



Introduction to the Special Issue: Emerging Tourisms and Tourism Studies in Southeast Asia

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Abstract: The field of tourism studies is now addressing a range of issues which in part stem from the problems engendered by multi-disciplinary approaches and from the post-modernist, post-colonialist, post-structuralist criticisms that its priorities and concepts have been determined by a Western-centric (Euro-American) view of tourism. This introduction provides an overview of papers on a range of tourisms: disaster, *halal*/Islamic, culinary/gastronomic, luxury, and Royal-sponsored community-based tourism. From this comparative perspective, it is suggested that we engage critically with binary modes of thinking which have sought to distinguish between the West (Euro-American/Occidental), and the East or Orient, and between Western-centred and Eastern-centred perspectives, and between insiders and outsiders. The issue of “emerging tourisms” on which most of the papers in this special issue focus only serves to complicate these matters. How do studies of tourism accommodate novel tourisms? Do we view them as simply variations on a theme to be addressed within existing conceptual frameworks? Is a “mobilities” or an “encounters” approach sufficiently robust and viable to handle apparent touristic innovations and differences? In an Asian and Southeast Asian context does the issue of emerging tourisms require us to re-engage with debates about Orientalism and Western academic hegemony?

Keywords: emerging tourisms, multi-disciplinarity, binaries, Orientalism, Occidentalism

Introduction

The papers in this special issue emerged from two research-focused gatherings organized by the Center for Asian Tourism Research and the Research Administration Center at Chiang Mai University. Five of the papers were delivered at the International Conference on “Emerging Tourism in the Changing World” on 12-13 November 2016, and the remaining two contributions were presented and discussed at the International Seminar on “Tourism in Asia: Change and Diversity” on 16-17 February 2017. It has been difficult to determine unified and coherent themes for discussion in the wide range of papers offered but it seems that an introductory deliberation on the

concept of “emerging tourisms”, and the related problems of classification, conceptual innovation and the insider-outsider dichotomy in tourism studies might serve to provide an interconnection between the papers selected for this special issue.

Classification

Many observers have pointed to the classificatory impulse and the preoccupation with the formulation and demarcation of categories in tourism studies. In this introduction, I focus on sociological and anthropological contributions to our understanding of tourism, and though the study of tourism comprises a multi-disciplinary field of enquiry, researchers from other disciplines (politics, economics, history, geography, management and business) might perceive and define the world of tourism rather differently. However, I argue that most of the conceptual innovations in the study of tourism have derived primarily from the disciplines of sociology and anthropology, followed by political economy and history. Classification, along with the definition and naming of categories of tourist and associated tourism activities are of course necessary, especially in the earlier stages of research (see, for example, Cohen 1972; 1979a; 1979b; 1984). But they also serve analytically to essentialize what are seen to be the differing characteristics of tourism, behaviour, motivation, and its consequences (Franklin and Crang 2001, p. 6; King 2015). The danger is that classification becomes an end in itself; in other words, those who classify, especially in an ever-expanding field of tourism studies, tend to devise and elaborate ever more intricate typologies, grids, taxonomies, templates and frameworks and increase the range of categories and subdivisions as a means of grasping, comprehending and controlling the phenomena under investigation. From relatively simple, often binary distinctions (host-guest; mass-alternative; adventure-beach/cruise; business-pleasure), schemes then subsequently became more extended with regard to tourism types [ethnic, cultural, historical, environmental, recreational] or [culture, ethnic, history, heritage, nature/ecotourism, rural/farm-based, personal development, health, visiting friends/family, social status, recreation] or tourist types [organized mass tourist, individual mass tourist, explorer, drifter] or [adventurers, worriers, dreamers, economisers, indulgers] or [explorers, elite tourists, off-beat tourists, unusual tourists, incipient mass tourists, mass tourists, charter tourists] or [backpackers; empty nesters, children gone; double income no kids (dinks); single income no kids (sinks); early/active retirees; late/senior

retirees; boomers, youth]. Of course, typologies have a useful role to play. But as Burns concluded some time ago “While each of these typologies has added something to our understanding of tourists [and tourism], it becomes obvious on analysing them that they add very little deeper understanding of tourists [tourism] (1999, p. 46). Burns captures precisely the dilemma that the emerging field of tourism studies had to address in the late 1970s and the 1980s.

Emerging Tourisms

There are also problems in defining what we mean by and how we categorize “emerging tourisms”. But the underlying assumption must be that, in some way, the concept (and category) applies to novel kinds of tourism activity. However, this might apply to a site or sites which are new to tourism and have adopted and developed mainstream tourisms which are well-established elsewhere (Myanmar might be a case in point, or some other parts of mainland Southeast Asia in the Lao PDR, Cambodia and Vietnam). The notion of “emerging” might also be used to explore the behaviour of tourists who have become only relatively recently engaged in international tourism activities (Chinese tourists in Chiang Mai for example), or to changes in government policies in relation to tourism planning, or that, in some way, the tourist activities are genuinely new in a global context. In the papers included in this special issue under the umbrella “emerging tourisms” we should note that (excluding this introduction) they have all been written by Asian scholars, a matter which I will address later.

