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John Urry

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## THE 'CONSUMPTION' OF TOURISM<sup>1</sup>

JOHN URRY

*Abstract* This paper provides an analysis of a relatively unusual topic, namely, the social divisions surrounding the consumption of tourist-related services. In the first section a number of points are made which suggest that the topic is both important and difficult to analyse. Some attention is paid to the features of the tourist gaze. In the second main section the problems brought up by various economists of congestion and positionality are analysed. It is suggested that there is an important distinction to be drawn between the romantic and the collective tourist gaze which makes the issue of congestion/positionality more complex than economists have suggested. Some sociological implications of this distinction are developed in the final concluding section.

'Tourists are vulgar, vulgar, vulgar'  
(Henry James, quoted Pearce and Moscardo 1986:21)

### *Introduction*

To the extent to which there can be said to be a sociology of consumption it has been mainly concerned with the differential purchase, use and symbolic significance of material objects. Such objects include not only housing but also clothes, cars, electrical goods, food, furniture and so on. In this article I shall suggest that this is an overly-restricted focus and that there are a range of alternative items of consumption, of various services, which raise particularly complex problems of interpretation and explanation. In particular I shall be concerned with those services related to tourism and holiday-making. It will be argued that interesting and complex issues arise with regard to the social relations surrounding such tourist-related services, in particular, the nature of so-called 'positional goods'. A paradox will be detailed, namely, that, although within economics rather than sociology, some advance has been made in explaining the consumption patterns of tourist-related services, the conclusion of such work is that such consumption is indelibly social. Explaining the consumption of tourist-services cannot be separated off from the social relations within which they are embedded.

Before turning directly to these issues, I shall outline a number of programmatic arguments. First, as already stated, the sociology of consumption must

consider services as much as material objects. Indeed, given the importance of services in contemporary western economies, one could well argue that the analysis of the social differentiations involved in services will now be of greater significance than is the case for material objects (see Urry 1988 for a review of such material).

Second, one particular kind of service that has been particularly under-examined by sociologists is that of travel. There is really no sociology of travel. The two most useful kinds of analysis have been first, the work carried out by social historians, such as on the social impact of the railway in the nineteenth century; and second, more recent cultural investigation, such as the social features of boulevard life which developed in the Paris of the Second Empire (see Perkin 1976 and Berman 1983 respectively). One aspect that needs analysis is the democratisation of travel. Until the nineteenth century being able to travel, particularly for non-work reasons, was only available to a narrow elite and was itself a mark of status. This was true of all horse-drawn forms of transport. The mid- to late-nineteenth century development of the railway permitted mass travel for the first time. Status distinctions came to be drawn less between those who could and those who could not travel but between different classes of traveller. In the twentieth century further distinctions became drawn between different modes of transport (sea, air, rail) and between different forms that this took (scheduled/package air flights). But also as geographical movement became democratised so extensive distinctions of taste were established between different *places*. Where one travelled to became of considerable significance. In nineteenth century Britain this gave rise to a resort hierarchy with considerable differences of 'social tone' established between otherwise similar places (Urry 1987; Perkin 1976).

Third, a further crucial feature of consumption is to be able to buy time, that is, the ability to avoid work and to replace it either with leisure or with other kinds of work. Veblen most famously investigated the social dynamics of a 'leisure class', that is the class that demonstrates esteem through leisure. He says that 'the characteristic feature of leisure-class life is a conspicuous exemption from all useful employment' (1912:40). Now however in western societies, leisure patterns are immensely more complex than this. Everyone has at least some rights to leisure, to be conspicuously non-working for particular times in the week or the year. Being able to go on holiday, to be obviously not at work, is presumed to be a characteristic of modern citizenship which has become embodied into peoples' thinking about health and well-being. 'I need a holiday' is a particularly clear reflection of such a modern view of the need to consume time away from work. Sixty-three per cent of the UK population define as a 'necessity' at least one week's holiday a year without relatives (Mack and Lansley 1985:54).

