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Observations on Contemporary Tourism in the Asia Pacific

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Definition of Tourism

Tourism is a wide-ranging concept, including both the visible and invisible (intangible culture, hospitality, consumer psychology etc.). Of course, tourism is not just a combination of transportation, accommodation and travel agent functions. It encompasses many elements including leisure industries, the food industry, conservation, the local community, and guest society. Both permanent facilities and temporary attractions are important. Cultural events are sometimes effective in attracting tourists in the short term. If a tourist destination has a big seasonal differential, planning good events for the off peak season can effectively reduce this.

In this paper, tourism is simply defined as return travel for purposes including leisure. Under this definition, hunting and gathering itself is not tourism, a business trip without leisure time is not tourism, but working visitors who want to surf are tourists and overseas students who want to visit theme parks on weekends are tourists.

Tourism and Culture

Cross-cultural relations have dual dimensions (involving interaction between hosts and guests) and sometimes tourists change the local culture. For example, some of elements of Bali's "traditional culture" have developed from tourism policies since Dutch colonialism. As with Bali, sometimes tourism can "enliven" traditional culture which may be "dying". Some people suggest that "selling" one's culture to tourists is important to keep traditional

culture "alive", although many argue against it because tourism changes traditional cultures, and when a society is traditional, its culture can remain alive naturally. However in modern society, traditional cultures may struggle to survive. Sometimes financial support from tax helps to preserve traditional culture in museums, however it is not "alive" but rather "fossilized". Cultural tourism may not be ideal, but it is better than other ways to keep traditions alive.

Unique culture attracts tourists but a lot of tourists sometimes acculturate local culture. Especially for primitive indigenous people, contact with the temptations of modernization is itself harmful to efforts to conserve the local culture. When local people wish to conserve their culture, they must limit the number of tourists or educate people about their culture. At the same time, tourists demand authenticity in traditional culture but easily forget that their own presence can sometimes destroy the so-called "authenticity".

This is the paradox between cultural heritage and tourism. Cultural heritage attracts foreign visitors, but foreign visitors bring modern ways of life which are sometimes harmful to traditional life. To the young generation, it is easy to accept the conveniences of modern culture, but continuity for future generations requires cultural conservation. It should be noted that foreign mass media can exert similar influences to tourists in this respect.

There are different points of view regarding traditional cultures. For example, in the case of Bali, the combination of tradition and tourism has changed the traditional culture.

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Viewed negatively, this amounts to cultural destruction because authenticity is lost. From a positive view, acculturated cultures are also worth viewing because they are interesting creations. While modernization may terminate traditional culture, if tourism can contribute to the preservation of some cultural elements, it will be worthwhile. However, there are some dilemmas, for instance if the indigenous people are too primitive, the tourism developer may introduce modern ways of life even though the local community does not need them. On the other hand, tourists may impose traditional customs on the local people even though they would prefer to live a modern way of life.

As some have commented, it is very difficult to make a choice between the local culture and tourism as new culture. Local people have often not been given a choice. In addition, sometimes the tourism developer creates tourist destinations that are made to look old, in response to tourists' demands to see "authentic culture". Sophisticated fake destinations often exist even where the local people are living a modern life.

Sustainability and Tourism

All human activities in themselves damage the natural environment. Even sustainable development is still a kind of "development" with some impacts. When we think about ecotourism, it should be recognized that conservation activities in themselves are not good enough. Ecotourism also requires educating people in the importance of preserving for the benefit of future generations.

Sustainability includes thinking of nature, culture and heritage as vital parts of sustainable tourism. Heritage tourism includes both nature and culture, not only cultural tourism but also ecotourism. Nowadays, some of the most famous heritage tourism sites are listed as UNESCO World Heritage (under The General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization meeting in Paris from 17 October to 21 November 1972).

Heritage tourism has potential for conservation but it is not almighty. Usually, heritage tourism is treated as alternative tourism, however famous heritage sites attract large numbers of tourists, and in this case, it can be classed as one kind of mass tourism with the potential to cause damage to the heritage.

There are fewer world heritage sites in the Asia Pacific region than in Europe. The members of UNESCO's selection committee are accustomed to European heritage but they are not always familiar with Asia Pacific region. In this paper, "heritage" is used to encompass

all forms of natural beauty, good historical sites and traditional cultures even if they are not included on the World Heritage list. Some tourist destinations such as Wat Pho (sleeping Buddha) in Thailand, Tana Toraja (ship-shaped house) in Indonesia and Mt. Fuji are worthy to be included on the heritage list.

