

COMISIÓN DE INVESTIGACIÓN DE TURISMO INTERNACIONAL  
COMITÉ DE RECHERCHE DE TOURISME INTERNATIONAL  
RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TOURISM

# ***NEWSLETTER***

Official newsletter of RC50 of the International Sociological Association

**AUTUMN 2010**

**Editor: Jan te Kloeze**

## **EDITORIAL**

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

On behalf of the RC50 Executive Board I have the pleasure to send you this RC50 Newsletter Autumn 2010.

This Newsletter contains

- The announcement about RC50's website;
- The Minutes of our Business Meeting, Wednesday, 14 July 2010, Göteborg, Sweden, Svenska Mässan R4, 17.45 – 19.45;
- Notes, Peg Swain made during this meeting;
- Statements prepared for Session 7, called 'The Debate';
- Notes, Peg Swain made during this debate. Notes, called 'Future of RC-50';
- Impression of the Conference by Liza Berdychevsky;
- Idem by Rafiq Pirzada; and
- The 1<sup>st</sup> Call for Papers for our coming In-Between-Seminar, to be held in Shangri-La, Yunnan Province, China ; 8-12 August 2011.

I would like to thank all RC50 Executive Board Members for their contribution to this extensive Newsletter, and for the kind cooperation during the Congress in Göteborg, and afterwards. I trust we are going to make RC50 successful, and I am happy to announce that all Executive Board Members are ISA members-in-good-standing. In the meantime RC50 is growing.

Especially, I would like to thank Stephanie Malia Hom, our new Communications & Promotion Officer for all her efforts done so far.

I also would like to thank Liza Berdychevsky and Rafiq Pirzada for sending in their impression of the congress in Göteborg.

I am looking forward meeting you in Shangri-La !

Yours,

Jan te Kloeze,  
RC50 Secretary / Treasurer

## Announcement about the RC50 website

The RC50 unveiled its new website this month. The site, [www.rc50.info](http://www.rc50.info), is intended to be a source of information for its membership and the broader academic community about the organization's activities and its tourism-related research.

Stephanie Malia Hom

## Minutes RC50 Business Meeting, Wednesday, 14 July 2010, Göteborg, Sweden, Svenska Mässan R4, 17.45 – 19.45

### 1. Opening and settling the agenda.

RC50 President Jaap Lengkeek opened the meeting, and welcomed everybody. One extra point for the agenda was introduced by Jaap: members of honour. See point 8. 28 participants were present; amongst them 14 RC50 members-in-good-standing.

### 2. Minutes of business meeting, Durban 2006: adopted.

### 3. Reports of President and Secretary/Treasurer.

Jaap mentioned various subjects looking back at his presidency during the last four years:

- all sort of ideas made during the midterm conference in Wageningen were not followed (meant as a preparation for the Durban World Congress);
- Jaap prepared "Durban" (Mode 1, Mode 2, Cross-cultural perspectives ~ paradigms), but it was hard to get the papers in this framework; so disappointing;
- Midterm conference in Jaipur: International and Domestic Tourism. Again: hardly papers for the theme; no coherent papers for publishing (was refereed by Erik Cohen and Jaap Lengkeek);
- Gothenburg: vertical relationship between local/global and horizontal: tourism problems. Different backgrounds: Asia marginal represented; Latin America hardly, and Africa not at all. This is a main concern. Speaking in 10 minutes: a disaster; not more time given by ISA; but less papers: half of the people would come. So: a dilemma. Nevertheless: Jaap was surprised by the quality of the papers.

Another concern of Jaap: reading a paper should not be the case ("forbid reading"). Jaap was happy with the "Unusual" session. So, by and large: looking back with mixed feelings.

Other dilemmas: (1) offering an open platform versus a research agenda, and (2) purely academic versus practical approaches.

Suggestions for the new board:

- Rethink role of RC50; "Gothenburg" is promising;
- Rethink position RC50 in ISA field;
- In Japan (2014): RC50 should be in presidential sessions;
- Great challenges about publication ambitions; and

- Financial support for people from underprivileged regions, and for “Oldies”; and
  - Reports by Secretary/Treasurer were adopted. Currently, RC50 does have 32 members in good standing. Affiliated membership is possible (paid RC50 member; no ISA membership; a.o. no voting rights; time slots given by ISA is based on number of members-in-good-standing; has to be checked at the ISA secretariat by the RC50 Secretary).
4. Reports of vice-presidents:
- VP-1: written report; was distributed;
  - VP-2: VP-2 did not show up; and
  - VP-3: see report Secretary.

5. Election Executive Committee (for members ISA *and* RC50 only).

Peg Swain suggested to work with “twins” for the various positions. This idea was discussed first. The members-in-good-standing voted as follows:

President:

- . Swain and Wu: 9
- . Swain: 4
- . Blanco: 1.

So, Peg Swain’s proposal was adopted.

After the election of the president, the other nominees for the various positions were elected according to the Executive Board’s proposal; see next page.

All Executive Board Members are ISA members-in-good-standing [*dd.* 15<sup>th</sup> January 2011].

A question regards the length of the stay of RC(50) officers; see RC50 Statutes.

