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EMERGING MASS TOURISM IN THE SOUTH

**REFLECTIONS ON THE SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES
AND COSTS OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL
TOURISM IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

by Krishna Ghimire

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◆ Preface

Tourism is an increasingly important economic sector in much of the developing world. In several countries, its contribution to GDP is substantial, it is frequently the primary source of foreign exchange earnings, and it has proven to be a crucial source of income and employment for many population groups. But a number of the socio-cultural and environmental effects of tourism development have attracted criticism, and there is lively debate about the extent to which tourism has actually led to national economic growth and is able to sustain local livelihoods.

The potential of and problems associated with tourism have so far been discussed in the context of industrialized countries or involving Northern tourists in the South. This paper looks at Southern tourists, and by focusing on the emerging national and regional mass tourism in different parts of the developing world it widens the debate and encourages reflection on what is likely to be an area of growing importance in the not-so-distant future.

At present, very few developing countries have a consistently elaborated policy on national and regional tourism. Since most developing countries perceive tourism to be associated primarily with the receiving of wealthy Northern visitors, most Southern governments have largely ignored the occurrence of domestic and regional tourism. The paper suggests that they may be wrong to do so, arguing that it is in the developing world that tourism is likely to expand most rapidly in the future.

The paper begins by examining contradictory views of and policies for tourism development, and outlines the problems related to definition of the principal concepts and processes. In the second section, it looks critically at how mass tourism has evolved in the industrialized countries through the participation of the large middle class and the relatively better-off segments of the lower classes, a process that appears to be taking place in many developing countries and regions. In the third section, the paper discusses the nature and magnitude of North-South tourism and its overwhelming economic importance in several developing countries. The fourth section shows how domestic and regional travel are becoming increasingly important phenomena in several parts of the Third World. The fifth section points out some of the possible economic, social, political, cultural and ecological effects of Southern domestic and regional tourism, and it suggests that there are currently major gaps in the research on these impacts. In the sixth section, the paper puts forth some hypotheses about future patterns of national and regional mass tourism expansion in the South, likely to result primarily from the rapid spread of consumerism, increasing demand for leisure activities, urbanization and economic growth in certain parts of the developing world. In the concluding section, the paper suggests that, given their accelerating growth, Southern national and regional mass tourism merit careful consideration from the point of view of both research and planning. It warns that if Southern national and regional mass tourism were to follow the same evolution patterns as Northern mass tourism, there could be disastrous socio-economic and environmental results. National and regional tourists, popular organizations and local population groups

constitute important social forces that can work to ensure that national and regional tourism become economically more equitable, socially more sound, and culturally and environmentally less damaging. The paper ends by stressing that the development of national and regional tourism in developing countries does present certain advantages for Southern governments, national enterprises and local communities that should not be overlooked, but appropriate and participatory policies and institutions need to be set in place if these are to outweigh the potential negative impacts.

Information and debate are greatly lacking on the nature, magnitude and specific impacts of domestic and regional mass tourism in different contexts. Concrete policy measures required to manage the emerging Southern mass tourism in a more sustainable manner are also rare. The present paper is meant to be a background document; it sets out a number of the areas that merit attention if this gap is to be filled. UNRISD would like to contribute to work in this area by commissioning a number of papers on critical themes related to domestic and regional tourism development in developing countries. We hope this will help to generate wider interest on the topic and lead eventually to detailed case studies in different countries and regions.

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◆ Abbreviations and Acronyms

ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
FNNPE	Federation of Nature and National Parks of Europe
GDP	gross domestic product
TNCs	transnational corporations
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WTO	World Tourism Organization
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council
WWF	World Wide Fund For Nature

*"On a bien attrapé un oiseau, mais c'est le feu pour le rôti qui manque"**

a Malagasy proverb

1. INTRODUCTION

◆ The Problematic

Under what circumstances can mass tourism contribute to sustainable development? This is a question that has given rise to much academic and philosophical debate, and preoccupied government officials and experts that are involved in designing tourism strategies and plans. There are conflicting views about what "sustainable development"¹ is and whether mass tourism has the ability to advance it. Governments, business groups, international lending institutions, multilateral and bilateral bodies and neo-liberal economists and tourism specialists have consistently emphasized the economic potential of tourism. Many critical scholars, environmentalists, NGOs and local community associations, on the other hand, have tended to point out the environmental and cultural costs associated with tourism; and they have also frequently questioned the prospects for national economic development or sustained local livelihoods, especially in developing countries.

