Book Reviews

*Recreational Tourism: Demand and Impacts*
Chris Ryan. Clevedon: Channel View Publications, 2003. Pp. 358. ISBN 1-873150-57-1 (hbk): £49.95; ISBN 1-873150-56-3 (pbk): £21.95.

*Recreational Tourism: Demands and Impacts* is a second edition of sorts. It is a revamped version of Ryan’s earlier text, *Recreational Tourism: A Social Science Perspective*, published in 1991 by Routledge. With this earlier edition in mind, Ryan’s objectives are tied to some of the lessons learned in tourism research over the last decade. The original text was ‘motivated by a wish to structure the determinants of tourism demand’ (2003: viii). Consequently, this text takes demand at a tourism destination and explores it through a framework of economic, social and psychological determinants. In theory these determinants interact, but in practice it may not be that simple due to factor interdependence. As the text’s title indicates, a second objective is ‘to examine the effects of tourism, and to illustrate the nature of the challenge posed for destination planners’ (2003: ix).

The transition between the two themes of demand and impact occurs in Chapters 5 and 6 of the book. The tourist experience, a subject Ryan has written on extensively (see Ryan, 2002), is the first of these chapters and focuses on how the three fore-mentioned determinants relate to generating a satisfactory holiday. A number of key issues emerge in Ryan’s discussion of creating tourist satisfaction. The first of these issues, authenticity, is presented in a historical context for tourism and changes in thinking since the early 1990s. Authenticity is also presented in terms of its relativity and authorisation. Other key issues discussed in Chapter 5 are the role of expectations, the interpretation of experience and the quality of a tourist ‘event’. Tourist experience, when placed under all these lenses is an exceedingly complex issue, ‘if the nature of the tourism product is an experience of place at a particular time, with either different groups of people or alone, then any study of tourism is bound within a psychological, geographical and cultural milieu’ (2003: 327).

The other transition chapter, Chapter 6, is not quite as clear as the first. Examining the tourist resort zone, this chapter jumps from concept to concept. While starting very basically in outlining four possible approaches for analysis and even detailing the basics of GIS, the chapter then discusses the role of destination image, measuring physical attractiveness, spatial models and finally implications for planning. Having expected this chapter to serve as an example or case study, it came across as a disappointing and rather convoluted introduction to far too many concepts.

Impacts, as the other theme of the book, are again broken into the three key determinants: economic impacts, impacts on the environment and social impacts. The beauty of these three separate chapters is the realisation that breaking impacts down into such categories is in fact cliché; Ryan argues the
issues are not nearly so ‘cut and dried’. The other strength of the chapters on impacts is the wealth of case study examples, which are temporally current and spatially global.

In the concluding chapter Ryan offers an excellent summary of the text and an overview of tourism in general. Three zones are discussed: the tourist-generating zone, the tourist-receiving zone, and the zone of interaction and interpretation. While presenting a useful hierarchy, Ryan also expresses the need to re-evaluate the assumptions made by academics, as well as the issues at the forefront of public discussion. In the end, ‘tourism represents a tension between consumerism and hedonism’ (2003: 328). For optimists technology is the solution, while for pessimists it is part of the problem. Tourism ‘offers both hope and dismay ... it is the nature of the human condition that such tensions will continue, even as the expressions of those tensions change’ (2003: 328).

While not focused directly on heritage tourism, *Recreational Tourism* is an excellent all-encompassing text. As an introductory text in tourism, the title is a bit misleading by using the word ‘recreational’. Recreation is rarely touched upon, and perhaps in 1991 an introductory tourism text needed to include this link so as to be utilised, but could have been changed for this edition. Prior to stating the objectives of this book, Ryan gave an initial glimpse at whom the book is targeted. In dismissing an approach to writing a book based on a series of checklists, Ryan states that, ‘knowledge is not a matter of lists to be remembered – rather it is an issue of understanding and questioning inter-relationships between dynamic factors certainly true of tourism and I strongly suspect students know this’ (2003: viii). This text really is targeted at students. As an introductory text it could make students really think about the complex system of interactions within tourism. It far surpasses numerous other introductory tourism texts, which simply read like travel guides taking students around the globe.

