
Book Review

Reviewed by Justin M. Taillon* and
Se Eun Lee

E-mail: taillon@uoguelph.ca

E-mail: s.lee@tamu.edu

*Corresponding author

Tourism, Regional Development and Public Policy

by: Nese Kumral and Ozlem Onder (Eds.)

Published 2012

by Routledge

2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN, UK, 98pp

ISBN: 978-0-415-69738-5

Tourism, Regional Development and Public Policy presents a series of five papers from the 2008 Regional Studies Association Research Network's first workshop, which was hosted by Ege University in Izmir, Turkey, in April 2008. The edited compilation's intention is to, "introduce, motivate and examine the diversities in the tourism industry from a regional development perspective" (p.2). We believe this translates to identifying best practices for overcoming mass tourism issues in different cultures. We found the authors realise the rapidly changing global demand for tourism and the substantive policies that have gone into effect as responses to these new demands, yet the book itself lacks a concise theme or particular reason to exist as a book rather than a special edition journal. It seems the papers are more suited for publication in a journal due to the lack of a cohesive theme.

The stated theme of the workshop these papers stem from was 'European Planning Studies'. This is too open-ended as theme for this format. This book delves into issues of European tourism, providing cases occurring in Denmark, Italy, and the Aegean regions. This locality-based approach attempts to facilitate a reader's understanding of culture and mass tourism, and the underlying problems that can exist in each cultural context. An attempted theme does not translate into a successful one though. Beyond the aforementioned problem with the book lacking a concise theme, there are also no consistent recommendations or conclusions. Treating the book as a single theme in this review does not suffice. Rather, we have chosen to treat each chapter as a unique case. This begins with a regional tourism development paper from Denmark.

The paper written by Pennie F. Henriksen and Henrik Halkier is entitled 'From local promotion towards regional tourism policies: knowledge processes and actor networks in North Jutland, Denmark'. The authors investigate factors promoting or de-promoting tourism policies. The authors recommend a reorientation of tourism policies and marketing strategies. Yet, there are inconsistencies in their conveyance of ideas, thus making it difficult to decipher the purpose of their chapter. Most importantly, the use of intangibles in their ideas makes this both a difficult read and difficult to follow the

authors' train of thought. For example, the authors describe the aim of their chapter as: "The aim of this article is to investigate the factors that drive or hamper tourism policy change from localized marketing towards regional innovation strategies, focusing especially on the role of stakeholder networks and knowledge processes in overcoming spatial fragmentation and product conservatism" (p. 6). As they are approaching an applied area of research, in an applied field, intangible verbiage does not convey the reality of the situation. The paper ends with the suggestion tourism policy development is achievable when organisations independently function as economic performers. These performers should base processes on effectual learning and networking activities towards innovative product and service development. How this will come about is not touched upon.

'Culinary tourism as a tool for regional re-equilibrium' written by Amando Montanari and Barbara Staniscia focuses on the prospect of food as a critical resource for regional development. The idea of gastro-tourism is being widely examined in literature. For example, as a part of 'special interest tourism' (Douglas et al., 2002), food has been discussed as a community economic booster. Most recently, food was described as a tool to sustain a regional identity (Everett and Aitchison, 2010) and as a significant actor in successful destination marketing (Rand and Heath, 2008). Although gastro-tourism is not a newly discovered topic, this paper confers a new angle to understand tourism policy by introducing a connection between agriculture, food, and tourism on the Apennines of central and southern Italy. According to the paper's finding, food is not only a cultural identity builder, but also an economic accelerator. Environmental peculiarity of the region and a bottom-up procedure are demonstrated as considerations for the regional re-equilibrium and sustainability. While we can recommend this paper as informative for those interested in gastro-tourism in this region of Italy, the connection and flow in relation to the first chapter does not exist.

