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Issues and Case Studies**

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# **TOURISM AND THE LESS DEVELOPED WORLD: ISSUES AND CASE STUDIES**

Edited by David Harrison. CABI (Nosworthy Way, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 8DE, UK) 2001, 272 pp (tables, figures, index) £49.95 Pbk. ISBN 0-85199-433-4.

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David Harrison has assembled 16 colleagues, mostly from the United Kingdom and North America, to summarize their tourism development experiences in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the Pacific. Although all papers provide useful insights, the opening and concluding papers by Harrison himself provide the most interesting and provocative content of the collection. He sets the tone for the volume at the outset by observing, “[t]he notion of ‘sustainable tourism’ is at best ambiguous and more often than not virtually useless ... the tourism industry can be sustained for long periods, albeit at the cost of specific destination areas, environments, and communities” (p. 8).

Harrison identifies three key issues that shape tourism in developing countries: migration, commoditization, and the roles of government. He also notes the importance of amenity migration - a significant social phenomenon in North America and Europe - in some regions of the world. British residents have long traveled to Spain as part of their retirement; a similar phenomenon is now being observed with wealthier residents in former communist countries (p. 25). The

difference now is that modern amenity migrants are working from their new homes, whereas their forerunners were largely retirees.

The contributed papers begin with a discussion of commoditization by Linda Richter, who quotes a Malaysian marketing brochure in which “tourists are given no hint that they should be interested in anything but their golfing prowess” (p. 49). She suggests that “4-S tourism” needs four more “Ss”: security, sanitation, safe transport and sensible protection of built and natural heritage. Guillermo Santana examines tourism in a South American area, noting the significance of regional inter-airline agreements. Alan Lew covers tourism in China, pointing out that most international arrivals are ethnic Chinese from Hong Kong and Macau. He also mentions China’s former airline monopoly CAAC, a name that still brings shudders to old China hands worldwide.

Derek Hall takes on tourism in post-communist societies, bemoaning “economic geographers who often cannot see beyond the next manufacturing plant” (p. 103). Michael Hall notes that outbound Japanese in the 80s traveled in search of cheap sex (p. 126) or cheap golf (p. 122), and then presents detailed and more current data on tourism arrivals and Japanese investment in ASEAN nations. Shalini Singh notes that there are 144 million domestic tourists in India compared to 2 million foreign tourists. She reviews the special features, successes, and failures of the industry and tourism policy in the world’s second most populous country. Heba Aziz discusses the significance of the Hajj, the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, for tourism in the Arab world. Dave Weaver uses his Caribbean experience to

illustrate his classification into sustainable and unsustainable mass tourism, and both its “deliberate” and “circumstantial” alternatives.

Other chapters grapple with more controversial issues. Brian King examines resorts in less-developed countries, comparing enclave tourism with developments integrated into local communities, anarchic development with rigid planning, large with small scale development, and boosters with detractors. “The growing popularity of vast mega-resorts managed by transnational corporations is of ongoing concern” (p. 188). In another paper, Heather Montgomery examines child sex tourism in Thailand, observing that there are “real and terrible cases of abuse” (p. 200), but contrary to conventional wisdom, only about 10% involve tourists.

In their look at tourism in southern Africa, Frank Brennan and Garth Allen re-examine case studies of community tourism in Kwa-Zulu Natal and the bitter dispute at Greater St Lucia Wetland Park. This conflict involved a mining company, conservation agency and subsistence farmers at Dukuduku. They describe how, at nearby Phinda, Conservation Corporation Africa successfully converted 17,000 hectares of farmland to a private game reserve; while, at Kosi Bay, a community ecotourism venture for 130 families from three tribes, set up by an NGO, failed apparently because of poor management and personal rivalries.

Indonesia is one of the world’s most biodiverse regions, but as noted by Sheryl Ross and Geoff Wall, it also has the world’s highest proportion of endangered species because of continuing clear-cutting of its forests. In North Sulawesi, ecotourism appears to be a small-

scale add-on to pre-established parks, rather than a driving force for their establishment. Of course, the same applies in most developed nations. In nearby Fiji, Kelly Bricker describes her experiences in establishing a whitewater rafting and kayaking business. This involved complex negotiations with local landowner groups, establishment of a conservation reserve along the rivers, and arrangements for revenue-sharing. This has indeed become a local success story, but national politics intervened, and the author came back to the United States. Finally, in an afterword, Harrison concludes that “tourism development is intimately linked to relationships of power” (p. 255) and that while there may be individual resorts, tour and transport operators, and even governments that try to promote sustainability, “examples of good practice are comparatively rare” (p. 256).

This collection is a useful addition to the library of anyone interested in tourism in developing countries. Although some of the case studies had been published elsewhere, the volume collects such studies in one convenient source. The book, as a collection of papers, leads to no strong concluding statement, but this reflects the nature of tourism development in the real world. Instead of a tidy conclusion, there is a wealth of information and insight.

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