6. Resignation current committee and installation new committee: took place.
7. Discussion on future plans (intermediary sessions, publications).
- Regarding the XVIII World Congress in Yokohama, Japan: Nelson Graburn and Jens Jacobsen (VP-1) will contact a Japanese colleague;
  - Joint sessions will be considered. One suggestion came already from RC31: Migration;
  - RC50 President Tiger Wu suggested to reach the number of 60 members in 2014 (Japan);
  - Members should generate new members (why RC50 members?; apart from the intellectual level and the scientific and academic platform, also some financial benefit should be taken into account by making a fair difference in conference fee for the midterm conferences between members and non-members;
  - Jan te Kloeze advocated a specific paper presentation approach he experienced during a conference in Finland:
    - full papers should be ready one month before the conference; are sent to all participants; they read the papers;
    - around a theme appr. 8 – 10 participants are supposed to discuss; the content of the papers (every participant gets 5 minutes for refreshing up the memory);

## RC50 Executive Board; term 2010 – 2014

Position	Name	Organisational affiliation	Country
President	Tiger Wu <a href="mailto:Wubihu.bes@gmail.com">Wubihu.bes@gmail.com</a>	Beijing University	PRC
	Peg Swain <a href="mailto:mbswain@ucdavis.edu">mbswain@ucdavis.edu</a>	UC Davis, University of California	USA
Vice-President -1 - seminar during World Congresses	Hasso Spode <a href="mailto:Hasso.spode@gmx.de">Hasso.spode@gmx.de</a>	- FU Berlin: Willy-Scharnow-Institut (HAT) - LU Hannover: Institut fuer Soziologie	Germany
	Jens Kr. Steen Jacobsen <a href="mailto:jsi@toi.no">jsi@toi.no</a>	- Norwegian School of Hotel Management, University of Stavanger - Institute of Transport Economics Norwegian Centre for Transport Research, Oslo	Norway
Vice-President -2 - in-between-seminars	Honggen Xiao <a href="mailto:hmqxiao@polyu.edu.hk">hmqxiao@polyu.edu.hk</a>	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	Hong Kong / PRC
	Scott McCabe <a href="mailto:Scott.mccabe@nottingham.ac.uk">Scott.mccabe@nottingham.ac.uk</a>	Christel DeHaan Tourism and Travel Research Institute, Nottingham University Business School	UK
	Elizabeth Mathew <a href="mailto:Ebmathew.eb@gmail.com">Ebmathew.eb@gmail.com</a>	Loyola College of Social Sciences, Kerala	India
Vice-President -3 – Publications	Shalini Singh <a href="mailto:ssingh@brocku.ca">ssingh@brocku.ca</a>	Brock University Executive Editor of Tourism Recreation Research (India)	Canada India
	Kevin Meethan <a href="mailto:kmeethan@plymouth.ac.uk">kmeethan@plymouth.ac.uk</a>	University of Plymouth	UK
Secretary / Treasurer	Jan te Kloeze <a href="mailto:Jan.tekloetze@wice-dsl.nl">Jan.tekloetze@wice-dsl.nl</a>	Foundation WICE - DSL	The Netherlands
Communications & Promotion Officer	Stephanie Malia Hom <a href="mailto:smh@ou.edu">smh@ou.edu</a>	University of Oklahoma	USA

- in first instance, the discussion takes place according to a few questions put on the table by the session leader; these questions are taken from every participant who has prepared the question “at home”;
  - at least one hour should be available for the discussion; duration of the whole session: 2 hours;
  - this approach requires a lot of discipline from the participants; and
  - the big advantage is the optimal use of time for discussion (in contrast with the usual 10 minutes presentation time we faced during these and other conferences).
- Jaap voted for a “moderate Finnish Model”: paper ready, and handed out to participants who are interested;
  - variants: enough time should be reserved for exchange (apart from presentation time); “conversation session”; “post” 10 minutes or “post 30 minutes (e.g. 30 minutes talking);
  - geographical suggestions for the midterm conference:

- UK (VP-2 Scott McCabe)
- China (VP-2 Honggen Xiao)
- Kerala, India (VP-2 Elizabeth Mathew)
- Breda, Netherlands (Jaap Lengkeek)
- ISA World Forum, 2012; perhaps Paris???
- Remarks Kevin Meethan: see notes from Peg about publications.

8. Any other business.

- Jaap proposed to appoint RC50 members of honours (criteria: > 70 years; excellent work done in the frame of RC50). He proposed four names:
  - Marie-Françoise Lanfant
  - Krzysztof Przeclawski
  - Erik Cohen
  - Nelson Graburn.

The proposal was adopted with great enthusiasm. Jaap will inform them accordingly through the RC50 Secretary.

At least, RC50 will offer them a life-long RC50 membership, free of charge.

Nelson reacted in terms of offering this fee to a colleague in a less privileged position.

- Another point was the revival of the RC50 website; should be open for members only; lays on Stephanie's plate; she and Jan will communicate about this matter.

9. Closing

Peg Swain closed the meeting.

Drs Jan W. te Kloeze  
Secretary / Treasurer ISA - RC50

## **Business Meeting RC-50, Goteborg, July 2010**

### **M. Swain notes**

JAAP:

Paper presentation: from Durban, saw bad idea to just read from papers. Ask the new board to forbid reading of papers in the future. Debate is the model for the future.

Publications: disappointing results for Durban and Jaipur – hard to get a focus.

Decline? We will not get more space from ISA to have sessions. Should accept all who submit an abstract? Where have all the papers gone over the last 4 years? Don't know- would be good to find out.

Offer a platform of multicultural background, a purely academic approach to link to other RCs, as well as linking with practicum, link directly with change.

New Board:

Re-think RC-50's role. Organize program life cycle. Re-fix position in ISA field. Would be very happy to join in 4 years from now.

Strong challenges to new board: publications? Re-think internal procedures- how to fill different roles, think of supporting people from less privileged regions and support participation in another meeting.

