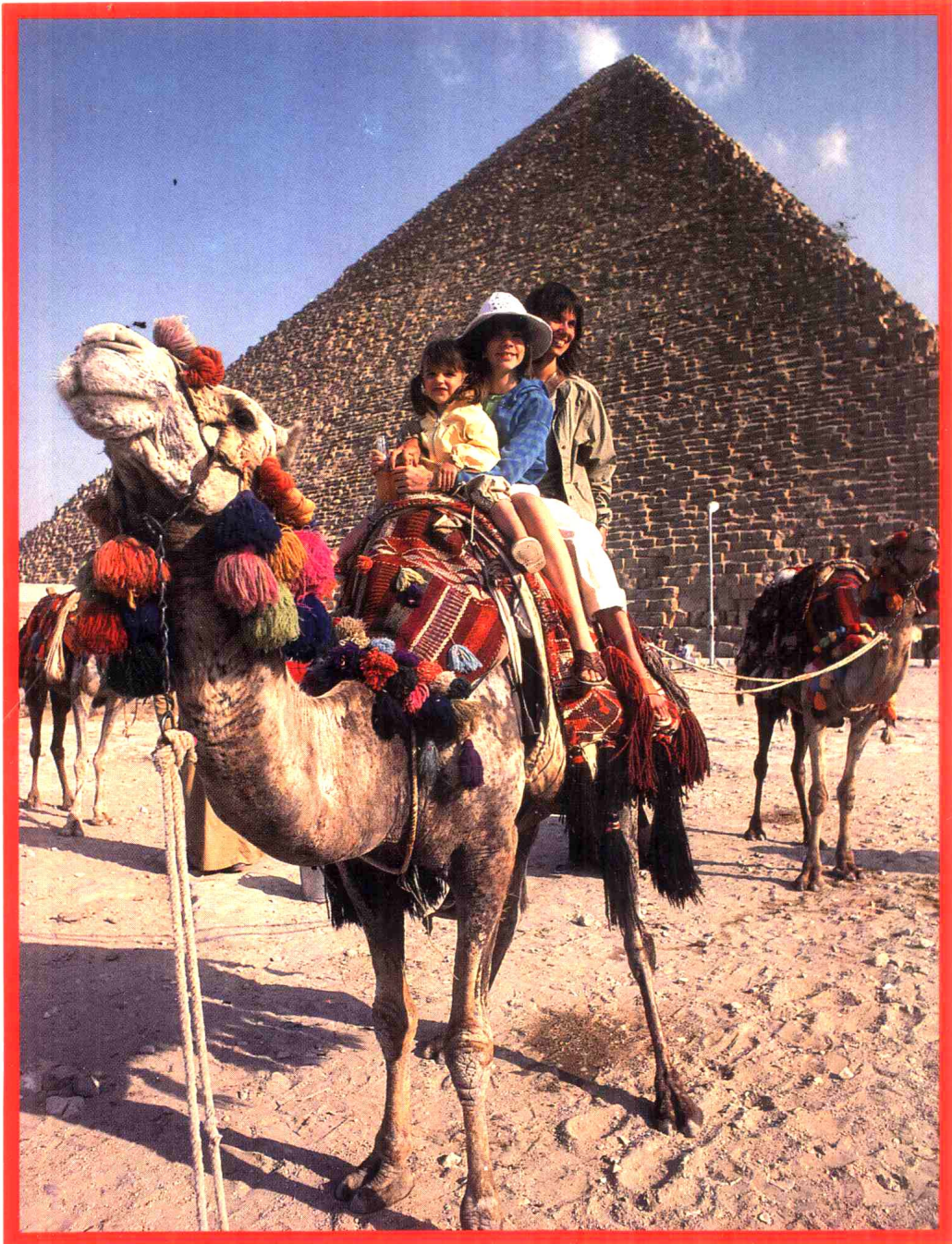


TOURISM TODAY

A geographical analysis



Douglas Pearce

Tourism Today: ***a geographical analysis***

Douglas Pearce
University of Canterbury
Christchurch
New Zealand



Copublished in the United States with
John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York

Longman Scientific & Technical,
Longman Group, UK Limited,
Longman House, Burnt Mill, Harlow,
Essex CM20 2JE, England
and Associated companies throughout the world.

Copublished in the United States with
John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 605 Third Avenue,
New York, NY10158

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First published 1987

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
Pearce, Douglas G.

Tourism today: a geographical analysis.

1. Tourist trade

I. Title

338.4'791 G155.A1

ISBN 0-582-30145-9

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication
Data**

Pearce, Douglas G., 1949-

Tourism today.

Bibliography: p.

Includes index.