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**Issues in Cultural Tourism Studies**

Melanie K. Smith. London: Routledge, 2003. Pp. 195. ISBN 0415256380 (pbk): £21.99.

As well as teaching in the field of cultural tourism, author Melanie Smith has a personal interest in this form of tourism, admitting to being an avid cultural tourist herself. This passion sets the stage for what proves to be a well thought out addition to the emergent literature on cultural and heritage tourism.
Logically organised into nine thematic chapters the book summarises previous related literature and provides insights and illustrations of the dominant issues within this field. The first chapter provides a framework for cultural tourism studies as a background to the discussion of critical issues relating to the nature, development and impacts of cultural tourism, highlighted by theme in subsequent chapters. Rather than highlighting the contents of all chapters this review first provides a critical reaction to several of the book’s chapters, and then concludes by commenting on the format and potential uses for the book.

While many studies of cultural tourism begin by defining such tourism, Smith is to be complimented by using the first chapter to take a step backward, providing a foundation for the rest of the book. She does this by defining culture (no mean feat), by highlighting the politics of cultural tourism, discussing the relationship of globalisation and cultural tourism development and tracing the development of the cultural and creative industries. Post modernism is used as a perspective for examining cultural tourism studies and this provides a useful framework for analysing the development of culture in relation to tourism. The initial chapter then draws on other fields for its strength and in addition acts as a precursor for those that follow.

Another strong feature of the book is the chapter on indigenous cultural tourism. With a stated focus on the growth of indigenous cultural tourism in particular in fragile or remote locations it begins by defining such tourism as including ‘both ethnic and tribal tourism, and any form of tourism that involves contact with indigenous people or their culture’ (2003: 117). A community based approach to the development of indigenous cultural tourism is suggested, drawing in particular on the work of Tourism Concern. Case studies are used to illustrate the varying levels of indigenous involvement in such initiatives for the Eskimo (Canadian Artic); the Maori (New Zealand) and the Iban Longhouse People (Sawark, Borneo, Malaysia). Other critical themes touched upon include the cultural representation of indigenous peoples and indigenous arts and crafts tourism. Rather than providing all of the answers regarding the issues and challenges of indigenous cultural tourism this chapter succeeds at providing an overview of the current situation, reminding us that tourism can be viewed as a positive force for these people, provided that key concepts of local empowerment, self-determination and control are adhered to.

The critical perspective taken by the author of cultural tourism issues is reflected in the chapter on cultural tourism, interpretation and representation in the brief section on ‘The role and function of museums’ (2003: 87–90). The challenge of the contemporary museum to be more relevant to the public is encapsulated in the case of the success of New Zealand’s bi-national Te Papa Tongarewa Museum. Examples are also given of museums taking up contemporary issues, such as racism, class bias and sex discrimination while also focusing on some of the softer more pleasant histories and ignoring the darker stories that have been addressed by so-called ‘dark tourism’. A complete chapter could have been dedicated to the complex relationship between museums and cultural tourism, rather than just a few pages.

Overall, the book ably accomplishes its aim at being contemporary in nature. This is due in part because of the plethora of case material from around the globe,
including thematic (e.g. literary, media and film tourism in the UK, 2003: 25) and
site specific (e.g. Ironbridge Gorge Museum, 2003: 97) cases. This is a particular
strength of the book. While many of the examples provided are from Europe
there are a few other examples for example The Sydney Olympics 2000 (2003:
162) and ‘Gentrification, culture and community in New York’s Lower East
Side’ (2003: 165). This is a particularly attractive feature for using the book in
both undergraduate and graduate teaching and study.

Beyond the contents the paperback format of the book is attractive. The
volume could easily be used as a supplemental text for university level
courses in cultural and heritage tourism, acting as a reference resource for
projects, the thematic chapters providing ample material to stimulate related
thematic discussions in class. It is also a must for tourism planners and
tourism development agencies involved in the marketing and delivery of cul­
tural tourism experiences, for college and university libraries where tourism is
taught as well as for the increasing number of academics who are researching
and teaching in the field of cultural heritage tourism.

