reported that a well-respected Balinese academic, Luh Ketut Suryani said that the effects of the bombing was a “good thing” and that she had advised local authorities to leave the bombsite untouched as a memorial to the evils of tourism (an altogether different meaning to the monument than the one described above). In her interview she said:

This is the punishment of God because we have not developed cultural tourism but we have brought in many things outside our Balinese culture. We now have prostitution, gambling, pedophilia, drugs, casino. These things are not Balinese. These things are brought in by foreigners. It disturbs our culture. It is good for us that Australians will not come back to Bali for a few months or a year. Our people can go back to their land, to their paddy. Bali will learn from this. I am not against tourism, but many Balinese now think the dollar is more important than maintaining culture. (Ellis, 2002, p. 4).

The Australian made a note that she was not known as a “nationalist firebrand” and her comments reflect a belief of a growing Balinese lobby, but this did not assuage those that saw her comments as “insensitive” and “anti-Australian”. From another angle, Ros Coward wrote in *The Ecologist* that the backpacking clubber attracted to Bali was unacceptably oblivious to the hostility that their partying could arouse in a traditional society (2002, p. 24). She stated “This kind of tourism, which views the world as its playground and other cultures as the backdrop for the same lifestyles as back home, is highly problematic. It’s a form of casual imperialism...” (2002, p. 24).

²⁵ Interesting how the islands off Australia’s shore have been recently embraced and repelled in short order. As we see here Bali becomes a part of Australia while at the same time other islands belonging to Australia to the north of Australia’s mainland have been excised in order to ensure that Australia’s protection regimes for asylumseekers do not apply to “illegal” boatpeople who arrive there (such as Ashmore reef, Christmas Island, Melville Island and the Torres Strait Islands). Other islands further afield belonging to other states such as Manus Island, Papua New Guinea and Nauru are commandeered for detaining these repelled asylumseekers.

She makes a point of saying she does not condone the bombing; rather that she wishes us to reflect on the issues the experience raises; “if nothing else, these attacks should be used to cultivate some cultural self-awareness that our consumerist lifestyles are not what all people aspire to. Until this is realised, many young peoples won’t see how at risk they are” (p. 24). Her article raised a response from Brendan O’Neill of the *Christian Science Monitor* in an article titled “Don’t blame the backpacking victims” (2003). O’Neill claimed that such sentiments expressed by Coward and others are only “a short step to viewing them as legitimate terrorist targets” and reflect a long-standing antipathy to tourism on the part of “western” environmentalists, academics and other tourism critics (2003). His assessment was:

This all looks like a bad dose of Western self-loathing, where environmental commentators in the West are projecting their own prejudices onto the events in Bali...it was terrible enough that the Bali victims were cut down while travelling and enjoying themselves, without commentators spouting that there is something sinister about seeing the world with a backpack and a pair of dancing shoes (2003).

This is a similar dynamic to that in the aftermath of “9/11” in resisting reflection. O’Neill said let’s not look beyond the immediate issues of these young people happily enjoying themselves in their right to travel the world and the evil bombers who shattered their innocence. O’Neill accused an article by Nicholson-Lord of also placing culpability on the victims; admittedly this work is very critical of tourism but O’Neill failed to engage with Nicholson-Lord’s clear message to both the tourists and the travel industry that facilitates them that they can no longer ignore “that much of the planet is in turmoil or despair and that to go on partying in the midst of it all, or trying to ‘find oneself’, is at the very least in questionable taste” (2002, p.23). He made a plain case for the industry and for travellers to educate themselves about the issues and the risks because the world is increasingly more dangerous for not only the “wretched” but now also for the “rich”.