Fourth, two further deficiencies of much writing about consumption are the presumption of an a-social individual and the supposition that consumption occurs without further work once an object has been purchased. These

assumptions are not problematic for some relatively trivial kinds of consumption, where the purchase by an isolated individual of an object involves fairly direct consumption, such as a bar of chocolate. But most forms of consumption involve breaking with these two assumptions. This is first because much consumption is conducted by social groups, obviously by households, but also by large organisations (*e.g.* global corporations) and by informal social groups (buying a round in a bar). Forming a view as to the appropriate scale and nature of consumption is in all these cases irreducibly social and cannot be sensibly analysed by assuming utility-maximising isolated individuals (see Pahl 1984 on how 'consumption' involves household work strategies). The second assumption, that consumption equals purchase, is also often inappropriate since there is generally a considerable amount of work involved in transforming what is purchased (such as meat and vegetables) into object of consumption (a hot meal). Much feminist literature on households, which demonstrates the fact that housework is *work*, brings this out very clearly. It means that there is here also a fundamentally *social* process and one often involving social relations of considerable inequality. Specifically, in relationship to tourism it is crucial to recognise how the consumption of tourist services is social. It normally involves a particular social grouping, a 'family' household, a 'couple', or a 'group'. To a significant extent different kinds of holiday experience are devised with these different social groupings in mind. And it is also clear that converting a range of tourist services into a satisfactory 'holiday' involves a great deal of 'work'. This work involves both the grouping itself determined to have a 'good time', and it involves those selling the services who, to varying degrees, try to guarantee a particular holiday experience (hoteliers, tour operators, restaurateurs, flight attendants *etc.*). One problem however with tourist services is that there is a rather unclear relationship between the objects and services purchased (ice creams, flights to Majorca *etc.*) and a good holiday experience. This is partly because many of these services involve the production and consumption of a particular *social* experience which cannot be reduced to, say, the details of a restaurant menu. This is an extremely difficult quality to ensure and to the extent it is not provided (the surly waiter, the abrupt flight attendant, the careless amusement park attendant), so the customer will be dissatisfied although it may be difficult for management to identify just what is missing (Bagguley *et al.* 1990:chapter 3). Moreover, part of that social experience involved in many tourist contexts is to be able to consume particular commodities in the company of others. Part of what people buy is in effect a particular social composition of other consumers; and this is difficult for the providers of the services to ensure. It is this which creates 'ambience' of a particular cosmopolitan city, a stylish hotel, a lively nightclub and so on. The satisfaction is derived not from the individual act of consumption but from the fact that all sorts of other people are also consumers of the service, and these people are deemed appropriate to the particular consumer in question.

Fifth, it is already clear that consumption in the case of many tourist services

is a rather complex and inchoate process. This is because what is the minimal characteristic of tourist activity is the fact that we look at, or gaze upon, particular objects, such as piers, towers, old buildings, artistic objects, food, countryside and so on. The actual purchases in tourism (the hotel bed, the meal, the ticket *etc.*) are often incidental to the gaze, which may be no more than a momentary view. Central to tourist consumption then is to look individually or collectively upon aspects of landscape or townscape which are distinctive, which signify an experience which contrasts with everyday experience. It is that gaze which gives a particular heightening to other elements of that experience, particularly to the sensual. In conclusion to this Introduction I shall summarise some of the key elements of the 'tourist gaze' which, as I have just suggested, is central to the consumption of tourist services (for much more detail see Urry 1990).

1. Tourism is a leisure activity which presupposes its opposite, namely regulated and organised work. It is one manifestation of how work and leisure are organised as separate and regulated spheres of social practice in 'modern' societies. Indeed being a tourist is one of the defining characteristics of being 'modern' and is bound up with major transformations of paid work. Work has come to be organised within particular places and to occur for regularised periods of time.
2. The tourist gaze arises from a movement of people to, and their stay in, various other destinations. This necessarily involves some movement through space, that is the journey, and a period of stay in a new place or places.
3. The journey and stay are to, and in, sites which are outside the normal places of residence and work. Periods of residence elsewhere are of a short-term and temporary nature. There is a clear intention to return 'home' within a relatively short period of time.
4. The places gazed upon are for purposes which are not directly connected with paid work and normally they offer some distinctive contrasts with work (both paid and unpaid).
5. A substantial proportion of the population of modern societies engages in such tourist practices; and new socialised forms of provision are developed in order to cope with the mass character of the 'tourist gaze' (as opposed to the individual character of 'travel').
6. Places are chosen to be gazed upon because there is an anticipation, especially through day-dreaming and fantasy, of intense pleasures, either on a different scale or involving different senses from those customarily encountered. Such anticipation is constructed and sustained through a variety of non-tourist practices, such as film, newspapers, T.V., magazines, records and videos which construct that gaze. Such practices provide the signs in terms of which the holiday experiences are understood, so that what is then seen is interpreted in terms of these pre-given categories.
7. The gaze is directed to features of landscape and townscape which separate them off from everyday and routine experiences. Such aspects are viewed

because they are taken to be in some sense out-of-the-ordinary. The viewing of such tourist sights often involves different forms of social patterning, with a much greater sensitivity to visual elements of landscape or townscape than is normally found in everyday life. People linger over such a gaze which is then visually objectified or captured through photographs, postcards, films, models and so on. These enable the gaze to be endlessly reproduced and recaptured.