Ecotourism has gained widespread popularity throughout the world, and in 2002 the Ecotourism Summit was held in Quebec. The definition of ecotourism is quite complicated, but some reasonable definitions are provided by the World Tourism Organization (WTO), Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA), Japan National Tourist Organization (JNTO), and other international tourism organizations.

The definition can vary greatly from person to person. For example, 'Eco' tourism for conservationists and Eco 'tourism' for developers are quite different concepts. In the case of Eco > Tourism, people understand the natural environment easily and tourists can enhance grass-roots movements for conservation. However, does it always result in economic benefit? Does volunteer management contribute to the local economy? In the case of Eco < Tourism, sustainable developments will help keep tourist spots in good condition, and sustainable income will be generated. However, sometimes we can see fake eco-tours which take tourists into the natural environment but are actually environmentally unfriendly.

As long as they are environmentally friendly, this author does not concern with the scale of ecotourism activity. However, some researchers propose a specific limitation on the number of tourists. For example, Yoshida (1993) shows that a group of eco-tourists has to be under 20 people. This limitation is proposed not only from an environmental point of view, but in consideration of the fact that the interpreter will have difficulty to speak to more than that number of people without a microphone.

The definition also differs from place to place. An example of this definitional difficulty is green tourism. According to Ogata (2000), green tourism in Britain is similar to ecotourism. However, in Japan, green tourism often means agri-tourism. As the British definition is wider than the Japanese one, it often results in confusion in international conferences.

Mixture of Mass and Eco

Some people suggest ecotourism is for unspoiled nature and green tourism is for human-made nature. As in the case of Hawaii's Waikiki beach, some well-known scenic areas have been made by human beings. For example, there were no sheep before Europeans arrived

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in New Zealand and there were no rice paddies until Korean or Chinese arrivals in Japan. Ranches and paddies are artificial but they are good examples of green tourism destinations.

Recently, it has been said that sustainable tourism is good and mass tourism is bad, but sustainable tourism also has weak points and mass tourism has positive attributes. Unless tourists use mass transportation it will remain costly, but if a lot of tourists rush into a particular natural tourism site, terrible damage can be caused. Mass tourism has a transportation advantage and an ecological weak point. Like the hub and spoke system of air transportation, a combination of different types of tourism is important. For example, Zermatt is the one of the most famous tourist destinations in Switzerland. Many tourists try to come to the town by bus, car, etc., but are required to change to electric vehicles when they arrive. This park and ride transportation concept would be effective in many tourist destinations such as Yufuin, a local town in Oita prefecture, where traffic jams are common on Sundays.

When ecotourism becomes a big industry, a lot of accommodation is needed. Sometimes too much accommodation is harmful for ecology because of tree felling, polluted water, waste from garbage, etc. However there is an interesting case at Fraser Island in Australia. The island controls the number of tourists, preventing too much development. In addition, resort buildings are built no higher than the natural trees to retain the good natural view, and the buildings made from wood and paper are able to return to the soil easily.

Sometimes advertisements and signs are not effective and tourists harm natural environment and cultural heritage. Entrance fees for national parks and heritage sites can be used to repair damages but in reality, they cannot protect from damage itself, although an entrance charge for conservation is better than nothing.

Like Mt. Everest, some natural heritages are very costly to maintain. For instance, national parks in the US and Australia require entrance fees to fund their conservation efforts. Famous natural destination need park rangers, lifeguards, etc., otherwise visitors fill the destination with garbage, as can be seen at Mt. Fuji.

There are a lot of differences between ecotourism in Japan and in Australia. First of all, National Parks in Japan are usually free but famous Australian parks such as Uluru and Kakadu charge entrance fees to contribute to conservation. Secondly, Aboriginal culture plays an important role in Australia's "national ecotourism strategy" announced in 1994, but some Japanese politicians and bureaucrats are still ignoring the importance of indigenous

Ainu culture and their environment.

Uluru in Australia was not an environmentally and culturally friendly tourist destination in the 1970s and 1980s. Tourism developers destroyed the natural environment and tourists wrote graffiti on the Aboriginal rock art. However, now tourists have to pay entrance charges for the national park and thus contribute to preservation of the local environment. Interpreters, some of whom are Aboriginal park rangers, educate tourists, providing a good opportunity to learn about both the natural environment and Aboriginal culture.

In the past, sustainable tourism has been rather small scale, but has grown rapidly since the Earth Summit of 1992. Many countries embarked on sustainable development programs, and sustainable tourism projects were formulated by many tourist associations. If governments and travel agents can effectively manage the number of tourists and interpreter guides, rather large-scale sustainable tourism can be viable. However, this type of sustainable tourism must result in benefits not only for travel agents but also for local communities.