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Heritage Tourism
Dallen J. Timothy and Stephen W. Boyd. Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd, 2003.
Pp. xvi + 327. ISBN 0582 369703: £23.99.

The academic polemic on definitions of heritage and heritage tourism con­
tinues to rage and has to date yielded no consensus. However, what seems
apparent is that there is agreement on the fact that there can be no meta
definition or meta understanding of heritage and indeed of heritage tourism
as the meanings of these concepts are culturally and contextually determined.
This book by Timothy and Boyd recognises the complexity of this issue and
makes no attempt to add to the myriad definitions and understandings of heri­
tage and heritage tourism by coming up with their own ‘new’ definitions.
Indeed, this is explicitly not their intention. Rather, the authors commence
this work with an exegesis of the extant literature which seeks to understand
these problematic concepts, and against this backdrop have formulated a
conceptual framework to aid their discussion of heritage and heritage
tourism in the succeeding chapters. This conceptual framework is based on
seven key themes around which the entire book is structured, namely heritage
supply, heritage demand, conservation, authenticity, the management of
heritage, interpretation, and the political dimension of heritage. As such,
the authors have presented a well-structured and coherent discussion of the
key issues affecting our understanding and management of heritage and
heritage tourism.

Each chapter contains relevant case-study examples which provide practical
applications and serve to elucidate the issues discussed. In addition, relevant
examples of heritage tourism sights and sites are liberally interspersed
throughout the dialogue thus continuously marrying the theoretical with the
practical. This is an excellent aid to pedagogy as are the discussion questions
and further reading provided at the end of each chapter. Further, the authors
provide an extensive list of references at the end of the book which not only
points to the range and depth of sources consulted but is also a useful tool for
students pursuing heritage and heritage tourism studies whether as part of an
advanced undergraduate degree or as part of postgraduate studies. Of note is
the fact that the examples and case studies are not confined to the developed
world, as is often the case with many tourism texts. Still, perhaps there is never­
theless an over concentration of examples from the developed world (especially
the USA, Canada, and New Zealand) but it is posited that this might be more a
reflection of the fact that this is where most of the examples of heritage manage­
ment practice can be found, rather than a reflection of any deliberate bias on the
part of the authors. Perhaps also in this context it might have been helpful for the
authors to suggest some of the strategies that can be used by developing
countries to nurture and manage heritage resources in the face of endemic pro­
blems such as poverty, political corruption, natural disasters and disease
(though this might be a Herculean task!).

While there are not many obvious weaknesses in the text, there are a few areas
where the authors could have provided more critical analysis. For example, in
Chapter 2 the authors indicate that heritage supply can be changed in two
basic ways – widening and deepening. However, both of these changes point
to an augmentation of the supply of heritage but here there is no discussion of
the way in which heritage supply can also be changed through a destruction
of heritage sights and sites. One of the more famous examples in this context
was the destruction by the government of Afghanistan of the Buddhist statues
in Bamyan in 2001. While this destruction of heritage is discussed in the
chapter on the politics of heritage, it might have been helpful in a chapter on
supply to indicate that heritage supply can also be changed through a reduction
in supply and not solely through an augmentation of supply. In other words,
change goes both ways. More importantly, a vital connection could have been
made between the power political underpinnings of heritage and heritage
supply, thus demonstrating the pervasiveness of the political context within
heritage. Of course the underdevelopment of a more in depth critical component
to the work might have resulted from the authors’ attempt to be as comprehen­
sive as possible thus making it difficult to engage more deeply with any of the
key themes around which the book is structured.

While it is true that there have been many academic texts and articles written
on heritage and heritage tourism and that this work does not seek to provide
any new theories or concepts in this regard, the strength of this text by
Timothy and Boyd lies in the fact that it covers the main issues involved in heri­
tage and heritage tourism in a structured and cohesive way and succeeds in
combining theory with practice through its use of numerous case studies and
examples of heritage tourism in diverse regions of the world. The book
would therefore be useful as a key text for advanced undergraduates and post­
graduate students pursuing tourism degrees with a strong heritage component.
It might also be of value to practitioners in the field of heritage as it provides
informed advice on how heritage sights and sites can be developed and managed in a sustainable manner.