8. Moreover, the gaze is constructed through signs and tourism involves the collection of such signs. When for example tourists see two people kissing in Paris what they are gazing upon is 'timeless, romantic Paris', when a small village in England is seen, tourists think they are gazing upon the 'real (merrie) England'. As Culler argues: 'the tourist is interested in everything as a sign of itself . . . All over the world the unsung armies of semioticians, the tourists, are fanning out in search of the signs of Frenchness, typical Italian behaviour, exemplary Oriental scenes, typical American thruways, traditional English pubs' (1981:127).

9. An array of tourist professionals develop who attempt to reproduce ever-new objects of the tourist gaze. These objects are located in a complex and changing hierarchy. This depends upon the interplay between, on the one hand, competition between different capitalist and state interests involved in the provision of such objects; and on the other hand, changing class, gender and generational distinctions of taste within the potential population of visitors.

In the following section I shall consider some of the contributions made by economists to understanding the complex processes of congestion and crowding which results from various social limits upon 'consuming' such objects of the tourist gaze. It will be shown that there are in fact two distinct forms of the gaze which have different implications both for visitors and for the objects gazed upon (such as 'lovers' in Paris, residents of quaint English villages, and so on).

### *The Social Limits To Tourism*

The economist Mishan presents one of the clearest accounts of the thesis that there are fundamental limits to the scale of contemporary tourism (1969). These limits derive from the immense costs of congestion and overcrowding. He perceptively writes of: 'the conflict of interest . . . between, on the one hand, the tourists, tourist agencies, traffic industries and ancillary services, to say nothing of governments anxious to augment their reserves of foreign currencies, and all those who care about preserving natural beauty on the other' (1969:140). He quotes the example of Lake Tahoe, whose plant and animal life has been destroyed by sewage generated by the hotels built on its banks. A 1980s example would be the way in which the coral around tourist islands like Barbados is dying, both because of the pumping of raw sewage into the sea from the beachside hotels, and because locals remove both plants and fish from the coral to sell to tourists.

Mishan also notes that here is a conflict of interest between present and future generations which stems from the way in which travel and tourism is priced. The cost of the marginal tourist takes no account of the additional congestion costs imposed by the extra tourist. These congestion costs include the generally undesirable effects of overcrowded beaches, a lack of peace and quiet, and the destruction of the scenery. Moreover, the environmentally sensitive tourist knows that there is nothing to be gained from delaying their visit to the place in question. Indeed if anything the incentive is the other way round. There is a strong pull to go as soon as possible – to enjoy the unspoiled view before the crowds get there! Mishan's perspective as someone appalled by the consequences of mass tourism can be seen from the following: 'the tourist trade, in a competitive scramble to uncover all places of once quiet repose, of wonder, beauty and historic interest to the money-flushed multitude, is in effect literally and irrevocably destroying them' (1969:141). His middle class, middle-aged elitism is never far from the surface. For example, he claims that it is the 'young and gullible' who are taken in by the fantasies dreamt up by the tourist industry.

However, Mishan's main criticism is that the spread of mass tourism does not in fact produce a democratisation of travel. It is an illusion which destroys the very places which are being visited. This is because geographical space is a strictly limited resource. Mishan says: 'what a few may enjoy in freedom the crowd necessarily destroys for itself' (1969:142). Unless international agreement is reached (he suggested the immensely radical banning of all international air travel !), the next generation will inherit a world almost bereft of places of 'undisturbed natural beauty' (1969:142). So allowing the market to develop without regulation has the effect of destroying the very places which are the objects of the tourist gaze. Increasing numbers of such places come to suffer from the same pattern of destruction.