The third paper is titled 'Working on the other side: cooperative tour organisers and uncooperative hoteliers: evidence from Greek Cypriot tourism professionals'. The paper is a collaboration between Craig Webster, Bernard Musyck, Stelios Orphanides, and David Jacobson. They investigated the approach Greek Cypriot tourism professionals take towards the Turkish Cypriot counterparts. For those who may not be aware, this is a highly contentious relationship that has bred long-term negative consequences on the island of Cypress. The paper itself is not applicable beyond the confines of the island due to the uniqueness of the situation (e.g., the political strife). The paper begins by identifying the significance of tourism agencies and operators on Cypress and concludes with the recommendation to promote cooperation between these two entities. This is not new information, yet the case study is successful in portraying the case study for those who are not already aware. This paper concludes with an expectation of follow-up research upon strategic policy development to cure the Cyprus problem.

'Public policies and development of the tourism industry in the Aegean region' written by Yaprak Gülcan, Yeşim Kuştepelı, and Sedef Akgüngör evidences that the tourism industry is a kernel of regional economic growth in the Aegean region. An empirical economic analysis conducted in Turkey is used as evidence that the geographic positioning of Turkey is a decisive factor in regards to successful business operations in the tourism sector. Public investment and policies pertinent to regional uniqueness are also considered as necessary support systems in the paper. This paper, as those listed above, does not provide new information or ideas. Rather, it resituates an existing

element of research, in this case Turkey's economic development parallel to the country's tourism growth.

Finally, Özlem Önder, Aykan Candemir, and Neşe Kumral offer 'An empirical analysis of the determinants of international tourism demand: the case of Izmir'. The paper discusses alternative forms of tourism that have emerged from a mass tourism focus. Through the case study of Izmir, Turkey, the authors suggest various forms of tourism business and policy development in accordance with those changes. These suggestions turn into recommendations focused on the realising non-typical tourism assets such as culture and agri-tourism. The paper may awaken many regions who consider mass tourism as a panacea for economic growth. Although it is obvious that tourism plays a leading role to generate positive economic impacts at national, state, and local levels (Stynes, 1999), securing an economic stability through diversification of its form is an important issue for a sustainable regional development.

This book deals with several issues associated with tourism policy and regional development in a limited spatial location through five selected papers. This set of articles without a guiding theme leaves the value of this book in question. For its shortcomings, this volume is successful in providing fundamentals for studies new to the tourism field.

References

- Douglas, N., Douglas, N. and Derrett, R. (2002) *Special Interest Tourism*, Wiley Publishing, Hoboken, New Jersey, USA.
- Everett, S. and Aitchison, C. (2010) 'The role of food tourism in sustaining regional identity: a case study of Cornwall, Southwest England', *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, Vol. 16, No. 2, pp.150–167.
- Kumral, N. and Onder, O. (2012) *Tourism, Regional Development, and Public Policy*, Routledge, London, UK.
- Rand, G.E. and Heath, E. (2008) 'Towards a framework for food tourism as an element of destination marketing', *Current Issues in Tourism*, Vol. 9, No. 3, pp.206–234.
- Stynes, D. (1999) 'Approaches to estimating the economic impacts of tourism: some examples', White Paper [online]
<http://fama2.us.es:8080/turismo/turismonet1/economia%20del%20turismo/economia%20del%20turismo/approaches%20to%20stimating%20the%20economic%20impacts%20of%20tourism.pdf> (accessed 30 October 2012).

Book Review

Reviewed by Jennifer Laing

E-mail: jennifer.laing@monash.edu

**Medical Tourism: The Ethics, Regulation and Marketing of Health
Mobility**

by: C. Michael Hall (Ed.)