The “emerging tourisms” examined in this issue comprise “disaster tourism” which is addressed by I Wayan Suyadnya and Megasari N. Fatanti on two disaster sites in Java, Indonesia [relatively new to Indonesia and an emerging form of tourism globally]; the development of the “*halal* tourism” market in Japan in the paper by Shin Yasuda [this is presumably a matter of the novelty of this kind of tourism in Japan]; “food tourism” among female Japanese “food travellers” in Hiroshi Kuwahara’s analysis, and Thanya Lunchprasith’s paper on “gastronomic experiences” at Amphawa’s floating market in Thailand (a paper delivered in the February 2017 International Seminar) [food tourism is well-established, but in the contexts of these two papers, it could be argued that it is “emerging”]; and “luxury travel” in India and Mexico explored by Kailasam Thirumaran and Mohit S. Raghav [“emerging” refers to its

occurrence in developing countries and in new sites rather than in mature sites and developed countries]; in the final paper in this issue by Worrasi Tantinipankul, Wanthida Wongreun and Bavornsak Petcharanonda, they discuss (in their paper delivered at the February 2017 International Seminar) a form of “community-based tourism in the vicinity of the Mon Ngor Royal Project Development Center” at Mueang Kai, Mae Taeng District, Chiang Mai, Thailand; although they do not claim this as an “emerging tourism”, in that the Royal Projects were initiated as long ago as 1969, the specific configuration of community-based tourism and the involvement of the Royal Project Development Center might lend it a certain novelty.

In the November 2016 conference in Chiang Mai there were also several other papers which addressed a range of “emerging tourisms”: disaster or dark tourism in Japan; battlefield tourism in Vietnam; slum tourism in South Korea; food tourism in Malaysia; extended travel and sojourning in South Korea and Japan; road-race event tourism in Taiwan; volunteer tourism in Malaysia, Thailand and the wider Asia; folklore and educational tourism with reference to Indonesian students; health-related and medical tourism in Thailand, Malaysia, India and China; wildlife photographic tourism in Thailand; and trans-border ecotourism, heritage tourism, and ethnic and cultural tourism in Myanmar, Thailand, the Lao PDR and southern China.

What seems to me to be worth exploring in this introductory statement are the ways in which certain forms of apparently new tourism activities have been inserted into established forms, or have simply been repackaged, and advertised and promoted as something, in tourism terms, that is new. What we might previously have referred to as “alternative” or “niche” or “sustainable” tourism, as set against mass tourism or package tourism, now appears on websites in more dramatic forms as “weird” (TopTenz 2016), “bizarre” (List25 2016) or “curious” (Curiousmatic 2016). These categories were accessed randomly under such internet searches as “emerging”, “alternative”, “unusual”, or “strange” tourisms. What is noticeable is that there is some overlap between the lists, that some types of tourism hardly seem to be analytically viable categories; some are established forms of tourism whether mass or alternative, or a sub-category or element of a wider category; others appear not to be new or emerging, though they might be perceived as recent variations on a theme; and some, though involving mobility, should not be included as a type of tourism at all. However, what is clear is the strong inclination to increase

the types or categories of tourism in a post-modern, fragmented way and to explain this increase in terms of technological development, and the ways in which the modern, highly competitive tourism industry expands and promotes its markets and clientele, and seeks alternatives to established tourist sites to attract consumers.

Listed below are a selection of apparently novel tourisms accessed from the internet under the headings of “weird”, “bizarre”, “curious”, “strange” or “emerging”. They require further analysis, but I place them in three major categories to question in some cases their novelty or weirdness or whether they qualify as tourism at all, or whether then can simply be perceived as a specialist sub-category under wider-established categories; this then leaves a few cases, in my view, which might qualify as truly “emerging tourisms”.

- (1) **well established in the tourism literature and not weird or bizarre:** sustainable; ecotourism; domestic; rural/agritourism; gastronomic/culinary/booze; volunteer; educational; *halal*; tourism; gay; battlefield/war; gambling; long-stay/retirement; religious; sports; health/ wellness/medical; recently- and long-dead celebrities; home-stay; festival/fiesta;
- (2) **those that either (a) may not be usefully seen as tourism as such or (b) are sub-categories of wider tourism activity:** (a) benefit; fertility/birth; suicide; illegal immigrant; protest; slow; (b) shark; dental; Christian; drug; ghetto; homeless; stag party; garden; genealogy; Tolkien; soccer; bungee-jumping; sky-diving; crossword/bridge/painting tourism;
- (3) **those that might qualify as emerging tourisms or new/novel tourisms;** space tourism; doom/dark/disaster/extinction/war/atomic tourism.

