

RESEARCH COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL TOURISM  
COMITÉ DE RECHERCHE DE TOURISME INTERNATIONAL

# ***NEWSLETTER***

Official newsletter of RC50 of the International Sociological Association

Summer 2007

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 Summer 2007. The influence of the Durban event in 2006, and of the Wageningen-in-between-seminar in 2005 is quite obvious. Making further progress in theory building relevant for societal development and the world of tourism is one the challenges for nowadays RC50, and its current Executive Board.

This Newsletter contains two items:

1. the composition of the Executive Board – term 2006 - 2010, and
2. the pre-announcement of our first in-between-seminar “after Durban”, to be held in India [Jaipur – 15, 16, and 17 October 2008]. Ishwar Modi, Vice-President RC 50, will be the Organizing Secretary of the Conference.

It's nice to inform you that RC50 does have 50 members now, per September 1, 2007. I take it for granted that all RC50 members continue promoting this Research Committee.

I am looking forward meeting you in Jaipur!

Yours,

Jan te Kloeze,  
RC50 Secretary / Treasurer

## Executive Board RC50, term 2006 - 2010

Position	Name	Organisational affiliation	Country
President	Jaap Lengkeek	Wageningen University	The Netherlands
Vice-President -1; seminar during World Congresses	Giuli Liebman Parrinello	Università Roma Tre	Italy
Vice-President -2; in-between-seminars	1. Elizabeth Mathew 2. Ishwar Modi	Loyola College of Social Sciences Rajasthan Sociological Association	India India
Vice-President -3 – Publications	Margaret Swain	UC Davis, University of California	USA
Secretary / Treasurer	Jan te Kloeze	WICE [World Leisure International Centre of Excellence] at Wageningen University	The Netherlands

## IN-BETWEEN CONFERENCE RC50 JAIPUR, 2008

Jaap Lengkeek  
Giuli Liebman Parrinello  
Elizabeth Mathew  
Ishwar Modi  
Margaret Swain

### Title

*Ever the Twain shall Meet; Sustainable Development of Domestic and International Tourism*

The conference aims at exchanging ideas, research results and research ambitions with regard to the question how the global model of the tourism industry relates to local or domestic leisure, recreation and tourism patterns.

### Why this title, why this aim?

The face of international tourism seems everywhere, more or less, to be the same. Tourism transforms local assets such as nature, folkloric traditions, historic buildings, beaches, mountains, rivers, even climate into products and commodities for international consumption.

This transformation takes place not only in the material appearances, but also in meaning and symbolic representations. In this respect tourism is a major global change agent. Much of the driving forces behind this transformation process lies within the production process itself and the particular approaches that are implied: organization, infrastructure, management, marketing, cost-benefit relations, efficiency and effectiveness. Partly, this leads to 'de-differentiation' or marginal differences between the products offered to the larger target groups and some specific differentiation in the niche production for particular target groups.

This globalized and pluralized model of tourism - within a range from 'industrial' mass products, travel infrastructure and production networks on the one hand to eco-tourism on the other ('eco' or 'responsible' according to western standards) - is predominantly reproduced by western stakeholders and consumers. An interesting question is how the growing market of non-western tourists will influence or even transform this paramount model. So far, the impression is that non-western tourists visiting the western of western dominated tourist sites are still 'obedient' consumers following the same global canon of what is offered as 'must see's'.

Tourism research into the impacts of international tourism, focuses mainly on equity in benefits from tourism, changing social roles and structures at destinations according to economic gains for certain local groups (sometimes changing gender relationships) and disappearance or tourist (eclectic) re-invention of local traditions.

What seems to be absent in the majority of tourism research is the question of what kind of domestic leisure, recreation and tourism patterns exists and how its patterns relate to patterns of and its impacts from international tourism.

In Boissevain's 'Coping with Tourism; European Reactions to Mass Tourism' (1996) tourism impacts on local societies are well dealt with. But still, the local society and its environment figure as *destinations*, negotiating, receiving, contesting, dealing with and reacting to tourism coming from the outside.