Sustainable tourism is less harmful for the local society than mass resort development. When tourists rush to heritage sites, damage will occur. Cultural tourism needs to emulate the approach of ecotourism, limiting the number of tourists, zoning sites and building conservation funds from visitor entrance fees.

Knowledge of local culture is important. If a regional tourist destination tries to operate in the same way as operators in urban areas, it will find it difficult to compete. Knowledge of differences in local culture is vital in order to create a unique tourism destination. However, not all local culture appeals to tourists. Knowledge of both local culture and outsiders' points of view are needed to create a good tourist destination.

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Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Nobel Laureate Symposium

On October 27, 2005 Nobel Laureate Dr. Amartya SEN (Harvard University) visited APU to speak at the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University Nobel Laureate Symposium organized by RCAPS, with the cooperation of Ritsumeikan University. The symposium, titled "Reason, Discourse and Capability - Significance for the Asia Pacific", consisted of a keynote speech by Dr. SEN followed by a panel discussion and Q&A from the floor. The symposium which was open to faculty, students and the public attracted approximately 1000 participants eager to hear the lecture from the world renowned economist.

Dr. Sen began his lecture by introducing his theory on the "Capability Approach". He then followed with a comparison of China and India's life expectancy and the significance of this. Finally, Dr. Sen explained the importance of



discussion and two-way assessment of capability in order to uncover new viewpoints.

Dr. Sen's lecture was followed by a panel discussion which included Prof. MATSUI Noriatsu (Yamaguchi University), Prof. GOTO Reiko (Ritsumeikan University) and APU Professors SALAZAR



Dr. Amartya SEN

Robert, SINHA Dipendra and ZHANG Wei-Bin who commented on Dr. Sen's lecture.

The symposium was followed by a Ritsumeikan International Conference on 'Ethics, Economics and Law: "Against Injustice"', which was held for 3 days from October 28, with Dr. SEN attending the first day of proceedings. The conference sessions were made available to APU researchers and students via remote video conferencing facilities, enabling active participation and ongoing discourse among participants.

Message from RCAPS Director Prof. KEE Pookong

This is my first opportunity to communicate with supporters of the Ritsumeikan Center for Asia Pacific Studies through the RCAPS Newsletter since I assumed the post of Director at the beginning of the academic year in April 2005. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Center's immediate past Director, Prof. COOPER, Malcolm and members of the RCAPS Steering Committee during his term. With a new 10 member Steering Committee, RCAPS is well-positioned to consolidate and expand its service to APU, the Ritsumeikan network, and wider national and international community of scholars interested in Asia Pacific affairs. Some of our achievements in the past nine months include the keynote lecture on "Reason, Discourse and Capability -Significance for the Asia Pacific" by Nobel Laureate Dr. Amartya SEN, the 2005 RCAPS International Conference on "An East Asian Community?" attended by among others, the ASEAN Secretary-General His Excellency Mr. ONG Keng Yong and World Bank Vice-

President Mr. YOSHIMURA Yukio, as well as the workshop on "Globalization and the Revitalization of Local Economies" organized with the Japan Institute of Developing Economies Advanced School (IDEAS) for its Fellows from 8 countries. During the year, RCAPS has continued to encourage research on the Asia Pacific by young researchers through its graduate fieldwork research subsidies program which enabled 44 theses to be completed on various countries of the region. We look forward to sharing further details of these research activities and achievements with readers of the RCAPS Newsletter.



Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific Conference “An East Asian Community”

RCAPS organized an international conference on ***An East Asian Community? Global and Regional Dynamics*** on November 26-27, 2005. The conference aimed to examine the concept of an “East Asian Community” and the global and regional forces that facilitate or inhibit the development of such a community. More specifically, the conference examined the evolution of an East Asian identity, commonalities and differences in the region covering Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia, the grouping of countries that form the ASEAN Plus Three (APT) framework. The conference approached the issue from the range of international, regional and national dimensions, examining the economic, political, social and cultural factors that are shaping relationships among the diverse nations of the region. The conference critically assessed the achievements, barriers and opportunities that the nations of the region have encountered in their efforts to maximize the benefits of regional cooperation for sustainable development.