This pessimistic argument is criticised by Beckerman who makes two important points (1974:50–2). First, concern for the effects of mass tourism is basically a 'middle class' anxiety (like much other environmental concern). This is because the really rich 'are quite safe from the masses in the very expensive resorts, or on their private yachts or private islands or secluded estates' (Beckerman 1974:50–1). Second, most groups affected by mass tourism do in fact benefit from it, including even some of the pioneer visitors who return to find services available that were unobtainable when the number of visitors was small. Hence Beckerman talks of the 'narrow selfishness of the Mishan kind of complaint' (Beckerman 1974:51).

This disagreement over the effects of mass tourism is given more theoretical weight in Hirsch's thesis on the social limits to growth (1978: see the collection Ellis and Kumar 1983). His starting point is similar to Mishan's when he notes that individual liberation through the exercise of consumer choice does not make those choices liberating for all individuals together (1978:26). In particular he is concerned with the positional economy. This term refers to all

aspects of goods, services, work, positions and other social relationships which are either scarce or subject to congestion or crowding. Competition is therefore zero-sum, as any one person consumes more of the goods in question, so someone else is forced to consume less. Supply cannot be increased, unlike the case of material goods where the processes of economic growth can usually ensure increased production. People's consumption of positional goods is relational. The satisfaction derived by each individual is not infinitely expandable but depends upon the position of one's own consumption to that of others. This can be termed coerced competition. Ellis and Heath define this as competition in which the *status quo* is not an option (1983:16–19). It is normally assumed in economics that market exchanges are voluntary so that people freely choose whether or not to enter into the exchange relationship. However, in the case of coerced consumption people do not have such a choice. One has to participate even though at the end of the consumption process no-one is necessarily better off. This can be summarised in the phrase: 'one has to run faster in order to stay still'. Hirsch cites the example of suburbanisation. People move to the suburbs to escape from the congestion in the city and to be nearer the quietness of the countryside. But as economic growth continues so the suburbs get more congested, they expand and so the original suburbanites are as far away from the countryside as they were originally. Hence they will seek new suburban housing closer to the countryside and so on. The individually rational actions of others make one worse off and each person cannot avoid participating in the leapfrogging process. No-one is better off over time as a result of such coerced consumption.

Hirsch argues that much consumption has similar characteristics to the case of suburbanisation, namely that the satisfaction people derive from it depends upon the consumption choices of others. This can be seen most clearly in the case of certain goods which are scarce in an absolute sense. Examples cited here are 'old masters' or the 'natural landscape' where increased consumption by one leads directly to reduced consumption by another (although see Ellis and Heath 1978:6–7). Hirsch also considers the cases where there is 'direct social scarcity', which are luxury or snob goods enjoyed because they are rare or expensive and possession of them indicates social status or good taste. Examples include jewellery, a residence in a particular part of London, or designer clothes. A further type Hirsch considers is that of 'incidental social scarcity', that is goods whose consumption yields satisfaction which is influenced by the relative extensiveness of use by others. Examples here include the car-purchase but with no increase of satisfaction because of increased congestion as everyone else does the same; and the obtaining of educational qualifications and no improved access to leadership positions because everyone else has been acquiring similar credentials (Ellis and Heath 1983:10–11).

It is fairly easy to suggest examples of tourism which fit these various forms of scarcity. On the first, access to Windermere in the English Lake District is in a condition of absolute scarcity. One person's consumption is at the expense of



someone else's. On the second, there are many holiday destinations which are consumed, not because they are intrinsically superior, but because they convey taste or superior status. For Europeans, the West Indies, West Africa and the Far East would be current examples, although these will change as mass tourism patterns themselves change. And third, there are many tourist sites where people's satisfaction depends upon the degree of congestion, currently such as Greece. Hirsch quotes a middle class professional who remarked that the development of cheap charter flights to a previously 'exotic' country meant that, 'now that I can afford to come here I know that it will be ruined' (1978:167).

Although I have set out these different types of positional good identified by Hirsch, the distinctions between them are not consistently sustained and they merge into each other. Furthermore, there are a number of major difficulties in his argument. First, it is ambiguous just what is meant by consumption in the case of much tourism. Is it the ability to gaze at particular object if necessary in the company of many others? Or is it to be able to gaze, without others being present? Or is it to be able to rent accommodation for a short period with a view of the object close at hand? Or finally, is it the ability to own property with a view of the object nearby? The problem arises, as we have noted, because of the importance of the gaze to touristic activity. A gaze is after all visual, it can literally take a split second, and the other services provided are in a sense peripheral to the fundamental process of consumption, which is the capturing of the gaze. This means that the scarcities involved in tourism are more complex than Hirsch allows for. One strategy pursued by the tourist industry has been to initiate new developments which have permitted greatly increased numbers to gaze upon the same object. Examples include building huge hotel complexes away, say, from the coastline itself; the development of off-peak holidays so that the same view can be gazed upon throughout the year; devising holidays for different segments of the market so that a wider variety of potential visitors can see the same object; and the development of time-share accommodation so that the facilities can be used all of the year.