Let us move on to consider whether these categorizations of emerging tourisms (and the fact that some of them may misleadingly be placed under the umbrella of tourism and therefore shade into a more amorphous concept of travel and mobility) require re-conceptualization. Here we enter an arena of difficulty. In my view, the field of tourism studies suffers from some of the same problems as other multi-disciplinary fields of study; a major issue comprises the question of where our main concepts are generated and who generates them.

This then entails a consideration of the problematical relationships between multi-disciplinary and disciplinary studies and the issue of dialogue across disciplinary boundaries and what I have referred to elsewhere as the insider-outsider dichotomy (King 2016a). Multi-disciplinary studies have been and continue to be criticized for perceived weaknesses in conceptualization and in methodology (King 2006; 2014). In this regard, perhaps the field of tourism studies and its rationale should be questioned (see, for example, Cohen and Cohen 2012a; 2014a; 2014b; 2015a; 2015b).

Orientalism and Occidentalism

With reference to the study of Southeast Asia/Asia, whether in the field of tourism or more widely across the social sciences and the humanities, there have been sustained criticisms by mainly Asian-based scholars who construct what they perceive to be a Western-centred Orientalism and the dominance of Euro-American perspectives, interests, experiences and priorities. There has also been a tendency to set up an insider-outsider binary in this construction in the call for the increasing indigenization of scholarship. In other words, the charge is that Southeast Asia/Asia as a region has been constructed by outsiders as has the study of tourism there.

In debates about the insider-outsider binary, reference is invariably made to Edward Said's thesis on Orientalism (1978; 1993). However, these debates were already under way in Southeast Asia from the mid-1950s in the work of Syed Hussein Alatas in his notions of the "captive mind" and "academic imperialism" (1956, p. 52; 1972; 1974). Syed Hussein Alatas emphasized the negative consequences of local scholarly dependence on the West (1974) and of the colonial construction of Southeast Asian populations (1977; 1979; 2000). It was then conceptualized more generally in global social science terms by Syed Farid Alatas, following his father, Syed Hussein, in consistently presenting the case for "alternative discourses" (2006a). Over twenty years ago Syed Farid stated that "The institutional and theoretical dependence of Third World scholars on Western social science has resulted in what has been referred to as the captive mind [which] is uncritical and imitative in its approach to ideas and concepts from the West" (1993, p. 307). We might refer to this sustained critique of the Western academy from Asian-based scholars as "Occidentalism", and as an Asian counter-construction of Western research on Asia.

Syed Farid Alatas isolated several issues in the problematical engagement of local scholarship (insider) with Western (outsider) academic hegemony. He chose to concentrate on debates from the 1970s when the concept of “indigenization” began to be consolidated, especially in the disciplines of anthropology, psychology and sociology (2005, p. 227). The problems he identifies for local scholarship arising from this hegemony are: a lack of creativity; mimesis; essentialism; absence of subaltern voices; and an alignment with the state (2005, p. 229; 2001, p. 50; 2003; 2000; 2004; 2006a; 2006b). His call for alternative discourses is rooted in the identification of an “academic dependency” which demands “the critique of the Eurocentric, imitative, elitist and irrelevant social science” imposed from the West (2005, p. 230; 2009). His recent paper on the theme of “doing sociology in Southeast Asia” extends his argument that in the era of a “new Orientalism” there has been “a neglect and silencing of non-Western voices” (2015, p. 192; and see 2009; and Alatas and Sinha 2001). His arguments in the interest of encouraging “indigenous voices” and “local priorities” have been considerably reinforced more recently in the work of several prominent Southeast Asian academics (see, for example, Goh 2011a, p.1; 2001b; 2014; Heryanto 2002; 2007). Eric Thompson too, based in Singapore, has been critical of Western authors, who have not given due recognition to “emergent national traditions” in locally generated anthropological research in Southeast Asia (2012, p. 664-689; 2008).

While I have some sympathy with these arguments (see, for example Porananond and King, 2014 on tourism research in Asia), I do not think the insider-outsider (Western-Eastern) dichotomy can be substantiated (King 2016a, p. 17). The so-called Euro-American (and Australian?) or Western hegemony is diverse and increasingly fragmented. Adrian Vickers has already suggested in relation to Edward Said’s thesis that “identifying ‘Orientalism’ as a single discourse about ‘the East’ is extremely questionable” (2009, p. 64); and Grant Evans poses the question “[W]hich is the ‘real West’?” (2005, p. 51). Even Syed Farid Alatas qualifies his argument by stating that not all Western scholars are “necessarily Eurocentric” and that Eurocentrism is not confined to Europeans and Americans (2015, p. 196). There has also been an enormous growth in research and scholarship within the region undertaken significantly by local scholars, examples of which are provided in this special issue. Importantly there is also a considerable contribution on Southeast Asia and the wider Asia by researchers in East Asia. This special issue, for

example, includes two contributions from Japanese scholars, and Japan has always been something of an independent centre of scholarship separate from the West and Southeast Asia (Ben-Ari and van Bremen 2005, p. 2). These Asian constituencies are also varied in their academic histories, backgrounds, characteristics, interests, priorities and perspectives and are not easily lumped together. Furthermore, neither local scholars nor those from outside (if we can make these distinctions) “have unambiguous advantages” (Evans 2005, p. 51). Similarly, Eyal Ben-Ari and Jan van Bremen have drawn attention to the difficulties of differentiating categories of insider and outsider and called for a re-conceptualization of the professional hierarchies of “centers and peripheries”, given the shifting, fluid nature of scholarship and its globalized character (2005, p. 9-10, p. 28-30). Shinji Yamashita has also examined the complexities, in an interconnected scholarly world, of distinguishing between “foreign”, “native” and “indigenous” anthropologies (2004, p. 1-34).