The concern is that the act of enjoying this right to travel is an ideological act which is predicated on a system of inequity and therefore may invite another ideological act, terrorism, as a response. This is not sympathising with terrorism but saying that the hubris of first world tourists asserting their right to travel freely, with maximum comfort and guaranteed safety is “sinister” when others cannot even ensure the means of survival for themselves, their families and their ways of life. It is an obscene and intolerable situation and the efforts of commentators such as O’Neill is to shield us from thinking about the ideological baggage that is packed in our backpacks and the dirt and blood that is adhering to our dancing shoes. This invocation to not think beyond the role of ourselves as carefree backpackers on the open road is not dissimilar to the New York appeal to see shows and visit restaurants and hints at the sedating affect that our consumerist culture performs us- we stubbornly refuse to consider that our free movement may be related somehow to the asylum-seekers

imprisonment at Baxter Detention Centre in Australia, our silence in the illegal invasion of Iraq in 2003 might be a catalyst to the bombs in Madrid and London and the others that are to follow,²⁶ our tourist hedonism might be implicated in the poverty of the destitute and our consumerist lifestyle might contribute to the loss of biological diversity and ecological integrity and so threaten our very long-term existence.

Meeting Grounds of Denial: Tourism and the Environment

One last topic for exploration in this challenging of tourism, is the issue of tourism, the environment and sustainability. From the 1980s when the discourse of environmentalism impacted on businesses and their ability to appropriate the environment and its resources, sustainability became a buzzword on everyone's lips. Business has been won over by the argument that sustainable business practices are not only good for the environment but also good for business. Ecotourism promises even more; it promises not only profits for the tourism industry, a special experience to the tourist, development for host communities but also conservation and even enhancement of nature. It would seem that the conundrum of development and the environment is not difficult at all, with a little human ingenuity and goodwill. But sustainability discourse has been with us for a very long time now, and all creatures great and small, from the World Bank, the World Tourism Organization, national governments, transnational corporations to the local business and the lone individual, are seemingly converted. But an examination of the tourism industry reveals a great disjuncture between rhetoric and reality.

One example is the implementation of the Balearic Islands "eco-tax". The Balearics are iconic for overdeveloped mass tourism; with a total population of 800,000 hosting eleven million tourists per year the stresses that tourism places on these sensitive islands is not difficult to imagine. As a result of recognised environmental pressures, an "eco-tax" was implemented in May 2002 which levied a one euro fee on hotel occupants per day of their stay contributing some 21 million euros in its first year for an environmental fund (Templeton, 2003). However, this small initiative met with heated opposition from significant players in the British tourism industry. These included the Association of Business Travel Agents, the Federation of Tour Operators and Thomas Cook travel agency (travelmole.com, 2002). Tourism Concern, a British NGO focused on ethical tourism, has said:

We think the tourism industry should put its green words into action. On the one hand they are saying they want to sign up to sustainable tourism and on the other they are doing everything they can to oppose it. Unfortunately, their actions are speaking louder than their words (travelmole.com, 2002).

²⁶ Not to mention the failure to pay any attention to, let alone deal with the "Palestinian question" for decades despite the fact that almost the entire Middle East considers it a fundamental human rights issue of vital importance and thus remains an outstanding grievance in the international arena.

However, it was lack of political support that has seen its withdrawal. Local government elections in May 2003 brought in a centre-right government of the Popular Party and ousted the Socialist party that had implemented the tax (Templeton, 2003). It was reported that British tour operators “overwhelmingly welcomed” this action; the Association of British Travel Agents stated:

We are very pleased to see that the new Balearic government will be scrapping the so-called eco-tax. It was always an unfair burden, in particular for families on a tight budget, and we hope the government will look to better sources of revenue to continue improving the environment (Templeton, 2003).

While travel industry players said that potential tourists to the Balearics had been diverted to other destinations to avoid paying the levy, Templeton cites statistics that UK visitation had risen in fact by eight percent during the period and only a handful of complaints about the tax had been submitted to the government (2003). The fact that the eco-tax only costs the average holidaymaker perhaps seven euros per holiday and that British travel research has shown that 64% of British tourists surveyed were willing to pay up to 5% more for an environmentally sound holiday (travelmole.com, 2002), indicates that in this instance, the tourists were being used as an excuse. This particular case study illustrates that important tourism industry leaders show a demonstrable gap between their rhetoric and their actions when it comes to a meaningful environmental agenda with real ramifications on their interests.