Published 2013

by Routledge

2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxford, OX14 4RN, UK, 224pp

ISBN: 978-0-415-66575-9

The rising cost of medical care in the West is partly responsible for the burgeoning interest in accessing them at more competitive prices, particularly services offered by the developing world and the former communist bloc. Further arguments advanced for the growth in medical tourism include the potential to gain entrée to healthcare that is not available (in some cases because these services are in fact illegal) in one's home country; a desire for anonymity; empowerment with respect to one's own health, by controlling how and where treatment is to be taken; a growing appreciation of complementary and alternative forms of healthcare; and the opportunity to combine a holiday with medical treatment (Bookman and Bookman, 2007; Smith and Puczkó, 2008; Voigt and Laing, 2013). As the number of countries developing and promoting medical tourism services in the international market-place continues to rise, it is increasingly vital that research keeps pace and in fact leads these industry and policy developments. Ethical and legal considerations, in particular, need to be explored, and the different nuances and issues that emerge in different destinations examined in depth, rather than taking a one-size-fits-all approach. This book therefore makes a valuable contribution to the emerging literature on medical tourism, as well as being a fine addition to the eclectic and cutting-edge Routledge *Studies in Contemporary Geographies of Leisure, Tourism and Mobility* series.

The text is largely clearly structured and highly readable, despite the occasional use of jargon ('responsibilised?'), and Hall is to be commended in drawing together a number of valuable case studies which consider medical tourism in countries as diverse as India, the Czech and Slovak Republics, Korea and the USA, as well as less well-known international examples like Macao, from a demand and/or supply perspective. This book makes it clear that further studies are needed around the globe, even in countries with a highly developed medical tourism infrastructure and strong track record in delivering these kinds of services, such as Germany and Hungary.

These case study chapters trace the historic development of medical tourism services, as well as the growth in consumer interest; highlighting cultural and political differences that affect how these services are delivered, and the various patterns of demand. It is pleasing to see that empirical data is being collected in a growing number of geographical

locations, which will help us to understand this phenomenon in greater depth. This book is also notable for presenting research across a range of disciplinary backgrounds, including sociology, social policy, management, marketing, tourism, recreation, medicine, and biomedical sciences. Hopefully the next step, as Hall notes, will be a greater incidence of inter-disciplinary studies, to focus on some of the more important issues in a more holistic way.

In his opening and concluding chapters, Hall mentions a few key areas that warrant further investigation, particularly issues of inequitable access to these services and who ultimately ends up paying for them; and the lack of internal and cross-border debate currently surrounding the ethics and risks of medical tourism. Those chapters which explore general rather than country-specific matters, such as Cook et al.'s confronting discussion in Chapter 4 of the incidence of tourists engaging in *xenotourism* (treatment involving the transplant of living animal cells, tissue or organs) and Lunt et al.'s overview in Chapter 2 of the issues of quality, safety and risk inherent in medical tourism might make a useful starting point for some of these policy debates. It was good to see throughout this text an acknowledgement of the difficulties of gathering data on medical tourists, as this is perhaps one of the stumbling blocks to understanding their behaviour, including motivations to travel and decision-making. An in-depth qualitative study of tourists accessing plastic surgery treatments, for example, would be extremely useful, given the growing evidence of this kind of travel, but may prove challenging where access to contact details (or the tourists themselves) is not available, or these individuals shy away from discussing what they regard as personal or confidential matters.

One of the book's highlights is Ormond's chapter on claims of cultural competence in a multi-ethnic society such as Malaysia. She notes that its ethnic and cultural diversity has been used to promote the destination as a 'home away from home' for various market segments, including those from the Middle East and South-east Asia, as well as Western visitors. This strategy builds on a view of cosmopolitanism that is based on differences, rather than a globalised homogeneity. It will be interesting to see whether other countries that make a strong claim to multiculturalism and are starting to take an interest in medical tourism (i.e., Australia) adopt similar destination branding strategies down the track. It is also to be hoped that this kind of study signals a shift to a more in-depth analysis of medical tourism, which is framed by important theoretical debates such as otherness, orientalism, authenticity or post-colonialism.