Eurocentrism/Anglo-Western-centrism in Tourism Research: “Asia on Tour” and the “Asian Wave”

An observation on research on Asian tourism and specifically Southeast Asian tourism in the last 15 years or so must direct our attention to the increasing interest in the characteristics, behaviour, and effects of intra-Asian tourism, the underlying tourist motivations generated in regional travel, and the importance of addressing the “domestication” of tourism (see, for example, Chang 2015; Singh 2009/2011; Teo and Chang 1998; Teo, Chang and Ho 2001; Winter 2007, p. 27-44; 2009a, p. 315-324; 2009b, p. 21-31; Winter, Teo and Chang 2009a, 2009b). Tim Winter, though not an insider, has called persuasively for more attention to “the ongoing rise of Asian tourism” and that this process has rendered research on intra-Asian and domestic tourism “institutionally and intellectually ill equipped to understand and interpret the new era we are now entering” (2009b, p. 21; and see Alneng 2002, p. 119-142; Nyiri 2006; 2009, p. 153-169).

Winter has probably been the most persistent in pressing the case and in addressing universalistic assumptions about “the tourist” derived from preoccupations with Western tourism and the cultural and geographical biases generated by these preoccupations. The solutions, he suggests, are to encourage more scholarship on Asian tourism undertaken by Asian researchers to address the characteristics, experiences, encounters and motivations involved

in intra-Asian and domestic tourism (“centring scholarship from Asia”) and “to create the institutional homes in Asia that support and promote critical perspectives” (2009a, p. 323-324; 2009b, p. 21-31; and see Porananond and King 2014; 2016). The important corollary of this proposed shift in emphasis to the development of Asian scholarship on Asian tourism is that it should not confine itself primarily to matters of policy, management, and training in the tourism and hospitality industry, but instead address critical issues of power and marginality, representation and imaging, stakeholder interaction and local community involvement (Winter 2009a, p. 325).

There is a final “future direction” which is based on Winter’s critical assessment that there has been “a widespread failure to look more closely and incorporate non-Western forms of leisure travel into the mainstream discussions and theories about tourism” (Winter 2009a, p. 317). This observation derives directly from Syed Farid Alatas’ “instructive guidance” on “alternative discourses”, and for Winter the need to “develop grounded theory”. Nevertheless, as Winter also admits, “This is perhaps the trickiest issue of all” (Winter 2009a, p. 322-323). What is more, Winter, Teo and Chang are uncertain whether Asian tourism experiences are “qualitatively different” and are “creating a series of distinct, even unique, cultural forms” (2009b, p. 9; and see Singh, 2009/2011).

However, Winter’s concluding remarks in *Asia on Tour* do not seem to give us a clear direction in seeking out alternative discourses and the means to develop grounded theory (2009a, p. 322-323). I accept that we need to adjust our analytical lens to address Asian tourism in Asia, and I appreciate that local hosts may hold different perceptions of tourists of different nationalities and ethnicities, though not in all circumstances; that tourists of different ethnicities and different types may have different motivations, expectations and interests, and organize their visits in different ways; that various notions of modernity, self, status and power are generated, captured and reflected upon in the Asian tourism experience; that Asian visitors to other Asian countries may form different images of their hosts than Western tourists; that encounters between tourists and hosts who share broadly the same culture might be more likely to be thought of in terms of cultural affinity rather than ones which focus on difference, dissonance and the exotic; that in domestic tourism the interaction between national and ethnic, local and provincial identities frequently comes into play; and that in a globalizing and increasingly cosmopolitan world the

distinctions between the domestic and the foreign are no longer clear-cut and, indeed, become increasingly complex. But do these considerations require theoretical and discursive innovations?

A most recent intervention in this Asianizing mode is T.C. Chang's paper on "The Asian Wave" (2015). He too expresses eloquently the need to address the rising tide of intra-Asian and domestic tourism and to move away from overly Eurocentric preoccupations. He suggests two ways forward in capturing Asian experiences: the "post-colonial approach" stemming from Critical Tourism Studies (CTS) which "re-configures traditional Western templates for Asian tourism" and the "geography-matters perspective" which "emphasises the importance of locality in mediating allegedly global forms of development" (2015, p. 83-84). In illustrating these approaches, he draws on case studies which demonstrate the differences between Asian and Western touristic encounters in Asian backpacking (Teo and Leong 2006) and theme parks and domestic tourism (Teo and Yeoh 2001). He also refers to Erik Cohen's and Scott Cohen's substantial and important work on Eurocentrism in tourism studies and their argument in favour of a paradigm shift to a "mobilities" framework. However, it would seem from Chang's case material that, although he indicates cultural and geographical differences from Western tourist experiences, the analyses can be handled within existing conceptual frameworks and do not require an alternative locally-generated paradigm. Indeed, Chang refers to his post-colonial and geography-matters proposals as "revisionist", using "alternative indigenous insights"; so far as I can discern they do not constitute an alternative non-Western paradigm (2015, p. 83, p. 88).