The conference comprised of two pillars. The first was a set of keynote speeches. The first keynote address was ‘ASEAN Plus Three: Issues, Challenges and Opportunities’ provided by His Excellency Mr. ONG Keng Yong, Secretary General of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). His Excellency was followed by Mr. YOSHIMURA Yukio, Vice President and Special Representative of the World Bank. Mr. Yoshimura’s address was the subject of a special World Bank live television broadcast, linked to World Bank Offices in Singapore, Hanoi, and Tokyo. Other keynote speakers included: Dr. ITO Takatoshi, Japan’s former Vice



His Excellency Mr. ONG Keng Yong

Minister of Finance and now at the Graduate School of Economics and Public Policy of Tokyo University; Dr. SAITO Shinzo, Deputy Chairman of Japan’s Atomic Energy Commission; and Mr. WAHDI Yudi, the Deputy Director of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO). These keynote speeches identified issues in development, regional cooperation and community formation in East Asia from various standpoints including politics, economy, development, energy, and education.

Parallel sessions formed the second pillar of the conference. A total of 25 papers were presented at the sessions, which were organized under the following six categories: ‘International Relations’, ‘Environment, Science and Technology’, ‘Industry, Commerce and Management’, ‘Non-Governmental Linkages’, ‘Economic, Finance and Trade Dynamics’, and ‘History, Culture and Identity’. Overseas participants from countries such as South Korea and China, as well as APU researchers, engaged in active discussion. APU students joined the sessions, using them to expand their understanding of East Asian Community issues and ideals.

RCAPS plans to use linkages formed through the conference as the basis for developing concrete relationships with ASEAN and SEAMEO and for expanding research on the formation of an East Asian Community.



RCAPS Seminars

■ 2004 RCAPS Seminars

Contemporary Asia Pacific Seminar Series - 2004

Date	Title	Speaker	Affiliation	Language
April 5	An informal discussion with APU faculty on the UNEP and waste management	Ms YAMAMOTO-KUWABARA Sachiko	UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme)	English
April 15	The Economics of Recycling in Shanghai Problems and Policies	Mr. XU Zuxin, et al.	Director, Shanghai Environment Protection Bureau	Chinese
April 27	Infrastructure Development in Indonesia	Dr. DARDAK Hermanto	Advisor to the Minister of Settlements and Regional Infrastructure, Indonesia	English
May 17	The Future of the enlarged EU and its relations with Asia, especially with Japan	Dr. REITERER Michael	Minister, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Commission in Japan	English
June 16	Making Alternative nations in the post-colonial states of Southeast Asia	Dr. Wee Vivienne	Associate Prof. Department of Applied Social Studies & Associate Director, Southeast Asia Research Centre, City University of Hong Kong	English
June 24	Insurance in India: Problems and Prospects	Dr. SINHA Tapen	ING Chair, ITAM, Mexico, Professor, University of Nottingham, UK; Swiss Reinsurance Company Visiting Professor, IIRM, India	English
July 7	Administrative Reform Efforts in Japan	Mr. HORIE Masahiro	Director General of the Information and Communications Policy Bureau, Ministry of Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications Government of Japan	English
July 22	Current Issues Facing International Migration and the International Organization for Migration(IOM)	Mr. TANIMURA Yorio	Director for migration policy of the International Organization for Migration(IOM)	English
December 3	ASEAN Ten Plus Three: Toward an East Asian Economic Community?	Prof. SHEE Poon Kim	Former Visiting Professor, Faculty of International Relations, Ritsumeikan University	English
December 15	Japan's Foreign Policy with Southeast Asia	Mr. TAKIZAKI Shigeki	Director, Second Southeast Asia Division, Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	English
January 18	East Asian Economic Integration and China's Economy	Prof. WATANABE Toshio	Faculty of International Development, Takushoku University	Japanese
January 26	Sustainable Tourism Development in Japan, China and Europe	Dr. ARLT, Wolfgang	Fachhochschule Stralsund University of Applied Sciences, Germany	English

Current Research Seminar Series - 2004

Date	Title	Speaker	Affiliation	Language
May 12	Non-continuation of Tourism Policy in Japan	Assistant Prof. ASAMIZU Munehiko	APS, APU	English
May 26	Market Strategies of Japanese Logistics Corporations in Singapore	Prof. WANG Mariner	APM, APU	Japanese
June 23	Retailing in China	Dr. DRUMMOND Damon	APM, APU	English
January 12	How to get profits in Japanese FDI business in India	Prof. SUZUKI Koji	APM, APU	English