It is undeniable that tourism today constitutes an essential sector of the national economy in several developing countries, generating foreign exchange earnings as well as income and employment for certain sections of the population. Because of this important economic role of tourism, combined with the process of rapid global economic integration, the expansion of tourism is, on the whole, inevitable. Moreover, there has been a speedy development in transport and communications systems that provide greater mobility for those attaching importance to travel and leisure activities. In many cases, the socio-economic, cultural, environmental and political impacts of tourism are quite predictable.

The guiding assumption in this paper is that it is in the developing world that tourism is likely to expand most rapidly in the future. Some of this growth may be linked to the increased international tourist arrivals facilitated by faster mobility and competitive travel fares. But more importantly, there is likely to be a strong rise in national and regional tourism within the South. It will attempt to qualify this argument throughout the paper, especially towards the end.

* Translation: "We have caught the bird; now, all we need is the fire to roast it."

¹ In major international discussions, as well as the general literature, the concept of "sustainability" has principally been used to examine processes of environmental degradation, or at times unsustainable economic growth or consumption patterns (see e.g., WCED, 1987; UNCED, 1992). The wider issues of basic needs provisioning, equity, political representation, human dignity and cultural diversity have frequently remained secondary to environmental damage (cf. Redclift, 1992; Barraclough, Ghimire and Meliczek, 1997).

The growth in world travel and tourism since the 1950s has been phenomenal. Indeed, between 1950 and 1990 annual world tourist arrivals increased from about 25 million to 455 million (table 1). In 1995, international annual tourism arrivals reached 567 million, representing over one tenth of the global population. In addition, there are domestic tourists who are not included in this figure. Evidence suggests that within the European Community, for example, about 60 per cent of the population, or about 180 million people, took annual holidays away from home in the early 1990s (FNNPE, 1993:10). A comparable situation exists in North America. But the information on domestic tourism in developing countries remains obscure. As we shall see later, certain developing countries have experienced a significant increase in the number of their nationals travelling inside, as well as outside, the country. This indicates that a considerable section of the world population that had previously not been considered in this context may already be involved in leisure travel.

Table 1: The evolution of international tourist arrivals (1950-1995)

Year	Tourist arrivals (thousands)
1950	25,282
1960	69,320
1965	112,863
1970	165,787
1975	222,290
1980	287,906
1985	330,471
1990	454,875
1991	448,545
1992	502,788
1993	512,992
1994	537,000
1995	567,000

Source: WTO, 1992, 1993a, 1994; **WTO News**, No. 6, December 1995 and No. 1, February/March 1996.

Despite general economic stagnation in the affluent North and worsening of poverty in certain parts of the developing world, international tourism is expected to grow strongly in the future. WTO forecasts that, globally, 702 million people will travel in the year 2000, and 1,018 million in 2010 (**WTO News**, May/June 1996). To some extent, projections are bound to be uncertain. Nonetheless, tourism is expanding in almost all countries.

In the developed countries (which, taken together, receive and send many of the present international travellers), sustained growth in tourism is seen as important because of its substantial contribution to GDP.² The USA, France and Spain are competing to remain the top tourist destinations, while Italy aspires to catch up with them. The United Kingdom, Switzerland, Germany

² Tourism specialists include transportation, accommodation, catering/retail, recreation and travel related activities in the tourism industry (WTTC, 1993:4). These activities are, in fact, very vast and may also include many other sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, commerce, energy, construction and cultural activities. The contribution of tourism to GDP must thus be interpreted with some caution.

and the Scandinavian countries also desire to retain important shares of world tourism. Some countries, such as the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, Japan and, to a lesser extent, France also see national tourism growth as a way of reducing the existing gap between tourism income and expenditure resulting from travel abroad by their nationals. Attempts are thus made not only to attract more foreign visitors, but also to retain their nationals in the country. However, many industrial countries have made substantial tourism investment abroad as well, allowing them eventually to repatriate much of this income. This is particularly the case for the United States and the United Kingdom.