Questions to address:

Board job descriptions (Jan looks into this) (Note from Jan: has been done; see RC50 website under "RC50 Statutes", Article V - Obligations of Board Members)

Are they in existence?

If not, build them.

Who decides main theme of in-between seminar(s) (VPs for that) and next Congress?

Develop a work plan and time table.

Tiger Wu: Propose membership development- institutionalization, boost geographic coverage and membership. In 2 years grow to 60 members, in 4 years get to 100. All board members could recruit (goal not quota).

Mid-term conferences – proposes 2: (1) with ITSA biannual (SE Asia) combine with them; (2) Kerala India, ISA forum?

(end)

# STATEMENTS Prepared Before ISA RC50 SESSION 7 'THE DEBATE'

*XVII ISA World Congress – July 2010*

Antonio Noguees Pedregal, Nelson Graburn, Honggen Xiao, Graham Dann, Kevin Meethan, Peg Swain, Tazim Jamal, Stephanie Hom

ORGANIZED BY Jaap Lengkeek

(1) **Antonio Miguel Nogués Pedregal**  
*Universitas Miguel Hernández*

## **How do you assess the state of the art of tourism sociology?**

I think it is quite peripheral and endogamic because of inner fragmentation. I have the impression that many individual efforts actually vanishes in the variety of specific results. As shown in Dann & Liebman's book, there are many more works than just English-speaking authors. Unfortunately, the person chosen to write on Spanish sociology has not read anything new in the last 20 years.

## **What is the significance of RC50 in the domain of tourism studies?**

Rather than asking which is the significance, because tourism studies is quite a broad and heterogeneous field (see the increasing number of journals, specialised institutes and university centres, seminars & conferences...) we may want to ask what we would like RC50 to be. Probably, taking advantage of that mentioned heterogeneity, RC50 could play the role of a real Research Committee aimed not only to meet and discuss, but also to create sort of a shared research agenda. For instance, we have the opportunity to design and implement different transnational & multilingual research projects in many different settings making, thus, comparability the very strength of the projects. Besides, if each of us somehow makes clear that we are members of RC50 in our texts, this would help to visualise the RC and our common interests.

## **How can/must tourism sociology effectively penetrate the other realms of sociology?**

No one doubts that tourism is a highly complex phenomenon that is connected with many other realms of social sciences. However, the fragmentation within the field is our main weakness. Once again, joining all of our efforts in RC50 as a group we could create a research strategy to link our theoretical diverse national backgrounds and literatures (strengths) to other sociological or anthropological fields: for instance, I am trying it with development studies with no evident results.

(2) **Nelson Graburn**  
*University of California, Berkeley*

### 1. How do you assess the state of the art of tourism sociology?

From my point of view, I will have to focus as much or more on the anthropology of tourism as the sociology (see Leite and Graburn 2009) I can also point out exemplars such as Erik Cohen, Ed Bruner, and many others who will be

in Goteburg who effectively contribute to both disciplines or whose work at least is very stimulating to both.

I think that the state of the art of tourism sociology is, like many disciplines, very patchy. By which I mean it has different histories and Strengths in different regions and countries (cf. Dann and Leibmann 2009) I myself have been more immersed in the progress of research and publication in Brazil (2009) and China (2010b) which are going very strongly, and Japan (2010a) where there is also considerable independent strength.

2. What is the significance of RC50 in the domain of tourism studies?

RC-50 is most significant; it is the one organization which is academically very serious, more so than, for instance the International Academy for the Study of Tourism (IAST). It is still, however, rather "patchy" in that we do not regularly have representatives from a lot of important research traditions, and attendance is so variable that it is difficult to provide continuity which is essential to collective "progress." I will emphasize, however, that things have been improving since we have been "under Dutch rule!"

3. How can/must tourism sociology effectively penetrate the other realms of sociology?

Again I must answer this in the light of the Leite and Graburn chapter. The success of tourism socio/anthropology is measured as much by its submersion into/within the co-disciplines as by its separateness. Soc/anthropology of tourism should not remain "outside" or "a marked category" with respect to the main discipline(s) as though it were an oddity. I believe that we are truly seeing the "success" in terms of the very ordinariness of our endeavours, such that no one has to explain why they are studying tourism (as I had to in Bielefeld, 1994); and, to study social fields which include tourism no longer makes one a "socio/anthropologist of tourism!"

DANN, G. and LIEBMAN PARRINELLO, G. (2009). *The Sociology of Tourism: European Origins and Developments*. Bradford. Emerald.

Graburn, Nelson (2009) "Existe uma Antropologia do Turismo? Tendências Contemporâneas." In Margarita Barretto (ed.) *Turismo e Antropologia*. Rio de Janeiro: Papirus Editora.

----- ( 2010a) "Introduction" pp. 1-28 in Han Min and Nelson Graburn (eds.) *Tourism and Glocalization: Perspectives in East Asian Studies*. Suita, Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, Senri Ethnological Studies.(by Han Min and Nelson Graburn).

----- (2010b) "The Rise of Tourism Studies in China: a Preliminary Examination." RC-50, Research Committee on International Tourism, International Sociological Association Meetings, Göteborg, Sweden, 12-15<sup>th</sup> July

Leite, Naomi and Nelson Graburn, (2009) "Anthropological Interventions in Tourism Studies." Pp. 35-64 in Mike Robinson and Tazim Jamal (eds.). *Handbook of Tourism Studies*. London: Sage. (junior co-author with Naomi Leite)

(3) **Honggen Xiao, PhD**

*Assistant Professor, School of Hotel and Tourism Management  
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University*

Discussion questions

1. How do you assess the state of the art of tourism sociology?
2. What is the significance of RC50 in the domain of tourism studies?
3. How can/must tourism sociology effectively penetrate the other realms of sociology?