References

- Bookman, M.Z. and Bookman, K.R. (2007) *Medical Tourism in Developing Countries*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York.
- Smith, M. and Puczkó, L. (2008) *Health and Wellness Tourism*, Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford.
- Voigt, C. and Laing, J. (2013) 'A way through the maze: exploring differences and overlaps between wellness and medical tourism products and services', in Botterill, D., Pennings, G. and Mainil, T. (Eds.): *Medical Tourism and Transnational Health Care*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

Book Review

Reviewed by Marion Joppe

E-mail: mjoppe@uoguelph.ca

New Challenges for Tourism Promotion: Tackling High Competition and Multimedia Changes

by: Peter Keller and Christian Laesser (Eds.)

Published 2012

by Erich Schmidt Verlag

**Erich Schmidt Verlag GmbH & Co. KG, Genthiner Straße 30 G,
10785 Berlin-Tiergarten, Germany, 175pp**

ISBN: 978-3-503-13838-8

New Challenges for Tourism Promotion is organised in two main parts: an introduction by the editors and a 'practitioner's view', itself divided into four distinct sections. In the introduction, the editors outline the major challenges businesses and destinations are facing to attract and retain visitors in an environment that is growing ever more competitive, and how the papers in the book contribute to each of them. These challenges can be summarised as:

- 1 the enlargement of the market and global competition
- 2 mature markets and the differentiation of the customer needs
- 3 technological progress as a driver of the changes that are occurring for the promotional mix
- 4 tighter public financing and the need to prove performance.

The editors then go on to discuss the issues for future tourism promotion and marketing, again incorporating the relevant papers under each sub-heading. These are:

- 1 the need for new research approaches to understand today's much more complex traveller
- 2 approaches to getting attention in a very crowded information market
- 3 the digitisation of the value chain
- 4 the professionalisation of promotion and the role of public-private partnerships.

'The practitioner's view' is a collection of papers and speeches from the 2011 Aiest conference. The first two represent the views and insights of the national tourism board of Austria and Switzerland on how technology has changed what they do in terms of promotion and how the network of marketing organisations and businesses can be effectively coordinated. Since there has been a proliferation of organisations at all levels

government, all reaching out to the same or similar target markets, staying 'on message' is more difficult than ever.

This high level introduction is followed by the first three papers addressing various aspects of promotion, from social media to understanding lead time for travel decisions and new technological applications. Aside from discussion how the use of art, widely used in other areas of marketing, can be applied to tourism products, this third article demonstrates that even our traditional approach to publishing research needs to adapt: the use of 3D graphic arts should have been illustrated by providing website information to allow the reader to visualise better how this technique could be applied. The authors appear to have provided the publisher with a file containing the presentation of 3D graphics of the City of Gdansk, and perhaps the eBook version of the publication has it embedded.

The next section, entitled 'Special interest', is an odd collection of three papers that address very diverse topics, ranging from a comparison of approaches to social media management between two legacy carriers, the exploration of a new niche product 'energy tourism' and essentially limited to educational tours of renewal energy installations, and the factors that influence domestic tourism in Tanzania. While the first paper is an interesting insight into the different approaches and consequences of not providing sufficient resources to manage social media appropriately, the second paper is an intriguing look at the difficulties of creating new niche markets to expand product offerings. Although entitled 'Antecedents of domestic tourism', the third article really only addresses factors influencing the growth of domestic tourism in Tanzania and as such does not present anything different than would be expected in any less developed destination.

The last section regroups three papers that address various institutional aspects including public financing, public-private partnerships and promoting to a more environmentally and socially aware tourist, although this last paper would have been better under the 'special interest' section. The paper on public financing is largely a review of the abundant literature supporting the case for government funding for tourism promotion, although it adds the greater empowerment of the consumer due to the ability to research destinations extensively as a factor that suggests greater control and quality assurance is needed by official marketing bodies. The second paper in this section is a case study of Hungary, where a very formal and ambitious approach to creating a destination marketing organisation, supported by significant funding from the European Union, has been set up.

Overall, *New Challenges for Tourism Promotion* does indeed present some new information that should be of interest to destinations and other tourism organisations. However, several papers do not really present advances in tourism promotion so much as promotional challenges in new settings.