1. Tourist trade. I. Title.

G155.A1P359 1986 380.1'459104 85-24228

ISBN 0-470-20682-9 (USA only)

Set in Linotron 202 9/10 pt Palatino
Produced by Longman Group (FE) Limited
Printed in Hong Kong

For Chantal

Acknowledgements

Much of the field-work, data collection and library research on which this book is based was undertaken during a period of eight months' overseas study leave from the University of Canterbury in 1982. I am grateful to the University Council for granting this leave and for providing travel assistance. Research in France at this time was also supported by a Bourse d'Etudes Supérieures from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I would like to thank the many individuals of the various universities, libraries, national tourist organizations and other agencies whom I contacted in 1982 and subsequently for their assistance and for providing access to a wide range of material. In particular, I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Monsieur René Baretje and his staff in making available the bountiful resources of the Centre des Hautes Etudes Touristiques, Aix-en-Provence. The hospitality of old friends not only made field-work in distant places enjoyable but also enabled a lot to be achieved in a comparatively short time; many thanks to Myrna, Philippe and Alice, Hélène, Agnès, Jean-Marie and Veerle, Eva, Wayne and Diane. Special mention must be made here of Madame Biart for her hospitality and

welcome base in Brussels. Help with the compilation and analysis of data has been given by Grant Birmingham, Kathy Clark, Karen Eder, Fujio Kano and Suzanne Waters with financial support being provided by several grants from the University of Canterbury's Research Assistants' Fund. For their frank criticisms and valuable advice I would like to thank Bob Mings, who cheerfully reviewed the first draft of the entire manuscript; Doug Johnston, who read many of the early chapters and gave welcome technical advice; and Dick Bedford who commented on Chapter 9. My thanks also go to Brenda Carter for typing the manuscript, to Linda Harrison and Anna Moloney for typing the tables and bibliography, to Alister Dyer, Jenny Penman and Tony Shatford who drafted the maps and diagrams. Chantal's company and assistance increased the pleasure and productivity of our travels in 1982 and her subsequent patience and support have enabled the successful completion of the manuscript; I gratefully dedicate this book to her.

Douglas Pearce
Christchurch, April 1985

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American Geographical Society for fig 11.1 from fig 3 (Pearce 1984b); British Tourist Authority for fig 4.6 redrawn from *BTA Newsletter* No 19, Autumn 1976 pv, Tables 2.4, 4.1–2 from Tables 20, 45, 54 (BTA, 1981b), 4.5 from Tables pp 36, 38 (BTA, 1982b); the Author, Dr. S. G. Britton for fig 1.8 from fig 3 (Britton, 1980a); C.H.E.T. for fig 1.10 from fig 3 (Gormsen, 1981); the Editor, *Cornell HRA Quarterly* for fig 1.9, Table 1.1 from pp 13–16 (Plog, 1973); the Author, Dr. P. C. Forer for figs 4.7–9, Table 4.3 from figs 4, 6, 8, Table 111 (Forer & Pearce, 1984); the Author, H. Peter Gray for Table 2.2 from Table p 14 (Gray, 1970); the Editor, *Journal of Geography* for fig 7.1 redrawn from figs 1 & 8 (Mings, 1982); the Editor, *Journal of Travel Research* for Table 4.4. from Table 1 (Pearce & Elliott, 1983); the Author, N. Leiper & the Editor, *Contemporary Issues in Australian Tourism* for Tables 2.5, 2.6 from Tables 3, 6 (Leiper, 1984b); P.A.T.A. for

fig 3.3 Table 3.7 from fig 1, Table 1 (Pearce, 1983a), Table 2.1 from p 5 (Opinion Research Corporations, 1980); Pergamon Press Inc & the Authors, for figs 1.4, 1.11 from figs 1, 3 (Pearce 1979, after Miossec 1976), 2.1 from fig 1 (Iso-Ahola, 1982); Pergamon Press Ltd for figs 8.2–8.4 from figs 2, 4, 5 (Pearce & Grimmeau, 1985), 10.1 from figs 6, 7 (Pigram, 1977); the Editor, *Revue de Tourisme* for figs 1.6 redrawn from fig 1 (Lundgren, 1982), 10.7 redrawn from fig 2 (Lundgren, 1974), Table 3.10 from Table 1 (Pearce, 1978a); the Author, T. Cullinan for Table 3.9 from fig 12 (Cullinan et al, 1977); the Editor, Dr. T. V. Singh for Table 2.7 from Table 1 (Pearce, 1982a); the Author, Dr. G. Wall for fig 1.3 from fig 30 (Greer & Wall, 1979); World Tourism Organisation for Tables 3.2, 3.7 from Tables VII, IX (WTO, 1983)

We are also grateful to the National Geographical Institute — 1050 Brussels–Belgium for permission No A 584 to reproduce pl. 5 Aerial photography S189–117 *De Panne-Wenduine*.