The above questions (on sociology of tourism and its contributions to, or impacts on, tourism versus outside or parent disciplines) will be approached from the perspectives of scientific community and knowledge networks, multidisciplinary of tourism research and scholarship, (a)theoretical state-of-the-art of tourism studies, evolution of the field, and challenges for younger generations of tourism researchers.

The elaboration will also reflect upon paradigm shifts of social sciences knowledge and its implications for tourism research, tourism as an applied social scientific community, and the mobilization or use of tourism social science research for practitioners and policymakers in tourism.

(4) **Graham M. S. Dann**

*Finnmark University College, Alta, Norway*

**“Golden Oldies or Rising Stars: Whither Tourism Research?” Abbreviated Version of a Paper Forming a Partial Contribution to the Debate of Session 7, RC50 of the ISA World Congress, Gothenburg, July 14, 2010.**

*(Not to be cited without express permission from the author)* Now available in: Dann, G. M. S. 2010 "Golden Oldies or Rising Stars? Whither Tourism Research?" *Etudes et Rapports (Studies and Reports) serie L*, vol.15, pp.40. Aix-en-Provence: Centre International de Recherches at d'Etudes Touristiques

**How do you assess the state-of-the-art of tourism sociology?**

It can be argued that the Sociology of Tourism has reached a theoretical cul-de-sac. There still seem to be four basic perspectives: those of authenticity, stranger-hood, play and constructivism (identified by Dann (1996) and reiterated by RC50 (2008) which continue to predominate. Although their European antecedents can be traced to the 20s and 30s (Dann & Liebman Parrinello, 2009), in the Anglophone world the first two paradigmatic frameworks originate from the 1970s, the third from the 80s and the fourth from the 90s. They have endured pretty well unchallenged until today as perennial and conventional wisdom. The reason for this theoretical impasse is probably generational. The “golden oldies” responsible for these initial insights and capable of articulating them in excellent English continue to bathe narcissistically in their own glory. Moreover, their control over this branch of knowledge is reflected in their self-fulfilling, elevated citation counts which far exceed those eked out by their younger and junior counterparts. Indeed, these less eloquent “rising stars” face something of a paradox. If they do not cite the “golden oldies” masquerading as “founding fathers” (sic), they will be deemed to be ignorant of the field and if they do quote them (without contributing any new ideas of their own) they will simply be accused of not adding anything worthwhile, a situation in which they are damned if they do and damned if they don't. As a result, their own citation counts are very meagre and, since these inexperienced authors are judged as not having made valuable insights, they cannot be promoted either by their ancient peers or venerable institutions. A two tier system of mutual exclusivity thus operates, one that tends to

stultify the dialectical process in the development of understanding and often turns literature reviews into mindless ritual.

### **What is the significance of RC50 in the domain of tourism studies?**

Since 1986 (New Delhi) successful attempts were made to break away from the research committee (RC13) on leisure, thereby creating a clear, though complementary, demarcation between the two fields. From then onwards, international tourism became established as an independent domain within the International Sociological Association (ISA) and the group studying it enjoyed accelerated promotion to reach the much vaunted research committee status. This RC50, as it came to be known, operated autonomously in the successive ISA World Congresses of Madrid, Bielefeld, Montréal, Brisbane and Durban, as well as in the interim RC50 symposia of Nice, Jyväskylä, Liège, Mytilene, Wageningen and Jaipur, with publications ensuing from several of these encounters. In all of these academic assemblies, many leading thinkers (though admittedly not encompassing all those with earned reputations in the field) were present. However, in only one of these sessions was there a round table debate, the Montréal Congress, in which two eminent golden oldies, John Urry and Dean MacCannell, were pitted against each other, with the result that the remainder of the communications by lesser mortals have tended to be rapidly delivered monologues with little time for discussion or comment. Other areas of significant omission or underrepresentation included lack of dialogue between those trained in tourism studies (“rising stars”) and those without that formation (“golden oldies”), an unwillingness to carry out future-oriented research, insufficient presentations and theoretical grounding in works emanating from the other two official languages of the ISA (French and Spanish), absence of members from the continents of South America and Africa, and few from Asia. However, one strong point to emerge from RC50 is the happy blend between the disciplines of sociology and anthropology.

### **How can/must tourism sociology effectively penetrate the other realms of sociology?**

Although protagonists of the four major theories of tourism (MacCannell, Cohen, Urry and Bruner) have published their theoretical offerings in journals other than those devoted to tourism, it is only the last two who have received higher citation counts for having treated topics that are more discipline specific e.g. mobilities, capitalism (Urry, 2000 (1034 citations); Lash & Urry 1987 (1,752 citations); Lash & Urry, 1994 (2,746 citations) and ethnography/experience (Bruner, 1997 (342 citations); Bruner, Turner & Geertz, 1986 (390 citations)). Opportunities thus exist for both “golden oldies” and “rising stars” to contribute to the general disciplines of anthropology and sociology by focusing on the applied field of tourism which relates to such perennial unit disciplinary ideas as community, society, collective representations, de-sacralisation, freedom, social control, alienation, anomie, etc., as well to such applied fields as the sociology of religion, the sociology of the family, and so on. In such a manner they may be able to link more directly with such foundational thinkers as Durkheim, Marx and Weber even though none of these explicitly dealt with tourism. This would be a way of making tourism a more serious subject of investigation and encourage cross fertilisation and participation among other research committees within the ISA that also study particular fields under the general umbrella of sociology.