Conceptual Issues: Alternative Discourses and Paradigms?

Erik Cohen and Scott Cohen draw attention to the context within which tourism activities and emerging tourisms are currently developing and transforming in a globalizing world: the increasing pace of change; time-space compression; the saturation in information and images; the "fragmentation of lifestyles"; increasing risk, uncertainty and insecurity; pervasive consumerism and commoditization; "cultural pluralization"; and the "de-differentiation of social domains" (2012a, p. 2180). These processes also help explain the proliferation of emerging tourisms.

But there is a major question to be posed “Do we need re-conceptualization or conceptualization anew to address the changing arenas of tourism? My immediate response is “No”, neither do we require alternative discourses or paradigms. We can capture these changes and developments within our existing conceptual apparatus, though, in deploying it, we certainly need to take increasing account of intra-Asian and domestic tourism (King 2015a; 2015b). What I have also argued is that our current concepts are not derived from a coming together of academic disciplines within a multi-disciplinary endeavour of tourism studies. There has been very little if any cross-disciplinary activity which has served to generate conceptual innovation. Calling into question the rationale and delimitation of tourism as a viable field of studies is nothing new for those involved in multi-disciplinary studies. After all, these studies which bring together and feed off disciplines have indeterminate and fluid boundaries. What is more, like area or regional studies, tourism research, I would argue, has not developed distinctive methodologies and analytical frameworks; it invariably draws on disciplinary training, methods and concepts (King 2014, p. 44-64).

Clearly the dominant concepts in the study of tourism have been provided through sociological and anthropological research and through political economy and historical perspectives, initiated in the 1970s in the work of such scholars as Nelson Graburn (1976; 1977/1989; 1983; 1984), Dean MacCannell (1973, p. 589-603; 1976; 1984), Philip Frick McKean (1977/1989) and Valene Smith (1977/1989; and see Sherlock 2001) and carried through into the 1980s; concepts such as “staged authenticity”, “tourism as sacred journey”, “economic dualism” and “cultural involution” and the distinction between “hosts and guests” were formulated.

Subsequently from the 1980s we entered a more complex conceptual and discursive realm. However, the main concepts continued to be accessed from mainstream sociological, anthropological, political economy and historical work. In examining the effects of tourism development in Southeast Asia researchers were drawing on such concepts as “authenticity” arising from Erik Cohen’s work (1988, 2007; Cohen and Cohen (2012b), Eric Hobsbawm’s and Terence Ranger’s “invention of tradition” (1983) and John Urry’s “tourist gaze” (1990, 1992, p. 172-86; Urry and Larsen 2012; and see Perkins, 2001). There was also a developing literature exploring the interfaces between tourism, anthropology and the sociology of development (Harrison, 1992), as well as

expanding interests in the cultural politics of identity, tourism and ethnicity, and processes of “touristification”, symbolization and representation (see, for example, Bruner 1991; 2005; Lanfant 1995, p. 1-23; 1995b, p. 24-43; Nash 1981, p. 461-468; 1984, p. 503-522; 1996, p. 691-694; Picard 1990a; 1990b; 1996; Picard and Wood 1997; Selwyn 1996; Wood 1980; 1984; Yamashita 2003, p. 1-17; Yamashita, Din and Eades 1997; and see King, 2008, p.104-36, 2009, p. 43-68).

A constant theme running through much of this endeavour was the need to understand the interactions and relationships – the encounters - between a range of stakeholders engaged in the touristic experience. However, I accept that there has been a move away from some of these earlier concepts: authenticity and staging, the tourist gaze, and hosts and guests (and other binaries: local and foreign, domestic and international), though I would like to retain the notion of categories of people/stakeholders in interaction in a context of mobility at sites of tourist activity.

Mobilities

More recently there has been a conceptually sophisticated attempt to overcome the perceived problem of Eurocentrism, though again the tendency is to establish an insider-outsider binary. This critical intervention again refers to Syed Farid Alatas’ call for “alternative discourses”. Erik Cohen and Scott Cohen have proposed that a “mobilities” approach to “discretionary travel” [tourism] might serve to address the Eurocentric character of conceptual frameworks in the field of tourism studies, or more specifically in the sociology of tourism (2012a; 2014a; 2014b; 2015). More than this they argue that a mobilities perspective might serve to set in motion a “paradigmatic shift” in the study of tourism. Their work has emerged in the context of globalized processes of change and the expansion and differentiation of the experience and contexts of personal mobility, including in the Asian case, domestic and regional travel. What is more this context also helps explain the proliferation of alternative or emerging tourisms which have been generated to serve an increasingly mobile and discerning constituency in search of different experiences from those that are perceived as commonplace and long-established. Moreover, because many more people are now “on the move” tourism has increasingly come to be conceptualized as part of wider social, cultural, economic and political processes of movement and should, as the Cohens propose, increasingly be considered within the framework of mobilities.

