CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN TOURISM

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TOURISM TRENDS AND OUTLOOK
GUILIN, CHINA, 20-22 OCTOBER 2016
PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF CHANGE

- LIVED IN SOUTHEAST ENGLAND
- NO CAR, NO PHONE, TV (TWO CHANNELS)
- COMPUTER
  - PHD - MAINFRAME RUN BY CARDS
  - IBM XT – CAN$6,000
- LOCAL TOURISM
  - ANNUAL HOLIDAYS
  - LONDON – DOVER ROAD (ROMAN RD, A1, M2)
  - COASTAL RESORTS AND INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION
- RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA
TEMPORAL CHANGE

- **PAST**
  - EVOLUTION OF TOURISM
  - EVOLUTION OF TOURISM STUDIES / RESEARCH

- **PRESENT**
  - DAILY AND WEEKLY CHANGES
  - SEASONALITY
  - CYCLES AND TRENDS

- **FUTURE**
  - SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM
  - WEATHER AND CLIMATE
TYPES OF CHANGE

- EVOLUTIONARY
  - CONTINUOUS, GRADUAL
  - MORE OF THE SAME

- REVOLUTIONARY
  - SUDDEN, DISLOCATING
  - NOVEL SITUATIONS

- BOTH OCCURRING

- FORMER EASIER TO DEAL WITH THAN LATTER

- SPEED AND SCALE OF CHANGE
  - MAKES PLANNING DIFFICULT
REASONS FOR INTEREST IN THE PAST

- CURIOSITY
- HISTORY VERSUS EVOLUTION
- ESSENTIAL FOR UNDERSTAND PRESENT (AND FUTURE)?
  - NEEDS AND DESIRES
  - ACTIVITIES
  - LANDSCAPES
  - PROCESSES
- PLACE PRESENT PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS IN PERSPECTIVE (FUTURE OPTIONS DEPEND ON PAST DECISIONS)
- HEIGHTEN SENSE OF PLACE
- HERITAGE AND INTERPRETATION
- CORRECTIVE TO STATEMENTS CONCERNING RAPIDITY OF CHANGE
PAST AS GUIDE TO FUTURE

- HOW GOOD A GUIDE?
  - PROJECTION (SHORT-TERM SUCCESSES)
  - PREDICTION (LONG-TERM CHALLENGES)

- ARE THERE ALTERNATIVES?
  - DELPHI, SCENARIOS, VISIONING etc.

- NOTE: MODELS CAN STILL BE USEFUL EVEN IF SPECIFIC OUTPUTS ULTIMATELY NEGATED
IMPORTANT THEMES

- HEALTH
- RELIGION
- CONTINUITY versus CHANGE (Tradition versus Fashion)
- TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE
  - TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES
  - RECREATION AND TOURISM TECHNOLOGIES
  - OTHER ACTIVITIES – Conflicts among uses and users
- SOCIO-ECONOMIC INFLUENCES
  - SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES
  - MASS FOLLOWS CLASS
  - PROMINENT INDIVIDUALS
  - SOCIAL CONTROL
- CULTURAL TRANSFER and HISTORY OF IDEAS
- LANDSCAPE CHANGE AND LANDSCAPE EVOLUTION
- WEATHER AND CLIMATE
WEATHER AND CLIMATE

- No attempt to define terms
- No attempt to discuss attributes of climate change
  - How much, how fast, what parameters, what locations?
    - Great significance!
- Evidence climate change is occurring: need to consider implications
- Weather and climate variable on multiple time and spatial scales with far-reaching implications for tourism
UNCERTAINTY AND RISK

- Uncertainty v. risk
- What risks do tourism business face from climate change and variability?
- What can be done to reduce risks? Are there opportunities?
- Uncertainties of human systems greater than physical systems
- Climate change only one factor in increasingly turbulent environment (NOT most important for all scales and activities)
- Many forms of global change (climate just one)
- Most critical where forms of global change superimposed
VULNERABILITY OF TOURISM TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Vulnerability = extent to which a system (tourism) may be (adversely) affected, disrupted or displaced by an external force (climate)

Depends on:
- Distribution and importance of tourism
  - i.e. locations whose economies highly dependent on tourism at greatest risk
  - Characteristics of climate change: extreme events - magnitude, frequency, duration

Tourism both widely distributed and highly concentrated – cities, coasts, mountains
- Cities resilient – diversified economy
- Coasts and mountains (high energy environments) more vulnerable
- Long-haul destinations more vulnerable (higher risk) than those depending on local markets
MITIGATION and ADAPTATION

- MITIGATION (LIMITATION)
  - Cut greenhouse gases – reduce climate change

- ADAPTATION
  - Climate change likely – take steps to restrict adverse impacts and take advantage of opportunities

- Early reluctance to consider adaptation – seen as weakening case for limitation
- Adaptation now commonly regarded as necessary
- Complementary rather than competitive strategies
- Tourism could be vulnerable to both climate change and limitation strategies
MITIGATION

- Tourism as generator of greenhouse gases?
- Role of travel phase?
- Is tourism a discretionary activity?
  - For tourists?
  - For businesses and resort communities?
- Policies to curb travel have major implications for destinations
- Options greater for journey to work compared to journey to play
- Role of mitigation strategies for tourism?
ADAPTATION

- Involves adjustments to social and economic activities to reduce vulnerability (risk)
- Both natural and human systems already adapted to an unknown extent to variability in current climate
- Adaptations most likely in situations of intermediate risk
- Changes in magnitude and frequency of extreme events critical
STAKEHOLDERS’ ADAPTABILITY

1. TOURISTS
   - Mobile
   - Exercise choice
   - Substitute activity, location, timing
   - Niche markets more at risk
   - High potential to adapt

2. BUSINESSES
   - Lack of mobility – fixed capital
   - Flexibility of participants a problem
   - Ability to adapt varies
   - Seasonality, frequency of good/bad seasons
   - Both winners and losers

3. INSTITUTIONS
   - High potential but much conservatism

SUMMARY
   All but most specialized tourists will adapt but their flexibility may exacerbate challenges of mobile operators who rely on short seasons
RESEARCH NEEDS

- Both tourism / recreation data rich but information poor
- Difficult to combine available recreation and climate information
- Better GCM information – but by itself insufficient
- Current climate data could be better used
  - Viability of current investments?
- Understanding of current sensitivities?
  - “Weather costing”
- Relative importance of climate and other factors?
- Substitutability (activity, location, timing)
- Parks and protected areas – designation, use, management etc.
- Others?
  - Diversification strategies
  - Extreme events
  - Insurance
  - Land use zoning....
QUESTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

- Are some types of tourism more vulnerable than others?
- Is tourism more or less vulnerable than other sectors?
- Can tourism adapt more or less easily than other sectors?
- Role of comparative studies?
- Appropriate mix of limitation and adaptation strategies?
- Policy implications?
  - Coasts – significance for tourism and recreation and importance of changing water levels
  - Mountains – ski areas – upgrade snow-making and diversify (makes sense now)
  - Summer activities in mid and high latitudes – extended seasons if water available and coastal processes not disrupted
  - Ecological implications?
CONCLUDING COMMENTS

- EVOLUTIONARY AND REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE
- RELEVANCE OF PAST TO PRESENT AND FUTURE
- PERSISTENT THEMES IN TEMPORAL CHANGE IN TOURISM
- WEATHER AND CLIMATE
- MANAGING CHANGE