Up till now, international tourism has been originating predominantly from western countries. This will definitely change in the very next future. Expanding populations and particularly economies of countries such as India, China, Indonesia, South-Korea, Japan and recently booming Vietnam will generate huge streams of 'new' international tourists.

This apparent change in the tourism phenomenon will ask for re-thinking tourism theory.

The first significant changes in the Asian countries appear in domestic tourism. In Indonesia, for example, domestic tourism totals 108 million people against 4 million outbound tourists. In China in 2000 there were 740 million domestic tourists against 5.6 million outbound tourists. It seems logic to assume that more insight into attractions, motives, meanings, socio-cultural contexts and processes connected to domestic tourism will help to understand - from there arising - outbound tourism aspirations as well as the confrontation and interfaces between domestic and international attractions and destination qualities.

Bringing domestic leisure and tourism patterns in relation to international tourism – may sometimes compete within the same space – this will bring into view an active and original side of the symbols, myths and meanings coming from the host society itself. They may also define specific places of interest where these symbols, myths and meanings are attached. Leisure patterns and leisure places and landscapes spring from the inside of the local culture and represent active interactions between human beings and their environment within their own cultural context.

A further international comparison of domestic tourism patterns and symbolisms along different cultures will not only reveal universals and specialties in spatial leisure and tourism pursuits, but also give a clue to where domestic tourism and international globalized tourism may coincide or clash. Further, if they coincide as behavioural patterns, will the appreciation of domestic tourists correspond with the appreciation of international tourists?

### **Objectives for RC50**

1. Create an agenda for structured knowledge development within RC50;

Can we stimulate members of the committee to cooperate in joint (global) research projects and publications? RC50 meetings (as probably all conferences) generally seem to harvest papers within a wide range of similar issues, often following 'in a certain degree' the central themes of the meetings (see for example Tourism as a metaphor of the tourist world). Many papers are produced for different purposes than the RC50 meeting, but displayed for the audience of ISA peers.

The question is whether RC50 can pro-actively stimulate research on certain issues. Most researchers participating in RC50 have their own research networks and agendas. The results of their work is mostly shortened or prolonged – or in some way mutilated - on the Procrustus bed of the conference themes and session titles. The question how the contribution of the RC50 participants can be effectively organized (programs, cooperation, papers, statements, critiques, debates, side-papers) will be answered in course of the preparation of the meeting in Jaipur.

2. Create a substantial interface of western and non-western tourism knowledge;

Tourism is encapsulated in debates on post-modernism, alienation and consumerism. Mainly, these keywords are conceptualized within the western situation and paradigms. When we look at particular regional contexts and developments originating from there, will this provide new insights and knowledge about tourism as a global phenomenon?

Can this kind of knowledge contribute to a better positioning of current debates on academic tourism theories, sustainable development or the industrial approaches to tourism?

What are the relations between theoretical/conceptual knowledge and more practical and contextualized knowledge in different regions? Many questions arise. Will the non-western countries reproduce the logic of the tourism production process as developed in the West, trying to catch up and hoping to overtake? Or will new mechanisms and logics enter the global tourism systems and actor-networks?

When regional non-western scientists speak from their own cultural background, will this provide us with insights complementary to western dominated tourism studies? Will a fundamental regional comparison provide new theoretical concepts and approaches to tourism knowledge?

3. Explore the confrontation and complement of international tourism development and domestic tourism;

Will the traditional cultural background of domestic tourism be able to provide a 'natural' fit between new tourism development and local cultural and natural resources? Can the two effectively be combined?

The research topic is definitely not the only relevant theme for joint efforts in knowledge production of RC50. But the project has certain advantages such as preparing for possible fundamental changes in the tourism phenomenon, the comparative angle, within and between non-western and western contexts. An appealing example is that of Chinese mainland tourists (by the mid-1990s) visiting Trier Germany to see the reconstructed family home of Carl Marx.