The value of the Cohens approach is to address the issue of the problematical nature of tourism as a category and as an apparently unified and defined field of multi-disciplinary study, and to draw attention to the fact that there is now a range of phenomena and activities which are included (or becoming increasingly so) within tourism, but which were previously considered within other forms of scholarly enquiry or were seen as part of other areas of social, cultural, economic and political life (business, labour mobility, migration, diasporas, retirement, among others). In this regard, they are often referred to as “new or emergent” tourisms. In addition, the Cohens’ mobilities approach throws up other motivations for travel, not necessarily in seeking authenticity, for example, but in preoccupations with prestige and markers of modernity. There is then no longer a division between the ordinary and extraordinary, between work and leisure, home and away, study and entertainment, and reality and fantasy. Other binaries also collapse: between domestic and international, host and guest, and the authentic and inauthentic (2012a, p. 2181-2183); and, in the case of Asia, Asian and non-Asian.

Well before the Cohens developed their mobilities paradigm, Franklin and Chang had already presented a strong case for the relocation of the study of tourism within a broader conceptual field; even then they perceived tourism as “no longer a specialist consumer product or mode of consumption”, and no longer an event, process or phenomenon of minor or marginally eccentric importance in post-modern life nor something separable, discrete and exotic, but as “a significant modality” which was contributing to the organization and transformation of people’s everyday lives (2001, p. 6-7; and see Rojek 1995; Rojek and Urry 1997; Inglis 2000).

The Cohens take their inspiration from the pioneer voice in the sociology of mobilities, John Urry (2000; 2007). Urry has been concerned, in association with Kevin Hannam and Mimi Sheller among others, to develop our understanding of these processes of movement (Hannam and Knox 2010; Hannam, Sheller and Urry 2006, p. 1-22; Sheller and Urry 2004; 2006, p. 207-226). But, as Sheller indicates, citing Urry, the concept of “mobilities” does not comprise a coherent conceptual model, but rather captures the coming together of disparate fields of study (2011, p.3; and see Urry 2007). It therefore does not constitute a paradigm.

In their earlier excursions into what they have styled the developing paradigm of mobilities, the Cohens also explored two additional interrelated “novel theoretical approaches”. These comprise: the “performativity approach” and “actor-network theory” (ANT) (2012a, p. 2180-2186). They suggest that the “mobilities” paradigm and the other theoretical approaches are not fully formed, but they do offer exciting perspectives and ways forward in understanding travel in a continuously globalizing environment. They also acknowledge that there are tensions between conceptual and analytical innovations and conventional empirical research (2012a, p. 2185-2186). There have been debates about the novelty of the “performativity approach” and “actor-network theory”, but these additional perspectives seem to me to be necessary in capturing the social and cultural complexities, hybridities and fluidities of performance in touristic encounters (in behaviour and meaningful bodily movement, identity, symbolic and self-representation and -expression, impression management, staging, imaging, and simulation) (King 2015a, p. 512-513; and see Bruner 2005; Edensor 2001; 2007; Selwyn 1996); and in addressing the relations between various hosts, guests, mediators, translators and between humans and non-humans (objects, things) (see also Boissevain 1979, p. 392-394; van der Duim 2007).

Encounters

In my experience, a persistent theme in research on tourism in Southeast Asia during the past two decades has been the importance of understanding encounters and interactions, drawing in part on symbolic interactionist perspectives (see, for example, Argyle 2009, p. 9-14; Berg 2001, p. 8-10; Blumer 1969, p. 5), and situated within an understanding of wider economic and political processes and structures of change and in relation to issues of culture and identity (King 2016c; 2016d). The concern with encounters was captured in Valene Smith’s dual categorization of “hosts” and “guests” and their exchanges (1977/1989); however, this simple categorical opposition between locals and visitors needs considerable modification to address the complexities of touristic encounters and the domestic and intra-Asian dimension; but it need not be abandoned (King 2016b; Sherlock 2001).