Moreover, the notion of scarcity is problematic for other reasons. I shall begin here by noting the distinction between the physical carrying capacity of a tourist site, and its perceptual capacity (Walter 1982). In the former sense it is clear when a mountain path literally cannot take any more walkers since it has been eroded and effectively disappeared. Nevertheless, even here there are still thousands of *other* mountain paths that could be walked along and so the scarcity only applies to *this* path leading to *this* particular view, not to all paths along all mountains.

However, the notion of perceptual capacity further complicates the situation. Although the path may still be physically passable, it no longer signifies the pristine wilderness upon which the visitor had expected to gaze (Walter 1982:296). Its perceptual carrying capacity would have been reached, but not its physical capacity. However, perceptual capacity is immensely variable and

depends upon particular conceptions of nature and of the circumstances in which people expect to gaze upon it. Walter cites the example of an Alpine mountain. As a material good the mountain can be viewed for its grandeur, beauty and conformity to the idealized Alpine horn. There is almost no limit to this good. No matter how many people are looking at the mountain it still retains these qualities. However, the same mountain can be viewed as a positional good, as a kind of shrine to nature which individuals wish to enjoy in solitude. There is then a 'romantic' form of the tourist gaze, in which the emphasis is upon solitude, privacy and a personal, semi-spiritual relationship with the object of the gaze. Barthes characterises this viewpoint as found in the 'Guide Bleu': he talks of 'this bourgeois promoting of the mountains, this old Alpine myth . . . only mountains, gorges, defiles and torrents . . . seem to encourage a morality of effort and solitude' (1972:74). For example, Stourhead Park in Wiltshire illustrates

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

When I discussed Mishan it was noted that he emphasised that 'undisturbed natural beauty' constituted the typical object of the tourist gaze. But this is only one kind of gaze, the 'romantic'. I shall now set out the characteristics of an alternative, which I shall call the 'collective' tourist gaze.

I will begin here by considering a different Wiltshire house and garden, Longleat, which is

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

In other words, such places are designed as public places. They would look strange if they were empty. It is in part other people that make such places. The collective gaze thus necessitates the presence of large numbers of other people, as are found for example in English seaside resorts. Other people give atmosphere to a place. They indicate that this is *the* place to be and that one should not be elsewhere. Indeed one of the problems for the contemporary English seaside resort is precisely that there are not enough other people to convey these sorts of messages. 'Brighton or Lyme Regis on a sunny summer's day with the beach to oneself would be an eerie experience' (Walter 1982:298). It is the presence of other *tourists*, people just like oneself, that is actually

necessary for the success of such places which depend upon the collective tourist gaze. This is particularly the case in major cities, whose uniqueness is their cosmopolitan character. The presence of people from all over the world (tourists in other words) give capital cities their distinct excitement and glamour.

A further point here is that large numbers of other tourists do not simply generate congestion as the positional good argument would suggest. The presence of other tourists provides a market for the sorts of services that most tourists are in fact eager to purchase, such as accommodation, meals, drink, travel and entertainment. New Zealand is an interesting case here. Once one leaves the four major cities there are almost no such facilities because of the few visitors compared to the size of the country. The contrast with the Lake District in north west England is most striking, given the scenic similarity.

Thus Hirsch's arguments about scarcity and positional competition mainly apply to those types of tourism characterised by the romantic gaze. Where the collective gaze is to be found then there is no problem about crowding and congestion. And indeed Hirsch's argument rests on the notion that there are only a limited number of objects which can be viewed by the tourist. Yet in recent years there has been an enormous increase in the objects of the tourist gaze, far beyond those providing 'undisturbed natural beauty'. It was reported in a study conducted by the Cabinet Office in the U.K. that of all the tourist attractions open in 1983, half had been opened in the previous fifteen years (Cabinet Office 1985). And part of the reason for such an increase results from the fact that contemporary tourists are collectors of gazes. They are less interested in visiting the same place year after year. The initial gaze is what counts and people appear to have less and less interest in repeat visits (Blackpool being almost the exception that proves the rule).