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Introduction

Tourism is essentially about people and places, the places one group of people leave, visit and pass through, the other groups who make their trip possible and those they encounter along the way. In a more technical sense, tourism may be thought of as the relationships and phenomena arising out of the journeys and temporary stays of people travelling primarily for leisure or recreational purposes. While writers differ on the degree to which other forms of travel (e.g. for business, for health or educational purposes) should be included under tourism, there is a growing recognition that tourism constitutes one end of a broad leisure spectrum. In a geographical sense, a basic distinction between tourism and other forms of leisure, such as that practised in the home (e.g. watching television) or within the urban area (e.g. going to the local swimming pool), is the travel component. Some writers employ a minimum trip distance criterion but generally tourism is taken to include at least a one-night stay away from the place of permanent residence. These travel and stay attributes of tourism in turn give rise to various service demands which may be provided by different sectors of the tourist industry so that in an economic and commercial sense tourism might also be distinguished from other types of leisure activity.

The spatial interaction arising out of the tourist's movement from origin to destination has not been examined explicitly in much of the geographical literature on tourism. The majority

of geographical, and other, studies have been concerned with only one part of the system, usually with the destination, as typified by the many ideographic studies which have appeared since the 1960s. A sense of this interaction and a more general spatial structure does, however, emerge from some of the earlier studies. In his seminal work on second homes in Ontario, for instance, Wolfe (1951: 28) observes: 'In ecological terms we have added segments of two zones to the city of Toronto: a buffer zone 50 miles wide, a recreation bridge to cross . . . and a summer dormitory zone seventy miles wide'. In a similar vein Defert (1966), one of the first French geographers to make a substantial contribution to the geography of tourism, writes of an *espace distance* which separates the permanent residence from the seasonal one and of an *espace milieu* where the tourist enjoys his holiday. A decade later, Miossec (1976) speaks of *l'espace touristique* as being both an *espace parcouru* and as an *espace occupé* involving a *lieu de déplacement* and a *lieu de séjour*. Miossec notes, however, that few studies have explicitly attempted to bring together the generating regions (origins), receiving regions (destinations) and the associated linkages.

The aim of this book is to analyse in a systematic and comprehensive manner the geographical dimensions of tourism, not only to increase our understanding of this important and growing industry but also to show how a geographical perspective can contribute to its planning, devel-

opment and management. The basic framework used is an origin-linkage-destination system of the type outlined above as this provides an effective integrative device for investigating what is inherently a very geographical phenomenon. Geographic scale is a second major organizational feature, with the focus changing from the international to the national, regional and local scales. The links between these scales are also emphasized.

While this book stresses geographical methods of analysis and draws predominantly, but by no means exclusively, on the works of geographers, it is addressed to a much wider audience. An appreciation of the geographical dimensions of tourism and the adoption of a spatial perspective can provide valuable insights into this phenomenon for researchers in allied disciplines – economics, sociology, anthropology, resource management, business administration – as well as for those involved in the planning, development and management of the tourist industry at different levels. At present it appears many organizations responsible for collecting tourism-related data do not exploit them fully or in some cases at all. The effort appears to go into compilation rather than analysis. The examples given here show the wide variety of uses to which this information can be put. It is hoped that these will not only stimulate the relevant organizations to make better use of the material that is available but encourage others to extend or modify their data collection procedures.

Chapter 1 provides a theoretical base and reviews a variety of different concepts and models which give weight to different aspects of the origin-linkage-destination system. Chapter 2 concentrates on demand and motivation and considers what underlies people's desire to leave their home area to visit other places. Selected tourist flows at various scales – international, intra-national and domestic – are examined in Chapters 3 to 6. The focus then shifts to destination areas, with Chapter 7 being devoted to a review of ways of measuring spatial variations in tourism. Subsequent chapters then consider the spatial structure of tourism at various scales, at a national and regional level in Chapter 8, on islands in Chapter 9 and in coastal resorts and urban areas in Chapter 10. Finally, Chapter 11 reviews two major and recurring themes – concentration and spatial interaction – and considers the significance of these. Examples are also given of how geographical techniques and a spatial perspective can be applied in planning, development, marketing and the assessment of

the impact of tourism. Conclusions are then drawn.