These tourism issues are not much different in the Southern countries, although many of them have less well-developed tourism planning and some are just beginning to promote tourism. Nevertheless, there are few countries that are *not* seeking to develop tourism. Evidently, all of them desire to attract more, and wealthier, visitors. Those countries that have tended to receive a significant number of tourists, such as Brazil, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Singapore, Thailand and Tunisia are all aiming at expanding tourism, while newcomers such as China and South Africa see tourism development as a major avenue for national economic development. Indeed, as we shall see later, in these last two countries, the recent growth of tourism is exceptional. Recently, Viet Nam and Cuba have also entered into tourism planning and development, with the goal of acquiring much-needed foreign exchange earnings. Contrary to the Northern countries, however, Southern countries have not always considered national tourism seriously in their planning of tourism development.

As the dominant official conception in developing countries sees tourism to be associated primarily with receiving wealthy foreign visitors from the industrialized North, most governments have put significant effort into promoting international tourism and have overlooked the potentials as well as problems related to mass tourism involving domestic and regional visitors. Indeed, very few developing countries have a consistent policy on national and regional tourism. Domestic tourism development is often taking place without government planning. When a significant number of tourists begin to move, they demand facilities and services. Governments have tended to cope with this process in an ad hoc manner, with tourism policies being developed in a completely unplanned fashion. Even where investments occur, including from the private sector, they remain highly sectoral and short term, motivated mainly by quick profit-making.

This "Northern bias" is not only reflected in government tourism policies, but also in the general literature on tourism. The bulk of past social science inquiry has been concerned mainly with the socio-economic effects of tourism in the North or involving Northern tourists in the South. Little knowledge exists on Southern tourists. Although a great deal of research has been carried out on the impact of tourism on national economies and cultures, and more recently, on the environment, few studies focus systematically on the different social groups that interact in the context of Southern national and regional tourism, or on wider socio-political

structures and processes that very often determine who ultimately benefits or loses from tourism. Tourism studies rarely separate the respective impacts of national and international tourism. The type and extent of tourism impacts may differ depending not only upon the total number of visitors involved, but also their destinations, social origins and leisure expectations, as well as the type of economic system in the host country.

This paper aims to highlight how globalization processes have given birth to a new leisure ethic in developing countries and how this, in turn, is fostering domestic and regional mass tourism. Detailed information on the exact nature, magnitude and specific impacts of domestic and regional mass tourism in different socio-economic, cultural, political and ecological contexts, and on diverse social groups, as well as concrete policy attempts geared towards managing mass tourism in a more sustainable manner are all lacking at present. Nonetheless, the paper will seek to increase understanding of the implications of the rise in national and regional mass tourism by analysing the readily available material. This will be complemented by a critical look at the historical trends in international tourism development, taking into account the broader processes of political economy involving national and international power relations and economic and cultural changes. It will also indicate research gaps. As far as policy formulation is concerned, the central issue is to determine how the economic opportunities arising from national and regional mass tourism in developing countries can be maximized and shared as widely as possible, while reducing associated social and environmental costs.

◆ Definition of Principal Terms

Before proceeding further, it may be worthwhile to spend a moment clarifying some of the concepts and terms used in this paper. First, who is a "domestic tourist"? The World Tourism Organization (WTO) has defined a domestic tourist as any person residing in a country, who travels to a place within the country outside his/her usual environment, for a period not exceeding 12 months and whose main purpose of visit is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited (WTO, 1993b). WTO has also stated that the minimum stay away should be longer than 24 hours for a person to be qualified as a "tourist". Those staying away less than 24 hours are called "same-day visitors" (ibid.). Assuming that this definition of "same day visitors" is valid for national tourists as well, a visit as short as an overnight trip on the day of a public holiday by city-dwellers to a nearby recreational area makes them effectively "tourists". Nevertheless, the implications arising in terms of the development of tourism infrastructure and facilities, as well as the associated socio-economic impacts, from short trips and travel during week-ends, longer holidays and annual vacations might be somewhat different and need to be observed in specific national and local contexts.