I have argued elsewhere that our understanding of encounters, including both chance and planned or arranged engagements and those which are one-off or multiple, regular or irregular, and reciprocal, collaborative, complementary or

adversarial is still the central focus of the tourist experience. These encounters comprise person-to-person relationships, those between groups (or at least between members or representatives of groups), and those between local communities and national and international bodies and agencies. They also embrace interactions of individuals and groups within electronic and media networks and with information technology (which includes images and representations), between individuals and information provided in material form (guidebooks, tourist and government agency literature, travel books, signage and displays at sites), and between individuals and material objects (in museums, exhibition centres, at archaeological and heritage sites, in natural landscapes [which includes fauna and flora]). Encounters between people are often cross-ethnic, cross-cultural and cross-national; but with the rapid increase in travel, leisure and tourism within national boundaries, and between related culture areas, the cross-cultural dimension needs qualification. This in turn poses questions about the distinction and sometimes opposition between “domestic” and “international” tourists, though this categorization remains a useful way to capture broad differentiations. Encounters also encompass the behaviours generated, the motivations and interpretations implicated in them, and their character (for example whether they are one-off and temporary, or continuous, reciprocal or conflictual). With specific reference to the developing research on heritage tourism and UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Southeast Asia, there is evidence again of the deployment of the concept of “encounters” (King 2016b). In examining encounters there is recognition that global heritage sites, for example, which are located and demarcated in national territories, mark out spaces for complex interactions between various interest groups (local communities, tourists, conservationists and researchers, national and provincial politicians and bureaucrats, and representatives of international heritage and tourism organizations). What has also emerged is the importance of these sites, not only as global sites visited by international tourists, but also as domestic sites frequented by their own citizens, often with different motives for visiting from those who come from outside the nation-state. However, I emphasize that the concept of “encounter” is a low level conceptual framework directed to the analysis of empirical material and is not part of a grand theoretical scheme or paradigm. I would also hesitate to give it the status of a mid-range concept (see, Mielke and Hornidge 2017; p. 19-20).

Summary of Papers

The papers in this special issue are instructive in the context of debates about the problematical distinction between insiders-outsiders, about the increasing importance of intra-Asian and domestic tourism, the uncertain status of “emerging tourisms” and the controversial nature of “alternative discourses”. For example, I Wayan Suyadnya and Megasari Fatanti demonstrate that, in its configuration, and in its emotional, psychological and developmental aspects, “disaster tourism” in Java is an emerging form of “dark tourism”. However, the analysis is very much within the framework of “encounters”, especially in the way in which it focuses on the relations between tour guides and domestic (Indonesian) tourists and their interpretations and presentation of the sites. Furthermore, the overall conceptual framework is not one that has been developed by local scholars within local contexts of disaster, but the paper takes its inspiration from Michel Foucault’s conceptions of “spaces of otherness” or “heterotopia” (1971; 1986).

Shin Yasuda’s paper addresses the recent development of *halal* tourism in Japan. Islamic tourism is not new to some neighbouring Asian countries. When Middle Eastern tourists began to direct their attention to Asia from the early 2000s there were some countries, particularly Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore, and then Thailand and Brunei, among others which took advantage of these increased opportunities (see, for example, Henderson 2010). Islamic tourism is now well-established in such sites as Malaysia, and is therefore not “emerging”. However, in a Japanese context it has been promoted much more recently, and Yasuda, using the early work of Michael Polanyi on “tacit knowledge”, examines the problems of developing Islamic tourism in a country with an established tourist industry, but one which is not culturally and historically familiar with Islam. In this investigation, he points to the gap between explicit knowledge of Islam in market analysis, which is deployed among tourism consultants, advisors and officials involved in the certification and promotion of Islamic tourism, and the informal, unofficial, non-doctrinal dimensions of Islam in the context of everyday practices and lifestyles. Again, the study builds on Western-generated concepts of “tacit knowledge” and not on “alternative discourses”.

“Food” or alternatively “gastronomic” or “culinary tourism” and such sub-categories as “wine tourism” are also well-established as an activity in cultural tourism, and began to be seriously debated in several well-known contributions in tourism studies in the early 2000s, primarily authored by Western scholars (see, for example, Cohen and Avieli 2004; Hall et.al. 2003; Hjalager and Richards 2002; Long 2004). However, the promotion of food tourism in certain destinations in Asia is relatively new. Thanya Luchaprasith, in her feasibility study of gastronomic tourism in the Amphawa floating market at Samutsongkram, some 70 kilometres from central Bangkok, examines the possibilities for encouraging community-based development through an increasing focus on local food products and cuisine. The main visitors to Amphawa comprise local Bangkok residents who visit the floating market at weekends, and therefore, at this site, the touristic encounters are conducted between local and urban-based Thais. Although there are constraints and disadvantages, Thanya identifies food tourism as an “emerging” activity which does have potential in enabling an expansion of the local tourism industry and supporting local community development.

The other paper on “food tourism” by Hiroshi Kuwahara examines its development among Japanese tourists by using a market segmentation approach; he refers to the management and business literature, again largely Western-generated, mainly from the 1990s onwards, which focuses on such issues as service quality, and customer satisfaction and expectations. Using a questionnaire survey method delivered to outbound, before-departure female Japanese travellers, he compares the responses of what he defines as 228 “food travellers” with 185 “non-food travellers” on their perceptions of service quality in relation to their levels of satisfaction. Although referring to some of the standard literature on “food tourism”, his study is very much directed to the value of his survey data in improving market strategies in relation to segments of Japanese consumers.