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(5) **Kevin Meethan**  
*University of Plymouth*

A brief response

1. How do you assess the state of the art of tourism sociology?

We need to ask what is specifically sociological here, and whether or not we can define a particular approach that we, as RC50 members subscribe to, or indeed whether or not we wish to do so. A lot of what we do does not get labeled as 'tourism sociology' but will come under different labels

2. What is the significance of RC50 in the domain of tourism studies?

One of the interesting things about RC 50 are the number of people who come from different backgrounds such as social anthropology, geography and tourism studies etc. I find this to be a healthy eclecticism that allows for a diverse range of approaches and I suppose the real question here is whether or not we have a defined object of study that we can specifically refer to as tourism sociology.

3. How can/must tourism sociology effectively penetrate the other realms of sociology?

I have often said that you can put the tourism after any word describing any form of human activity and you will find it somewhere. Despite tourism being so ubiquitous, the sociology of tourism is not a label that is commonly found, at least in the UK. There are a number of historical reasons for this as in the past tourism has tended to be seen as the preserve of geography, social/cultural anthropology or business studies and what may generally be called tourist studies. The newly emerging 'mobilities paradigm' may seem to be an obvious candidate here, given tourism involves (among other things) travel but I have my doubts on this for a number of reasons. First, not everything or everyone is mobile, while we have to consider mobility as a part of our globalised world we also need to consider issues of power and the opportunities people have or do not have, and the overall role of the political economy and other power structures. In addition I personally have found a lot of the mobilities literature to be obscure and speculative theorizing.

(6) **Peg Swain**

*University of California, Davis*

1. State of the art? Growing interdisciplinarity and internationalization, with communication between the tourism management and tourism studies sides of the house. There is plenty of room for improvement.
2. RC-50? The more we break out of our Euro-US base, as more resources become available, the more truly international we can become. Greater collaboration, cross-linkings with other international tourism studies groups is a goods thing, fostered by board members.
3. Tourism & other realms of sociology? Do not see it as a matter of penetrating other realms, but rather model and intellectual resource sharing. It's our job to make ourselves relevant to social sciences writ large.

(7) **Tazim Jamal**

*Texas A&M*

1. How do you assess the state of the art of tourism sociology?

Much has been done in the early years of tourism sociology to lay some useful foundations for informing tourism studies. More recently, work on topics such as globalization, cultural consumption, cosmopolitanism, migrations, sociology of agriculture, rural sociology, to has been trickling into the tourism journals, but in disappointingly small amounts – much needs to be done to bridge tourism studies and sociology with respect to recent discussions and theoretical developments in sociology.

2. What is the significance of RC50 in the domain of tourism studies

Tourism sociology is a critical area of tourism studies, and RC50 can play a leadership role in further theoretical and methodological advances for tourism studies, and can especially inform inter-disciplinary (some will prefer the label 'post-disciplinary') approaches to understanding tourism sociology. RC50 can also take a leadership role in providing some curricula guidance in this respect, e.g., key readings in classical and contemporary sociology, key theorists in specific topic areas of interest and importance to tourism studies, etc. Tourism sociology can very usefully inform engrained "mainstream" economics and management driven approaches to tourism studies in numerous academic institutions in the US and Canada, for instance.

3. How can/must tourism sociology effectively penetrate the other realms of sociology?

Good question, and of less interest to me than bridging other realms of tourism studies (bridging disciplinary barriers). But I can see the importance of this question. I am not trained academically in sociology, but have the good fortune to interact (&/or work) with some good sociologists and rural sociologists, and try to draw upon various sociological insights as needed in my research and teaching. Hence, my tentative response to Question 3 might be to facilitate RC50 members presenting on tourism sociology at regional (in addition to national/international) sociology conferences on tourism sociology and inter/post disciplinary approaches to tourism studies and theory building (where sociology can play a key role). Offering

undergraduate and graduate course (including field-study based courses) specifically tailored to tourism sociology that could be cross-listed with other departments could be excellent.

**(8) Stephanie Malia Hom**  
*University of Oklahoma*

1. How do you assess the state of the art of tourism sociology?

While sociology and the rest of the social sciences has historically offered us with methodologies to approach tourism, its study should not be constrained to any one discipline. As indicated many of the papers given here at this conference, tourism researchers are moving between disciplinary boundaries, including those that are sometimes quite disparate.

2. What is the significance of RC50 in the domain of tourism studies?

RC50 should continue to play a leading role in providing opportunities that allow for the cross-pollination among disciplines within the broader field of tourism studies. It is important to have an organization such as this, which provides “loose” organization rather than institutionalization of the field. With institutionalization (i.e., a research center), we run the risk of closing off diverse avenues of disciplinary inquiry.

3. How can/must tourism sociology effectively penetrate the other realms of sociology?

The study of tourism, at least as I have encountered in my academic career, seems to consistently warrant a defence of sorts. Perhaps it seems not be taken as seriously as other objects of study, however, this has seemed to be the case with any significant new field (i.e., sociology & anthropology in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; women’s studies & cultural studies in the late-20<sup>th</sup> century). Tourism studies must continue to push its case, not only in the realm of sociology but other humanistic & social scientific disciplines—that the study of the most far-reaching and profitable global phenomenon of the last century speaks very significantly to the ways in which humans interact with each other and the rest of the world.