Second, what would be the usual tourist expectation? WTO has specified that the journey of a domestic tourist could involve the following purposes: a) leisure, recreation and holidays; b) visiting friends and relatives; c) business and professional; d) health treatment; e) religion/pilgrimages; and

f) other (WTO, 1993b). Several questions arise in terms of whether all the activities listed above could be regarded as "tourism". For example, to what extent could a person who goes to see family members for a short period in his own village or town be seen as a "tourist"? Even more significantly, how accurate is it to consider a person who goes away from home for medical treatment as a "tourist"? Indeed, the WTO definitions are so broad that anybody travelling inside the country for more than 24 hours could be seen as a "domestic tourist".

This paper maintains that, as travel involving visits to friends and relatives, health treatment, business and professional activities and pilgrimages is customary in all societies, it does not represent a trend. Travel relating to trade and occupational activities might obviously contain some elements of tourism, and it has been on the rise in many developing countries. However, what is certainly new is the acceleration in domestic travelling for leisure, recreation and holidays. This paper focuses especially on this phenomenon.

In this respect, a word of clarification is also useful on "regional tourists". WTO combines overseas and regional tourists into one category as "international tourists". For comparative purposes, it is found practical in this paper to make a distinction between these two groups of tourists. For instance, the Southern visitors that come from distinct neighbouring regions such as South-East Asia, Southern Africa, Central America and South America can be regarded as "regional tourists". Besides geographical proximity, the countries in a given region may share many similar historical developments, ecological characteristics, levels of living, socio-economic structures, culture and population compositions. The behaviour of a "regional tourist" might differ at times from that of the average international tourist, thus necessitating distinct policy measures. For example, he or she may be satisfied with less luxurious accommodation and more aware of the local cultural norms than tourists coming from Europe or North America. In some cases, however, the opposite could also be true, especially when the majority of the regional and national tourists originate mainly from the privileged classes engaged in lavish consumption activities.

Another term that requires some attention is "mass" tourism. Generally, it is clear that the expression "mass" implies a large number of people. But the term can have many nuances. The current practice is to rank countries on the basis of the total number of visitors received annually. This helps to explain general tourism magnitude in the country. However, countries vary in their geographical and demographic size. Receipt of five million visitors annually by France and Belgium, for example, is not the same matter given their vast territorial difference. More crucially, tourists tend to be concentrated in certain locations, such as the Mediterranean coast in southern Europe. Tourism impact is more severe when visitors are concentrated in a limited number of destinations, rather than spread throughout the country as a whole. Certain areas, such as mountains, may be ecologically more vulnerable than others. Furthermore, the seasonal fluctuation in tourism is an important aspect. For example, over summer or school holidays certain areas may be totally overcrowded, while other times they may largely remain empty.

Besides, what is important is who is going on vacation. It is clear that wealthy groups in all societies will have sufficient purchasing power to participate in a wide range of leisure activities, including travel vacations. But this would not necessarily lead to the development of mass tourism. For mass tourism to develop, there has to be strong participation of the large middle class, as well as the relatively better-off strata of the lower classes. This has been the case in regard to the evolution of mass tourism in Europe, and, as we shall see shortly, this is a process that currently seems to be repeating in many developing countries and regions.

2. THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF MASS TOURISM IN WESTERN EUROPE

Travel for leisure in Western Europe began a century ago, but it was limited to privileged classes. These included members of the aristocracy, bourgeoisie, political élite and some well-off urban dwellers. Holidaying was thus a symbol of economic affluence and social prestige. Travel distances, however, remained short, generally within the country. The Alps were one of the first major destinations that involved some travel. Mountain climbing, walking, thermal cures and skiing were the principal holiday activities undertaken, concentrated mainly over the winter season.