In their paper on “luxury tourism” Kailasam Thirumaran and Mohit S. Raghav consider it as an emerging tourism in certain destinations in developing countries, and among the “new rich” in contrast to luxury provision in developed regions and mature destinations. They argue that luxury resorts and other elements of luxury, including first-class air and land travel, raise several significant issues in developing regions, for example, whether luxury resorts, spas and casino complexes can be of benefit through “trickle down” effects

to a wider surrounding population, especially communities characterized by considerable poverty, or whether they remain essentially enclaves benefiting a few, elite members of the population and multinational investors. There are also matters to do with the mix of private and public investment and finance and the encounters between locally-trained staff and wealthy guests, whether international or domestic. They rely on an analysis of secondary material and data from the internet to examine the processes of development in luxury tourism, primarily in India, and specifically with reference to the Maharaja Express, and in Mexico, in such luxury coastal sites on the Yucatan Peninsula as Hacienda Temozon Sur. There seems to be the possibility of developing a model of luxury tourism, but, on the basis of the literature survey in this paper, one which presumably will continue to rely on concepts of luxury consumption and behaviour based on Western social science and management models.

Finally, the contribution by Worrasit Tantinipankul, Wanthida Wongreun and Bavornsak Petcharanonda, though it was not delivered as part of the conference on “emerging tourisms”, suggests a new tourism initiative in the Hmong village of Mon Ngor. It was also part of a changing (emerging) tourism strategy undertaken by the Tourism Authority of Thailand from 2012 to promote community-based tourism and encourage development from below rather than top-down approaches to the implementation of local-level initiatives. Under the initial guidance and sponsorship of the Royal Project Foundation in the early stages of development the villagers switched to cash-crop agriculture, but tourism subsequently developed because of the scenic mountainous landscapes in the area and the attraction of the Hmong, as a minority ethnic group with a distinctive cultural heritage (including local food products and cuisine and village rituals); these assets provided a suitable site for cultural tourism and ecotourism, for both domestic and international tourists.

Worrasit, Wanthida and Bavornsak describe the official initiatives to support the development of community-based tourism through a collaboration between the Royal Project Foundation and the Highland Research and Development Institute which began the programme from 2008 and then joined by the Rajamangala University of Technology Lanna and King Mongkut’s University of Technology Thonburi. The research team provided and encouraged tourism-related activities and undertook improvements in tourism infrastructure, but also faced constraints and problems, which are addressed in the paper. But there are also examples of promising local entrepreneurial activity in response

to the opportunities generated by tourist interest: in supplying local agricultural products such as coffee beans and tea, and local food and refreshments. There is also a dimension of interaction here between local entrepreneurs, the local community and tourists. The initiatives described in the paper are certainly not unique, though they are relatively new to Mon Ngor, but they are situated analytically within the context of a long-established set of concepts and practices to do with community-based development.

Conclusions

The purpose of this extended excursion into a discussion of concepts is to address the issue of emerging tourisms and how we handle them. With reference to the mobilities approach and its inclusion of tourism in a broad range of movements (some of which might be difficult to separate one from another), it is evident that some emerging activities categorized as touristic are simply brought under the umbrella of tourism because they involve movement. We therefore must be much more discriminating in the way in which we address emerging tourisms, and not confuse tourism with travel and movement. The proliferation of “new tourisms” must be also be treated critically in that they are clearly part of marketing strategies and internet promotions by the tourism industry.

In examining the insider-outsider, East-West, indigenized-Euro-American binaries, I have suggested that these are not analytically helpful. Nor do I think that we need alternative discourses, paradigms and theories to handle emerging tourisms, let alone established ones. We can analyse and understand them with the current analytical-conceptual tools which we have at our disposal, with obvious modifications; and at least part of our understanding can be derived from examining “touristic encounters”.

Of course, a “mobilities” approach situates and contextualizes encounters, negotiations, collaborations, tensions, and conflicts within an environment of movement and within wider processes of change and transformation, but it does not provide some of the basic tools to examine what is happening in the everyday worlds of social and cultural engagement (power struggle, empowerment, conflict and tension, unequal exchange, reciprocity, inter-cultural engagement, emulation and so on). The gap between this higher-level conceptualization, which still does not have the status of a paradigm, and the need to handle grounded empirical material is still wide.

The papers in this special issue also raise issues to do with encounters between different interest groups and stakeholders, the growing importance of domestic and intra-Asian tourism, and the difficulties of defining and delimiting a category of “emerging tourisms” (in that novelty can be applied to characteristics, government policies, sites, tourists, behaviours). Moreover, conceptual innovation in addressing emerging tourisms, even given we can agree what it is that is emerging, seems to be an unnecessary preoccupation. Finally, the problematical distinction between Western-based and Asian-based scholarship needs to be put to one side. In conceptual terms what these papers, all written by Asian scholars, demonstrate for me is a constructive dialogue between locally-based researchers and those from outside the region, and between Asian and Western scholarship, but there is little evidence of the development of “alternative discourses”.

Notes

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