■ Spring 2005 RCAPS Seminars

Contemporary Asia Pacific Seminar Series - Spring 2005

Date	Title	Speaker	Affiliation	Language
May 19	Reality and uncertainties in the "global warming" issue	Prof. YASUNARI Tetsuzo	Professor, Hydrospheric Atmospheric Research Center (HyARC), Nagoya University	English
May 25	Current Japanese Fiscal Conditions and Issues to be Considered	Mr. TANIGUCHI Hirofumi	Director-General, Kyushu Local Finance Bureau, Ministry of Finance, Japan	Japanese
June 27	Discourses on an "East Asian Community" and Japan's Commitment	Prof. SUEHIRO Akira	Professor, Institute of Social Science, The University of Tokyo	English
July 6	Transforming Incentives: Empirical Analysis of Pay for Performance Using Personnel Data	Prof. TSURU Tsuyoshi	Professor, Institute of Economic Research, Hitotsubashi University	Japanese
July 18	East Asian Regionalism in Global Context	Prof. YAMAKAGE Susumu	Professor, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences The University of Tokyo	English

Current Research Seminar Series - Spring 2005

Date	Title	Speaker	Affiliation	Language
June 22	Franchise Law and Business in Asia	Prof. SUZUKI Koji	APM, APU	English
July 20	Knowledge, Human Parity and Peace	Prof. CHOWDHURY Diman Kumar	APM, APU	English

RCAPS Activities

■ IDEAS Follow-up Seminar

On 16 November 2005, RCAPS co-hosted the Institute of Developing Economies Advanced School (IDEAS) Follow-up Seminar. This short-term training program aims to provide former IDEAS Overseas Fellows with a forum where they can discuss their current situations and improve their skills for tackling the development issues they face in their work after returning from the IDEAS programs.

This year's theme was "Globalization and Revitalization of Asian Local Economies". At the beginning of the seminar, Prof. YAMAMOTO Kazumi (Faculty of Modern Chinese Studies, Aichi University) gave a comprehensive overview of the impact of globalization on trade and investment environments. Then, Prof. IGUSA Kunio (Dean, College of Asia Pacific Management, APU) introduced the 'One Village, One Product Movement', which was initiated in Oita Prefecture and is gaining high popularity in other



parts of Asia and Africa.

After these two keynote lectures, ex-overseas fellows from eight Asian countries (Bangladesh, India, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam) presented case studies of economic and industrial development in each country. The fellows introduced various issues and problems in promoting trade and foreign direct investment and revitalizing particular sectors such as tourism, agriculture, and textiles. In the Thai case study, for instance, the 'One Tambon, One Product (OTOP)' project was introduced as a successful strategy to strengthen the local economy in the country.

APU students actively participated in a lively debate, posing insightful questions to the fellows' presentation. The proceedings of this seminar will be compiled in a "Follow-up Seminar Report" currently being prepared by IDEAS.

■ RCAPS Awarded Funds for Conference

RCAPS, under Director, Prof. KEE Pookong, has received unofficial confirmation that its application to receive Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) International Conference funds has been successful. This program aims to promote interaction and information exchange among researchers from various countries with an eye to elevating the level of research on the subject in both Japan and the broader scientific community. In the social science field, there were 26 applications, and RCAPS became one of only seven institutes to successfully receive funds (other successful institutes include Tokyo University, Kyoto University, Hiroshima University, etc.).

The proposed conference on "Global Movements and the Asia Pacific" will analyze and discuss the causes, processes and consequences of the global movements of migrants, refugees, tourists, students, trade, investment and technology in the Asia Pacific region. The increasing volume and complexity of the global movements of

people, capital, technology and information have been both the cause and consequence of globalization. This international conference will provide a forum for an eminent group of international scholars to examine the impact of such transnational movements on the societies and economies of the Asia Pacific.

The conference to be held in AY 2006 will build on the strong teaching and research strengths of APU, which continues to contribute to the creation of new knowledge on important and emerging issues affecting the diverse countries of this region. The conference will be one of the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific Conferences that RCAPS has planned and organized. Past conferences include 'An East Asian Community? Global and Regional Dynamics' (November 2005), 'The City Limits: Rethinking the Significance of the City in a Globalizing Age' (January 2005), and 'The Limits of the Nation-State in the Asia Pacific' (November 2003).

APU Publications

APU researchers have conducted intensive research in various academic fields. The following is a list of books and articles appearing in refereed journals published between April 2004 and September 2005. (The list does not include chapters in books nor non-refereed journal articles.)

Books

Asamizu, Munehiko, *Sustainable Development and Australia-Japan's Relations* (Tokyo: Kumpul, 2004).

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New York: Palgrave, 2005).

Suzuki, Yasushi, *Financial Market, Institutions and Credit Monitoring* (Tokyo: Yuigaku Shobo, 2005).

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Zhou Beihai, Zhang, Kunmin, et al, *State of the Environment in Asia Volume 1* (Beijing: China Environment Science Press, 2005). (Translation from Japanese)

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