## Future of RC-50

Wed. July 14, 2010 ISA

**Peg (M. B.) Swain**, rudimentary notes (my own comments often excluded- as could not talk & write at the same time). I apologize in advance for omissions and miss-hearings. Lets think of this as a living document with any "speaker" free to amend or erase what I have written (i.e. this should be a wiki).

Discussion framed by Jaap Lengkeek in terms of generations. See also preliminary written responses.

1. How do you assess the state of the art of tourism sociology?
2. What is the significance of RC50 in the domain of tourism studies?
3. How can/must tourism sociology effectively penetrate the other realms of sociology?

### 1. How do you assess the state of the art of tourism sociology?

Honggen Xiao: Field growing. Agree with Dann that Sociology and Anthropology are major contributors. Major challenge is in moving toward Tourism Research as an emerging field, dropping those disciplines as parent discourses by scholars of mixed disciplinary backgrounds with own methods and theories.

Tazim Jamal: inter vs. multidisciplinary. Worried about the quality of Tourism Studies if disciplinary focus is limited.

Peg Swain: we can look to other interdisciplinary fields –their body of work- how do they deal with disciplinary focci?

Scott McCabe: stuck in older kinds of theories, post-foundational? RC-50 can help tourism researchers stay grounded- Problems of society.

Jaap: research vs. education focus.

Graham Dann: Before start thinking of multi and post, quite contentious, what IS a discipline, Sociology vs. Business Management? Social science based is my rule. Also see generational differences. [need for] appreciation for founding theories. Citations give you a clue- MacCannell, Urry, etc. [There is] a linguistic divide, with non-English speaking, the citation count goes down. We have a theoretical cul-de-sac, feel we have to quote the 'Founding Fathers" to mark within the field. Dammed if you do, dammed if you don't. With transition of knowledge, hard to break in with new theory, feel obliged.

Jaap: How to deal with the oldies, make use of them, try to give new perspective.

Lina Tegtmeyer: Founding fathers? Look around you, there are three women in the inner circle [discussion arranged as a circle, ringed by a participatory audience]. Funding works against doing thorough research. Differentiate between 2 things- classic social science disciplines and newer interdisciplinary fields. An interdisciplinary approach looks to intersections, an umbrella bringing together leisure studies and tourism management [for example].

Stephanie Hom: How different is it in other fields, quoting the authorities?

Nelson Graburn: A-disciplinary useful- Berkeley's Tourism Studies Working Group has architecture, etc. represented. Quantitative and Qualitative divides often not crossed; English/non-English divide, other divides [remain].

Antonio Miguel Nogués Pedregal: A cul-de-sac? Non-disciplinarity? Don't get concerned about training. Global mania, pay attention to use of concepts: differences/inequalities/how inequalities dealt with. Turn back to basics.

David Picard: Talk about facts, tap into discipline well, dialectical history to build on some. Tourism Contact Culture group- (Emotion in Motion Network, other conferences, shows interest, where is RC-50?). Don't want to hear "tourist gaze" talk.

Peg: comments on need for non-western paradigms.

Jaap: strategy of dealing with problem, cross cultural debate, can be frustrating (Jaipur).

Kevin Meethan: How to solve this dilemma? Linguistic problems, more active encouragement of geographical areas approaches. Agrees with Keith Hollinshead - not really talking about research- interdisciplinary positivist, qualitative research. Framing questions in other ways should not be defensive, lets just get on with what we are doing, more explicit in methodological choices.

## 2. What is the significance of RC50 in the domain of tourism studies?

Jaap: Put this on the agenda- how to actively stimulate participants to work together.

Stephanie: This is a research group, its better to have it loose rather than be institutionalized, the strength of a looser cross-pollination of disciplines.

Antonio: Potential of creating research agendas between non-English social scientists, compare research on similar contexts.

Tiger Wu: What is the common objective in tourism research? Research tourists and destinations- We can create a commonality of language (not Chinese, English, or Spanish). ISA encourages more participation from other countries. Agree, we should have 2 presidents- Margaret is 0.125 Asian, but other VP or President from China [will open things up]). We should have a more structured agenda, methodology workshops, and just coming together is also inspiring.

Peg: We can have both: [smaller] research interest groups, and over-arching group.

Jaap: This is linked with practical issues- larger RCs, like education, have problems, challenges.

Scott: Sociology provides an anchor. Take challenges, risks- boundaries, poverty, development, technology, rather than looking backward.

Hazel Andrews: Agree that we should look forward.

Jaap: More pure academic context.

Nelson: Turning up and coming [to meetings], David's question is real- if we do not meet regularly, if have just a few? If want progressive [RC] have to enable people to come, organize by folks, so can afford to come. Give people enough faith, have organizers plan sessions by specifics - group on violence or whatever.

Gabriella: Try to communicate on what doing work about- that may be more important. How is tourism evolving now – blogs, web pages – use those resources.

Jens Steen: Should organize sessions on emerging topics – this is much more successful, more variety, in approaches and questions.

Marie-Françoise Lanfant: Sociology is like an old lady afraid of doing work in tourism or having fun.

More international teams to do research, RC-50 events with ISA.

Honggen: How to maintain quality of group? Possible to develop community while still maintaining character.

Tiger: could make known to others.

Graham: Golden Oldies and Rising stars- don't get a lot out of 10 presentations in 2 hours- This dialogic frame is better. ISA has 3 working languages – English, Spanish, and French. We could benefit from presentations in other languages.