Moreover, it focuses on something that seems to have been overlooked. Non-western domestic tourism also could reveal deeper layers of motives and interests of new masses of tourists coming from non-western countries and potentially changing the tourism market and the impacts of tourism, in other non-western and/or western destinations.

4. Explore the regional particular of tourism meanings;

The project offers an opportunity to broaden the historic insights (within and without the western academy) in the origins of tourism – now still mainly situated in western Classical concepts such as *licere* and *otium* and in the early modernism of the Grand Tour.

A more systematic approach is advisable with respect to the question what the historical backgrounds of leisure, travel and tourism are within different regions<sup>1</sup>?

5. Create more understanding of the future power of tourism in global social and cultural changes;

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<sup>1</sup> Regions: large identifiable cultural areas in the world, such as South-East and Central Asia, Central and South America, Northern and Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East (SW ASIA), South and Northern Europe, North America, Eastern Europe, Pacific Islands, Australia & New Zealand.

How do – persistent – traditional cultural undertones in modernizing societies influence future meanings (and different meanings) of tourism? Researchers such as Inglehart mapped out radically different value systems in different regions of the world. Van Egmond (2006) suggests that western conceptions of ecological awareness (a basis for the contemporaneous paradigm of eco-tourism) spring from the older European religious value system accentuating something like 'stewardship'. But this awareness coincides with a growing distance to the natural habitat of human beings. It is not unthinkable that a growing dominance in tourism of other, non-western basic value systems or new hybrids of ethical and religious value systems will change the face of tourism in the next future.

6. Make RC50 play a role in mobilizing the direct interface with regional tourism experts/scientists on a high academic level;

RC50 is a scientific community and - as a community - operating within its own limits. This implies an internal debate and inner directedness to a certain degree. The project therefore aims at organizing meetings between the RC50 scientific community and other tourism researchers who operate within *their* limits of regional tourism expertise and cultural/political context.

The idea is to stimulate debates and exchanges in different global regions by organizing (in-between) symposia in different places. This time we choose for India (Jaipur) and a South Asia region. Next time we could organize a symposium in South and Mid America. Another time we come together in Africa or the Middle East.

### **Practical implications and agreements**

On May 29 and 30 the board of RC50 met in Wageningen to discuss the in-between conference of 2008. The foregoing is the result of this meeting.

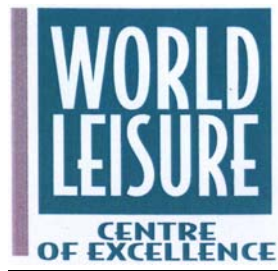
Furthermore the points discussed and agreed upon during this meeting may be summarized as under (as provided by vice-president Ishwar Modi):

- a. Agreed to hold the in-between Conference of RC 50 in India at Jaipur.
- b. The Conference may be held on 15, 16, and 17 October 2008.
- c. The Conference will be for 3 days.
- d. The Registration Fee for foreign delegates will be US \$ 200.00 and for Indian delegates the local organizers may decide at their own.
- e. The tentative theme of the Conference may be "Ever the Twain shall Meet; Sustainable Development of Domestic and International Tourism".
- f. Prof. Ishwar Modi, Vice-President RC 50, will be the Organizing Secretary of the Conference.
- g. The local co-organizers of the Conference will be Indian Leisure Studies Association (ILSA) and the India International Institute of Social Sciences. (The name of ILSA is likely to be changed to Indian Leisure & Tourism Studies Association i.e. ILTSA)

- h. Approximate number of potential RC 50 member participants is likely to be around 50 or so.
- i. While any financial loss on account of the Conference will be born by the local organizing Institutions, the profits, if any, will as well be shared by them. As such RC 50 will have no financial liability.
- j. Some resource persons for key-note addresses may be invited.
- k. Sessions with presentations on the subject will be arranged.
- l. Session(s) for eminent non-presenter RC 50 members may also be arranged. Regional Workshops may also be organized.
- m. Collaboration and support may also be sought from tourism concerned institutions/agencies.
- n. Efforts will be made in Jaipur to create the website for the Conference.

**A formal Call for Papers will reach you soon.**

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