Each of these topics is examined systematically, with the emphasis being on identifying general patterns and processes and on distinguishing the general from the specific. In order to understand better the processes involved, an attempt is made to examine the evolution of flow patterns and the changing distribution of tourists and facilities over time. Discussion of patterns and processes, and particularly their evolution, cannot, however, be separated from questions of data and methodology. The weight given to these matters varies from topic to topic depending on the extent and nature of the related literature. As recent reviews have pointed out, the coverage of topics is far from uniform and the literature on the geography of tourism is still very fragmented (Pearce 1979a; Barbier and Pearce 1984; Duffield 1984; Lundgren 1984; Mitchell 1984; Pearce and Mings 1984). In some cases, as with domestic tourist studies at the local level (Ch. 6) or the morphology of coastal resorts (Ch. 10), it is possible to review a wide range of related research results. In other instances, more attention must be given to the availability and reliability of the data, as with international tourist flows (Ch. 3) or methodological issues, for instance measuring intra-national tourist flows (Ch. 4) or analysing domestic tourist travel at the national level (Ch. 6). Given the diversity of data and techniques used in measuring spatial variations in tourism, it is appropriate to review and evaluate these in one chapter (Ch. 7) so as to allow a more fluid discussion of patterns in subsequent chapters. In topic areas which have hitherto attracted little attention, existing studies are complemented by original material or new treatment, such as the discussions of an integrated approach to international travel (Ch. 5), national patterns of tourism (Ch. 8), tourism on islands (Ch. 9) and tourism in urban areas (Ch. 10). Avenues for future research are also identified.

Given the nature of tourism, particularly international tourism, as well as the aim of identifying general patterns and processes, it is appropriate to draw on examples from many parts of the globe. Recent national reviews indicate that the coverage of topics varies considerably from country to country (Barbier and Pearce 1984; Benthien 1984; Duffield 1984; Lichtenberger 1984; Lundgren 1984; Mitchell 1984; Pearce and Mings 1984; Takeuchi 1984). Factors accounting for this uneven treatment include differences in the type of tourism practised, variations in available data, broader disciplinary traditions and emphases

(regional studies in France and quantitative analysis in North America) and the interests of individual researchers. Drawing on a geographically diverse range of examples allows the generality of ideas and patterns to be examined in those topic areas which have attracted relatively more attention and enables the evaluation of a wider range of techniques and data sources with reference to those problems which are only just being explored. Inevitably the material

selected has been biased by the author's own experiences, contacts and limited access to certain foreign language material. Any generalizations made have therefore to be seen in the light of the examples used. It is hoped nevertheless that the systematic approach adopted will readily enable other researchers to put their own results alongside the patterns and trends identified in this book and to compare and evaluate their techniques and methods with those discussed here.

1

Tourism models

The geography of tourism is not yet underpinned by a strong conceptual and theoretical base. To some extent this is due to the relative recency of tourism as a field of study. Although geographers were first interested in the topic over fifty years ago, it was not until the early 1960s in Europe and later in North America and elsewhere that geographical studies of tourism start to appear frequently in the literature (Pearce 1979a). Moreover there has been an absence of sustained research effort in this field, with much of the published work being carried out by those with only a transient interest in tourism, producing one or two usually ideographic papers before returning to their more established and accepted branch of the discipline or moving on to pastures new. Mitchell (1984: 6) speaks of a 'proclivity to "selectively mine" pristine tourism topics and to neglect the "mass mining" of more normal or mundane subjects or areas . . . The stock pile of research findings do not advance systematically but rather progress spasmodically and in a seemingly random fashion.' In the absence of unifying concepts and theories which are slow to develop in such a context, much research continues to lack direction and the cycle goes largely unbroken.

Nevertheless, since the late 1960s a number of models dealing with various aspects of the spatial structure of tourism have started to emerge. As in other areas of the geography of tourism, these models appear to have been developed inde-

pendently of one another, with little or no recognition of or attempt to build on previous efforts. Perhaps this is not too surprising given that models have been developed by those working in Europe, North America, Australasia and Japan. This chapter reviews and evaluates these models with the aim of providing a theoretical and conceptual base and general frameworks for examining the spatial dynamics of tourism and analysing and interpreting material in subsequent chapters.

As noted in the Introduction, a few early writers such as Wolfe (1951) and Defert (1966) outlined fundamental aspects of the patterns and processes of spatial interaction inherent in all forms of tourism. Later researchers have attempted to express these relationships more explicitly and to derive increasingly complex models of tourist space. The basis of most of these models remains an origin-linkage-destination system, with various writers giving different emphasis to these three elements and expressing them in different terms. Four basic groups of models might be identified: those emphasizing the travel or linkage component, origin-destination models, structural models and evolutionary models.

Models of tourist travel

The emphasis in the early explicit models of tourist systems tends to be on the linkage or