Lina: Traductora- How to do it differently? Limit the number of participants; have a greater # of sessions. Make work more accessible, translate with slides.

### 3. How can/must tourism sociology effectively penetrate the other realms of sociology?

Jaap: How to appeal to other social sciences?

John Urry: Try to mainstream Tourism Studies – what other RCs do with theories. Be everywhere. Over time most social sciences will be affected by what's done here. For example, mobilities and tourism- mainstreamed, get out of the ghetto, be responsive to interacting with others.

V.P. Modi: Connect with Leisure group. Now disconnected, quite isolated. Striking that we did not organize joint sessions- theory, violence, environment, many relevant ties.

Tazim: If Sociology won't accept tourism, then we have to invite disciplines, etc. to go to us- share sessions, co-publish.

Nelson: To study social fields that include tourism- [recent] AAA newsletter (Anthro) has some photos of tourism in China. When so accepted, not called an oddity.

Scott: We are on a cusp.

Nelson: Our methods are critical advances- mobile, cyber societies, cutting edge. Will come along, not drag you down. We were a working group, 4 years, in Bielefeld. RC 50 creating, sociology of tourism, changed to international tourism, with Marie-Françoise – she's a woman, so changed . . . .

David: Last intersession, domestic tourism became the focus.

Keith Hollinshead: In 2 years we have a plenary session coming up. I would want to offer a 3-day methodology event for ISA.

We can have joint sessions or even joint inter-sessions. Naturally share basic ideas with RC-31 (Leisure) and others, to mainstream.

**XVII ISA World Congress of Sociology**  
**RC 50 – International tourism**  
**Subjective impression of the sessions**

It was a great pleasure to be admitted to present my work at one of the RC 50 sessions and to attend the XVII ISA World Congress of Sociology. I definitely had a very positive experience. I have learned a lot, met many nice people and made some valuable connections in our field. I will definitely do my best to attend and to present in the future RC 50 sessions.

Having an overall great academic and personal experience in RC 50 sessions, I would still like to share some comments and suggestions. To my opinion, the papers presented at the RC 50 sessions were of mixed quality and unfortunately not all of them were impressive. However, partially the reason might be a very tight timeframe (i.e., 10 minutes and sometimes even less). For instance, having 12 presenters scheduled within 2 hours has some undesirable consequences. First, the researchers have no chance to show the depth of the study and the presentation becomes a descriptive “teaser.” Second, there is no time for questions, feedback and discussion, which is a huge loss. Third, if not for the “no shows” the last presenters in some sessions would merely have no time at all for their presentations. All the more, these “no shows” were discovered only during the session when the presenter was actually asked to go to the stage. In the sessions of other committees that I have attended, the chairs have checked prior to the session who came and who did not and re-adjusted the time slots accordingly. The RC 50 sessions were over after 3 days. Perhaps, having at least one more day of sessions could resolve these issues.

Another difficulty was the assigned room for the sessions. The demand for RC 50 sessions was quite high and the allocated room was definitely too small. I have attended the sessions of several other committees and all of them had considerably bigger rooms. People could not get in as the doors were closed. Some people who managed to get in before the doors were closed had to stand or to seat on the floor or table. There was no air conditioner, ventilation or even the possibility to open the window. If I was suffering without the air, I would assume that our senior colleagues felt even worse. Also, it is difficult to learn and/or to interact in these conditions.

Finally, during the debate we were discussing the importance of the interdisciplinary approach and mutual benefits. Thus, the absence of the joint sessions between RC 50 and other committees is surprising. For example RC 13 (Leisure Committee) had plenty of joint sessions that were still running even on Saturday. I believe that the interdisciplinary links, different theories and approaches are the most insightful. Unfortunately, because of the overlaps in the sessions that I was interested in, I had to miss 2 RC 50 sessions. Having joint sessions of RC 50 with other fields/committees (in my case, for example with leisure, gender, methodologies and etc) would enable me not to miss the RC 50 sessions and to benefit more from the congress.

Having said that, I want to emphasize again that my overall experience of RC 50 sessions is very positive and I will do my best to follow and to take part in the RC 50 sessions in the future.

Thank you very much!

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## My thoughts about the Conference

There were many issues raised in this conference, which included Tourist gaze, Anglophone hegemony, Red Tourism, Post-colonialism in tourism studies, Dark Tourism, Power relations in tourism, which invoked some interesting thoughts.

I am, however worried about two things:

1. We as a tourism research community are yet to come out of a west-centered body of knowledge in tourism, which is very crucial for the sociology of tourism to move. We talked about post-colonial tourism research and the Anglophone hegemony. I don't think we as tourism researchers ever came out of the colonial mindset, even when the colonies have vanished from the landscape. Anglophone hegemony may be a problem for other European researchers like French, Italian and Spanish, but for me as a researcher from the Asia I see it as a subset of the much bigger Western hegemony in tourism studies. And when I say this I look at this issue as an ontological and epistemological reality in the sense that what a Western scholar says or writes about third world tourism, is a representation of an objective reality out there. The scholar and the text, therefore, are outside the world studies, as an existential and as a moral fact. The need is to collaborate with the local scholars and break away from that existential being.

2. My second worry is that of interdisciplinary approach in tourism. Most of the tourism researchers are either pseudo sociologists or pseudo anthropologists, which is that we as tourism researchers have come from diverse disciplinary backgrounds and are neither trained as sociologists nor anthropologists. This reflects in methodologies we employ in tourism research, which are few tried techniques. While the sociology in general has moved beyond traditional paradigms into the critical realm, sociology of tourism has not. We are still wrangling with tourist gaze, authenticity, and typologies. We are yet to crack the complex power relations in tourism with a critical approach. We are yet to find serious studies from a critical ethnographic angle. We need to open back channels into sociology by roping in trained sociologists and anthropologists into the network.