Moving from a micro-example to a macro and fundamental one, lies the issue of reconciling sustainability discourse in tourism and the widespread use of unsustainable transport technologies in the tourism endeavour. Few tourism analysts have engaged with this issue at all, with Cater and Goodall providing a rare exception in their discussion of sustainable tourism entitled “Must tourism destroy its resource base?”(1997). Tourism’s use of travel technologies, and in particular the aviation required for some international travel, contributes to global warming. Cater and Goodall ask whether conventional tourism can be made more sustainable under these conditions:

Currently tourist transport uses too much fuel. Public transport could be substituted for private transport, short-haul travel to nearer destinations for long-haul holiday journeys, high occupancy charter flights for scheduled flights and flight refuelling stops planned to minimize the need to tanker extra fuel. It is, however, questionable whether tourism can adopt measures which will reduce significantly emissions from the use of transport services and other energy resources. Staying at home appears to be the “greenest” way to holiday (1997, pp. 88-9).

In an effort to ensure that the environmental costs of aviation transport is calculated into the total ticket price, an environmental group in the United Kingdom has proposed that passengers pay an eco levy of GBP 28 per 1,000 km travelled (travelmole.com, 2003). Airport Watch advocated the plan in order to raise funds to offset environmental damage induced by aviation emissions and as a catalyst to a new “holiday culture” where air travel comes to be viewed as a precious luxury to be rationed and not as an frequent occurrence that one can seize on whenever cheap offers come through the letterbox. Focusing upon the popular British destination of Spanish Majorca which would attract an extra cost of GBP 90 with the levy and thus no longer be the cheap holiday destination that it now is, one managing director of a British travel company said it was not a viable plan as tourists would prove unwilling to pay; instead he proposed “Tourists can help solve problems around the world. In Kenya, for example, people are much more interested in the bigger issues, for example, tourist cash helping to treat people dying of malaria” (travelmole.com, 2003).²⁷ This is indicative of an obstinate refusal by some in the industry to accept measures that are anything other than voluntary in nature and without costs to their bottom lines. Big players, such as British Airways, may find that carbon-trading schemes may be worth while pursuing, but it is still an effort to head off threats of such tax and penalty schemes that could be imposed upon them by governments.

Cater and Goodall are pessimistic in their assessment of the likelihood of the tourism industry effectively addressing this thorny issue. This has left the issue to environmentalists and NGOs who have not only called for government regulation of the industry as described above but also pioneered efforts to educate the tourists about the size of their “ecological footprint” (ie environmental impacts) when they undertake certain transport modes for their journeys. One effort is the website called “Choose Climate”²⁸ which has an interactive model created by a climate engineer that allows the user to plot a journey and the program will calculate the amount of greenhouse gas emissions this journey will contribute per passenger. In the section entitled “Flying off to a warmer climate”²⁹, a dedicated effort is made to educate the traveller about the true costs of airline travel³⁰. For example, using the interactive

²⁷ It is ironic that he points to malaria as his higher concern considering that it is rich world tourists who use the most up to date anti-malarial drugs which most Kenyans cannot afford and which contributes to the growing tolerance of the disease and thus the ineffectiveness of the prophylactics.

²⁸ Accessible at <http://www.chooseclimate.org>.

²⁹ The icon for the cursor on the computer screen is a jumbo jet which is “chased” around by CO₂, NO₂ and H₂O emissions as the user manipulates the cursor to navigate the sight.

³⁰ In a powerful subsection entitled “cheap flights”, the website informs the viewer that airline flights are cheap for a number of reasons including: the atmosphere is a global commons and thus access is free; aviation fuel is untaxed (unlike fuel for land transport); oil is cheaply priced despite the fact that it is a finite resource; and air transport is a “prestige” sector that is subsidised by state governments. The message is that cheap holidays are cheap because they do not reflect the true costs of the service and it is at a cost to the environment whose bill will be served in the distant or not-so-distant future. The title “choose climate” means that we make choices as to whether we will live in a warmer climate with the attendant ravages of the effects of global warming, just that many of us are unaware of this.

map on this website to plot a journey from Australia to the United Kingdom indicates this approximate 16,000 km journey would contribute total greenhouse gas emissions to a warming effect equivalent to 10,749 kg of CO₂. The website facility then places this information in a context that the user can understand, for instance, stating that this trip would utilise 2.43 years of your total sustainable carbon emissions budget. Another section offers alternative choices, which advise the user to consider other modes of transport than cheap flights, use of communications technologies such as videoconferencing³¹ and holidaying closer to home.