There are two concluding points to note here. First, those who value solitude and a romantic tourist gaze do not see this as merely *one* way of regarding nature. They consider it as 'authentic', as real. And they attempt to make everyone else sacralise nature in the same sort of way. Romanticism has become widespread and generalised, spreading out from the upper and middle classes, although the notion of romantic nature is a fundamentally invented pleasure. And yet the more that its adherents attempt to proselytise its virtues to others, the more the conditions of the romantic gaze are undermined: 'the romantic tourist is digging his [*sic*] own grave if he seeks to evangelise others to his own religion' (Walter 1982:301). The romantic gaze is part of the mechanism by which tourism is spreading on a global scale and drawing almost every country into its ambit, thereby providing uniformity, minimising diversity, and encouraging the 'romantic' to seek ever new objects of the romantic gaze (see Turner and Ash 1975 on this extension of the 'pleasure periphery').

Second, the tourist gaze is increasingly signposted. There are markers which identify what things and places are worthy of our gaze. Such signposting identifies a relatively small number of tourist nodes. The result is that most

tourists are concentrated within a very limited area. As Walter says, 'the sacred node provides a positional good that is destroyed by democratisation' (1982: 302). He in turn favours the view that there are 'gems to be found everywhere and in everything . . . there is no limit to what you will find' (Walter 1982:302). We should get away from the tendency to construct the tourist gaze at a few selected sacred sites, and be much more catholic in the objects at which we may gaze. This has begun to occur in recent years, particularly with the development of industrial and heritage tourism. However, in part the signposts are designed to help people congregate and are in a sense an important element of the collective tourist gaze. Visitors come to learn that they can congregate in certain places and that that is where the collective gaze will take place.

I will conclude this section on the economic theory of tourism by noting the pervasiveness of the romantic as opposed to the collective gaze and the consequential problem of the positional good of many tourist sites,

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

### *Conclusion*

I have tried to demonstrate here that the consumption of 'tourist services' is important yet by no means easy to understand and explain. The importance derives from the centrality of tourist activities in modern societies. Indeed elsewhere it will be argued that the way in which 'tourism' has been historically separated from other activities, such as shopping, sport, culture, architecture and so on, is dissolving. The result of such a process is a 'universalising of the tourist gaze' (Urry 1990).

The difficulty of understanding tourist activities derives from the unclear character of just what is being consumed. I have suggested that it is crucial to recognise the visual character of tourism, that we gaze upon certain objects which in some ways stand out or speak to us. I have also shown there are two characteristic forms of such a gaze, the romantic and the collective, and that problems of congestion and positionality are very different in these two cases. More work though needs to be undertaken on the impact of these different gazes on particular places, and how the providers of different services structure them in relationship to such different gazes. A particular issue is that of authenticity. It is argued especially by MacCannell that what tourists seek is the 'authentic', but that this is necessarily unsuccessful since those being gazed

upon come to construct artificial sights which keep the inquisitive tourist away (MacCannell 1976). Tourist spaces are thus organized around what he calls 'staged authenticity'. Two points should be noted here. First, the lack of authenticity is much more of a problem for the 'romantic gaze' of the service class for whom naturalness and authenticity are essential components. It is less of a problem for those engaged in the collective tourist gaze where congregation is paramount. Second, it has recently been suggested that some tourists might best be described as 'post-tourists', people who almost delight in inauthenticity. The post-tourist finds pleasure in the multitude of games that can be played and knows that there is no authentic tourist experience. They know that the apparently authentic fishing village could not exist without the income from tourism or that the glossy brochure is a piece of pop culture. For the post-tourist there is no particular problem about the inauthentic. It is merely another game to be played at, another pastiched surface feature of post-modern experience.

#### Note

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*Biographical note:* JOHN URRY, B.A., M.A., Ph.D.(Cambridge). Lecturer in Sociology, Lancaster University 1970-81, Senior Lecturer 1981-5, Professor 1985- , Head of Department 1983-9. Forthcoming work includes *Restructuring. Place, Class and Gender* (Sage 1990: co-author), *Place, Politics and Policy. Do Localities Matter* (Unwin Hyman 1990: co-editor) and *The Tourist Gaze* (Sage 1990). Editor of the International Library of Sociology.

*Address:* Department of Sociology, University of Lancaster, Lancaster LA1 4YL.