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Tourism, Globalisation and Cultural Change
Donald V.L. Macleod. Clevedon: Channel View Publications; 2004. Pp. 246. ISBN 1873150717(pbk): £24.95/US$39.95/CAN$129.95.

This book is the result of a well-researched, qualitative research project that uncovers the changes that culture, tourism and globalisation have on the peripheral (maritime) area of Valle Gran Rey (VGR) on La Gomera in the Canary Islands. It is divided into two parts, with the first one covering a general introduction to tourism, globalisation and cultural change, a description of the research area, and tourist types and motivation in general as well as for VGR in particular. The second part gives a detailed account of the influence of tourism on property ownership and work patterns, political power relations, social identity and family, beliefs and values, before identifying the ability of tourism to change the culture in VGR and other peripheral areas.

Clearly, the book is about the change in perception and usage of what Timothy and Boyd (2003: 4) define as heritage, namely ‘the modern day use of elements of the past ... tangible or intangible, cultural or natural’ in a world system divided into core and periphery (Wallerstein, 1974). It illustrates how the local gaze has been modified in regard to the economic, political and especially socio-cultural and environmental heritage as a consequence of tourism.

In particular, the socio-cultural influence of the tourist type predominant in VGR, ‘alternative’ backpackers, on peripheral and often isolated regions is researched. The longitudinal participant observation fieldwork (1990–2002) also utilises a variety of written sources (e.g. brochures, periodicals, local records). Macleod aims to evaluate the socio-cultural changes of ‘the grassroots interaction between people from the core regions (urban European tourists) and the local population of the peripheral region’ (Macleod, 2004: 7). However, the particular type of tourist to VGR, ‘alternative’ backpackers from westernised, industrialised countries, have particular influences on the socio-cultural environment that are potentially stronger than other types of tourists because of the personal and informal interactions they have with locals. These impacts of tourism are far more difficult to assess than, for example, impacts on construction and the economy, but the holistic approach that has been selected is certainly successful in doing this.

Another important element of the book is to do with the way in which tourism has transformed the collective local perception of VGR in relation to the natural environment, especially the change in value, use and purpose of land and sea from providers of food, ranging from survival to aesthetic and commercial uses. The agricultural gaze is increasingly subordinated to the (heterogeneous) tourism gaze. However, according to Macleod (2004: 223),
the ‘most outstanding result of tourism in VGR is its impact on the built
environment’, namely a large hotel built overlooking the beach, apartments
added to private houses, widened roads and the construction of tunnels, an
airport and a port.

In all these aspects, locals are described as recipients but also shapers of the
way the community organises the forces of globalisation and tourism with their
increased cultural flows into their everyday life. The result, according to
MacLeod, is not only the homogenisation of culture (e.g. level of consumption,
globally market goods) but also greater heterogeneity (e.g. continuation of/
emphasis on local cultural elements, such as the role of family, language or a
shared history).

This book suits final year undergraduate students, postgraduate students,
social anthropologists and everyone interested in understanding the changes
that tourism development can bring to a peripheral region. However, it
should be used in conjunction with more general books on tourism and global­
isation such as Meethan’s (2001) Tourism in Global Society or, if the focus is more
on peripheral areas, the recently by Hall and Boyd’s (2005) edited book Nature-
Based Tourism in Peripheral Areas: Development or Disaster. In recent years, there
has been a heightened interest in the relationship between cultural change,
globalisation and tourism. Ness (2003), for example, researched the cultural
alteration tourism brought to the urban side of Davao City on the Philippines
in her book Where Asia Smiles: An Ethnography of Philippine Tourism. It is interest­
ing, however, that Ness focuses more on the (glocalising) inter-relationships
between accommodation types and their management, the global market (in
the sense of non-local forces operating in Davao City) and local culture.