The environmental issues surrounding tourism actually illuminate some of the major problems with the current tourism system and have been well explored by analysts such as Mowforth and Munt (2003). One of the sources of the problem is the “freedom” taken for granted in the tourism arena. Tourists assert their “right” to travel where they wish and how they wish (if they have the economic means to support their demand) and the tourism industry manages to appropriate resources such as not only airspace, but also the world’s beautiful places, people’s exotic cultures and there very acts of living in order to service this tourist demand. What the environmental aspects of tourism reveal is that these “rights” must be balanced with their attendant responsibilities, including real limitations on growth and provisions that contribute to equity and social justice. But considering tourism’s fundamental role in the “culture-ideology of consumerism” which is predicated on continual economic growth³² through continual consumer consumption (Sklair, 2002), it is highly unlikely that such requirements will be accepted. This discourse of sustainability is engaged with by industry in order to continue business as usual and has the taint of hypocrisy much as ST-EP mentioned earlier. However, if you simply juxtapose the images of the “rich” continuing to enjoy their global jet-setting lifestyles into the indefinite future, while the “wretched” Pacific Islanders such as the people of Kiribati and Tuvalu who will have to seek asylum in other countries because soon their homelands will disappear under the rising waters of global warming, you can see that the hypocrisy of “sustainability” will soon be exposed and that such inequity cannot be indefinitely ignored.

Alternatives to the Hostile Meeting Grounds of Tourism and Globalisation

“Tourism has a role to play in building peace. Diplomacy cannot do it alone, politics is not adequate, but enlightened tourism, that is intellectually inspiring and spiritually uplifting can help the world” – Dr. Surin, PATA conference, Bali, April, 2003 (quoted in Muqbil 2003a).

³¹ On the issue of unsustainable transport and international conferences, another response has come from those who do not wish to curtail travel as they implement carbon offset programs such as funding the creation of new tree plantations. This occurred at the 2002 United Nations Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (see: <http://www.greeningthewssd.com/>)

³² Ceaseless growth could be referred to as the “logic of cancer”. Also highly recommended is Clive Hamilton’s analysis in *Growth Fetish* (2003).

Tourism does not have to be the damaging and exploitative force that is herein described. Advocates of peace through tourism, responsible tourism, volunteer tourism and the like have long argued that tourism is powerful force for understanding and tolerance that is vital for dissipating the hostilities across the divides in the global community. Vital and innovative contributions in this effort are occurring more and more. Ryan has proposed the application of the principles of stakeholder theory and social tourism to improve the meaning of sustainability and improve outcomes of balancing the competing and complex interests of the various stakeholders in tourism (2002). Reid's new text on tourism planning challenges tourism to contribute to distributive justice and thereby create a more equitable world (2003). Wearing has explored volunteer tourism for an analysis of tourism that promotes experiences that "make a difference" (2001). Scheyvens' new text on "tourism *for* development" also casts a critical eye to contemporary tourism and explores some new areas such as "justice tourism" where tourism can be made to work for the community good (2002).

Inayatullah (1995) has provided an analysis of tourism that may be very timely to return to at this particular historical moment in the development of tourism. In an article entitled "Rethinking Tourism" he applied an Islamic perspective to tourism as an offering to a topic that has been analysed overwhelmingly from a "Western" perspective. This analysis results in a tourism checklist with a difference. He asks:

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? (1995, p. 413).