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## Call for Papers

**ISA-RC50** Inter-session Seminar: Exploring New Horizons in Tourism  
Jointly with

**ITSA:** Shangri-LAsia International Tourism Forum

**Date:** 8-12 August 2011

**Location:** Shangri-La, Yunnan Province, China

**Theme:** “New Horizons for the Future of Tourism,”

**Information:** International Tourism Studies Association <[www.itsa.cn](http://www.itsa.cn)>,  
International Sociological Association-RC 50 on “International Tourism”  
<[www.rc50.info](http://www.rc50.info)>

<[www.wix.com/hom4309/rc50-website-build1](http://www.wix.com/hom4309/rc50-website-build1)>

The International Tourism Studies Association (ITSA) will host a joint conference with The International Sociological Association’s Research Committee on International Tourism (ISA-RC50) in Shangri-La, Yunnan Province, China on 8-12 August 2011. The overall theme of “New Horizons for the Future of Tourism,” addresses critical issues facing tourism in the second decade of the 21st century.

Shangri-La is now a phantasmal destination in touristic terms, due to its pristine natural beauty, cultural heritage, and links to a legendary book. What was once Zhongdian County, a Tibetan region in NW Yunnan, was renamed Shangri-La County in 2001, laying claim to a globalized brand. The name comes from James Hilton’s novel *Lost Horizon*, written during immense turmoil between the first and second world wars (1933). It immediately struck a cord with a global audience and gave people something to cling onto in dark times, a glimpse of an earthly paradise filled with peace, enlightenment and beauty, in contrast to a world seemingly bent on self-destruction. The story draws from ancient Tibetan narratives of a lost magical land in the Himalaya called Shambhala, an ethereal place unlike any other on earth, resting in the shadow of a vast white mountain, where harmony reigns. However, in Buddhist teachings, Shambhala is much more than a physical paradise; it is a mystical conception and refers to a spiritual rather than physical goal. For centuries people have searched for Shambhala in much the same way that the sociology of tourism has conceived of modern travel as escaped reality, a search for meaning, and indeed an earthly paradise.

Current debates about the future of the planet in terms of climate change, the global financial crisis and economic recession, food security and population growth, natural resource depletion, war and terrorist activity, and a changing global political power structure leaves very little sense of a positive future. This intense pessimistic media discourse, together with real fears about increasing social isolation and a breakdown of society has corresponding issues in recent tourist phenomena: all-inclusive tourism or ‘staycations’ that cocoon tourists in contained, constructed spaces in the realm of the familiar; psychographic tourist markets’ criteria limiting tourist interact with people outside their social-cultural milieus; increasing dependence on internet-based social networking to inform travel decisions and social contact whilst travelling; and the increasingly branded nature of places which constructs destinations in multiple, thematic ways.

The broad theme of “Exploring New Horizons for the Future of Tourism” and the conference venue in Shangri-La for this year’s RC50 Seminar offer us a unique occasion for focused discussions and presents an opportunity to reengage with some core sociological ideas in international tourism. The role of international tourism can be seen as a means to search for something that is lacking yet desired, a sense of

meaning and belonging, and to foster intercultural exchange, learning, and personal and social growth. This year's RC 50 seminar solicits papers and presentations that engage the sociology of tourism on the following sub-themes:

*Postmodern Tourism and Existential Authenticity*

- The search for meaning through tourism
- Tourism as escape or the search for paradise: lost and found
- Tourist cocoons and psychographic markets
- Learning through tourism's cultural encounters

*Images, Imageries and Imagination in Tourism*

- Phantasmal destinations, mysterious, mythical, imaginary worlds
- Tourism and cosmopolitan desires
- Branding local destinations and global popular culture
- Authenticity and tourist experience in ethnic/indigenous communities

*The Representation of Phantasmal Destinations*

- The role of the media in representing places
- Authenticity in tourism representations
- Social media networks and their construction of places and spaces through (or for) tourism
- Tourism and cultural identity

*Tourism and Ethnic/Indigenous Community Development*

- Tourism and poverty
- Tourism and cultural change
- Tourism and livelihood in ethnic/indigenous communities
- Sustainable tourism development, ethics and stakeholder analysis

**Submission Deadlines:**

- Abstracts due: **31 March 2011**
  - 250 word minimum -500 word maximum
  - Include author's name(s), affiliations, title of paper
  - Any references in abstract not included in word count
- Full papers due: **30 July 2011**

ISA-RC50 members or new participants in RC50 should submit their work electronically to one of the following seminar coordinators:

**Elizabeth Mathew**, Loyola College of Social Sciences, India. Email <[ebmathew.eb@gmail.com](mailto:ebmathew.eb@gmail.com)>

**Scott McCabe**, Christel DeHaan Tourism and Travel Research Institute, Nottingham University, UK. Email <[scott.mccabe@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:scott.mccabe@nottingham.ac.uk)>

**Honggen Xiao**, School of Hotel and Tourism Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong SAR. Email <[hmqxiao@polyu.edu.hk](mailto:hmqxiao@polyu.edu.hk)>

FURTHER INFORMATION ON CONFERENCE VENUE, LOGISTICS AND REGISTRATION FORTHCOMING- PLEASE CHECK THE WEBSITE FOR UPDATES.

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