This book certainly achieves its main objective, the description of the (socio­)
cultural changes on the peripheral maritime region of VGR, even if (or perhaps
because) it is very detailed in describing the influences of tourism at this micro­
level. Many of the cultural modifications outlined are thereby distinctively
related to tourism and globalisation, and apply to other similar peripheral com­
munities. Overall, I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book as its focus is on the
people and the way tourism impacts upon their everyday lives, while at the
same time providing a basic overview over related theories concerning
tourism, cultural change and globalisation.

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As with every other multi-faceted global phenomenon, the public face of tourism is constantly changing, adapting and evolving. This edited volume, aimed at researchers and students in tourism, explores new trends, experiences, and practices of unusual and extreme types of tourism. Although using the generic term ‘tourists’, the book mostly deals with better-off Western holiday-goers, with little or no mention of other market segments (e.g. the rapid rise of Asian tourism). The core hypothesis is that novel tourism forms will replace ‘old tourism’: the ‘sea, sun and sand’ mass tourism. Many of the contributions display a remarkable nostalgia for the ‘(Victorian) era of travelling’, leading to the paradoxical idea that the novelty of tourism lies in going back to the ‘good old times’ before mass tourism. This is linked to the somewhat elitist assumption that unusual experiences are only possible in new tourism forms.

The book contains five parts. After the introductory chapter, Part 1 explores cutting-edge touristic products, often in fragile natural and cultural heritage environments. Many people dream of flying into space, touching base on the South Pole, or gazing upon the world’s most remote cultural heritage sites. However, the current price tag of these (ad)ventures makes it very unlikely that they will become popular soon, which is in contradiction with the book’s main hypothesis. As for ‘skilled commercial adventure recreation’, not only money is needed but also highly specialised skills and a willingness to take certain risks.

Part 2 focuses on so-called dark tourism, with overlapping contributions on thanatourism, war tourism and atrocity heritage tourism. The authors give us a sense of how the human fascination for death and violence has been discursively described in academic and public discourses, or how (de)militarised borders, as metaphors for the forbidden or inaccessible, become tourist attractions. The reader is also offered a comprehensive model explaining why tourists are attracted to the heritage of atrocity.

All chapters in Part 3 are loosely related to nature. Two alternative ways to conceptualise ecotourism are proposed: one that uses deep ecology philosophy to reveal the moral underpinnings that are missing in current attempts to construct a responsible industry; the other applying Henri Lefebvre’s unitary spatial theory to tourism spaces. The case study that rounds up this section describes how health tourism, in its various guises, ensures physical, mental and social well-being.

Part 4 has three chapters devoted to what the editor calls ‘poverty tourism’. In contrast to most other contributions in this volume, the authors do not focus on specific niche products. Pro-poor tourism, for example, is an alternative approach to tourism development that attempts to enhance the linkages between tourism businesses and poor people. Volunteer tourism, on the other hand, focuses primarily on ‘the gratification of subliminal human needs through cooperative and selfless employment’. The chapter on senior travellers tries to convince the reader of the importance of this growing market, also for novelty travel.
The concluding Part 5 offers an in-depth reflection on the futures of tourism. Heavily critiquing Dean MacCannell’s Remarks on the Commodification of Cultures (in Smith & Brent, 2001: 380–390), the author empirically illustrates that uniformity is not the future, nor the present, of tourism. In order to be successful, global tourism has to create widely differentiated products (e.g. the ones described in this volume). Conceiving of tourism as part of the broader culture in which it is embedded, the author relies on contemporary social theory to explain why human beings are so badly in need of marking the differences between them and how travel has become one of the major ways of doing so.

Even if this volume has some fascinating contributions, it is hard to see the thread that holds them all together. The contributors do not agree on whom or what is behind novel tourism forms. Is new tourism really demand-driven, as most authors seem to suggest, or is it simply an outcome of the logic of the global market, which prescribes diversification? Also the thematic division in parts is somewhat artificial: some chapters focus on special interest tourism niches while others offer alternative approaches to tourism development in general. However, this lack of unity is understandable since it is iconic for a massive global industry that is extremely hard to grasp, including for tourism researchers. Only time will decide whether novel tourism forms will indeed replace mass tourism. This book offers readers interested in current and future tourism trends some core pieces of a vastly complex puzzle.

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