Inayatullah's works supports my view that tourism is much more than an industry, it is a social force (Higgins-Desbiolles 2006). Its power has been co-opted by the tourism industry which has chained it to the market paradigm and harnessed its energies for private profit and the wealth accumulation of a few. It cannot and must not remain this way for much longer. Tourism has long promised much more than it has delivered but it has been allowed to appropriate resources according to this promise. The players in the tourism industry have sheltered behind the protection of "neutrality" in business. Few leaders have been willing to engage in the bigger issues of our day, fearing the repercussions of getting into "politics". Imtiaz Muqbil of

Travel Impact Newswire is the rare exception and he has been prodding the conscience of the industry relentlessly.³³

The effect of the “War on Terror” is to exacerbate an increasingly divided world. The American leadership and those allied with it increasingly see a world divided between “us” and the “terrorists”.³⁴ In affect we could use metaphorical language that you are either a “tourist” or a “terrorist” according to your choice to buy into the “civilised” world. You are an acceptable component of the “civilised” world according to whether you “buy into” the consumer role assigned to you in our marketised world.³⁵ This is clearly not a desirable situation for tourism which sells itself best in a peaceful world where people of difference meet (if even superficially) across divides. Futurists must clearly see a tourism phenomenon where tourism circuits get narrowed to friendly territories, and so it would seem likely tourism leaders will step up the rhetoric of peace and tolerance to forestall such eventualities which may pinch their economic bottomline.³⁶ This will not be good enough. As Muqbil has advocated repeatedly, tourism leaders must think bigger than this and embrace issues that they have long chosen to avoid. They must commit themselves to a real agenda for change that embraces the lofty principles that they have already committed themselves to in the various declarations discussed earlier. Hypocrisy invites the actions and reactions that Fanon warned us about so many years ago. The “wretched” and the “rich” must come to terms across the divides of these “hostile meeting grounds” for a future in which we can all survive and perhaps even thrive; “business as usual” is not an option.³⁷

³³ Particularly recommended was his paper “Terrorism, more resilient than tourism” in which he exhorted the industry to look at the root causes of terrorism and commit themselves to engagement with some of the big issues (Muqbil, 2003b).

³⁴ Not only do the words of the “Bush Doctrine” clearly declare this but military advice demonstrates that this thinking goes very deep. See Barnett’s analysis in “Pentagon’s New Map” in which the world is divided between those of us in the market and therefore “civilised” and the rest, who are described as “the gap” (2003).

³⁵ An interesting headline in *The Ecologist* read “Environmentalists are the new terrorists”, in reference to American legislation in some states under the title of the Animal and Ecological Terrorism Act (see *Ecologist*, 2003, p. 11).

³⁶ Thus Weissmann in *Travel Weekly* predicted that not only are people from the Middle East deciding to only travel to “friendly countries” (now Malaysia and not the US for instance), but Americans may need to do so as well (2004, p. 57). While the tourists circuits are changing patterns according to political friendliness, interestingly a “terrorist” travel circuit has developed with “tours” for training in friendly states such as Afghanistan and Pakistan.

³⁷ That this is true is clear by the growing gathering of the civil society movement through the World Social Forum (WSF) which has gathered to challenge the dominance of the Washington Consensus through the meetings it holds under the auspices of the World Economic Forum. In conjunction with the assertion of third world clout at the Cancun summit of the World Trade Organization in 2003, it is clear that the “wretched” are seeking systemic change. At their 2004 meeting in Mumbai, the WSF put the tourism industry in its crosshairs with a Global Summit on Tourism. The theme of this tourism session was “who really benefits from tourism?” and a call to “democratise tourism!” was released. One NGO participant, the Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism (ECOT) called for the WSF to advocate for a tourism that is “pro-people” (ECOT, 2003).

Conclusion

"We are one more September 11th away from the end of the Open Society" – Thomas Friedman, New York Times

Resorting to the language of the "War on Terror", tourism has a choice to make. It can either encamp itself with the market fundamentalists and secure itself a world which is increasingly dangerous and fragmented, or it can encamp itself with humanity and take up the reins that it has as such a powerful social force. The hypocrisy of ST-EP, the Global Code of Ethics in Tourism and sustainable tourism is growing increasingly intolerable in a world where poverty and suffering is growing rather than abating. These initiatives will not be able to mask the fact that tourism is failing to live up to its promises and therefore is not worthy of the allowances, subsidies and support that is given in a world where resources are increasingly stretched. Tourism must serve the "wretched" as well as the "rich" if it is to continue to enjoy the open access it has been given to the world's resources and the faith that has been instilled in it for improving the lives of people.

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September 2005