A rapid development in transportation, especially involving the steam locomotive, made travel easier and faster. This opened up the possibility of travelling longer distances as well. An early result of this was increased travel to the Mediterranean coast by privileged European tourists, especially from the 1920s on. Cruising, sailing, swimming, beach-camping, sun-bathing and beach-walks were the main attractions. This growing popularity of the Mediterranean region for summer holidaying, combined with winters in the mountains, made tourism a year-round phenomenon. But tourism advanced significantly only when industrial workers in different European countries began to receive paid holidays. In France, for example, workers were granted paid holidays under the Front Populaire in 1936-1937 (Dumazedier, 1962), encouraging them not only to go the Alps and Mediterranean regions, but also to explore different parts of the country (Finger-Stich and Ghimire, forthcoming). It is estimated that until the Second World War, about 10 per cent of the population went annually on vacation in industrialized countries, including the United States and Canada (cf. Boyer, 1995).

Mass tourism has been an integral part of European and North American lifestyles since the 1950s. An expanding national economy, on the one hand, and sustained labour movements, on the other, allowed workers to obtain increased wages and benefits, including extended paid holidays. In most countries, workers' unions and employers created special holiday camps and activities for their workers. A variety of state assistance programmes made it possible for such population categories as school children, students and

pensioners to take vacations. By the 1960s, about 40 per cent of the European population took leisure holidays.

The urban population, which constituted the bulk of the European population in the 1960s, perceived leisure travel as an evasion from metropolitan stress, insecurity, unhealthy environment (e.g., pollution) and so forth. National élites, literature and education systems continued to idealize the "countryside" and viewed holidaying as a retreat from both hard working life and modernization. For some, holidays meant a possibility to go back to their childhood homes and appreciate local festivities, or discover new areas. Holidaying in general was taken as a synonym of relaxation and comfort, reflecting the growing consumer culture. This consumer culture has strongly influenced rural societies as well.

Investors and governments have long seen tourism as a promising economic sector. The ability of tourism to inject revenue into the local economy, to create employment and to generate spin-offs such as construction, repair of buildings and roads and cultural activities has encouraged all governments to make substantial investments in this sector. As mentioned earlier, by 1990, some 60 per cent of the European population took annual vacations away from home. This figure does not include those who take vacations in the region without leaving their place of residence, or make shorter or weekend trips without using hotel accommodation. In addition, European countries have managed to attract a substantial number of tourists from outside the continent interested in seeing cities and historical sites throughout the year. Europe received around 60 per cent of all international tourists, or about 300 million people annually, by 1994 (WTO, 1996a:205).

The growth in tourism is thus welcomed by the business community and governments. However, as was said before, the potential and actual problems associated with mass tourism have been looked on with a rather critical eye by academicians, independent researchers, environmentalists, local populations and so forth. It has become clear that, despite some economic earnings from tourism by some population groups, tourism development on the whole has not always led to significant reduction in social and regional differences. Instead, it frequently results in the increased control of land by property developers and affluent urban holiday-makers. Furthermore, once an area becomes built-up, investors and tourists tend to move to new areas. This, for example, has been the case in much of the Mediterranean region. In major tourist receiving areas, there has been notable destruction of landscapes due to over-construction. The possibility of making "quick money" through construction, business licences and activities, etc., has sometimes led politicians and local élites to become involved in corruption or dubious tourism development plans. Environmental problems related to waste disposal, water shortage, air pollution and the negative effects on marine and montane ecosystems have continued to exist. For example, it has been claimed that only 30 per cent of the sewage from coastal towns is treated before being evacuated into the Mediterranean. Some 500 Mediterranean plant species may be endangered and many Mediterranean sand dunes have disappeared. About 50 million

people visit the Alps each year and the ski lifts in the region can transport 1.5 million people per hour to 40,000 ski trails (cf. Eber, 1992:VI).

In recent years, many contradictory trends have emerged. On the one hand, there has been increased administrative regulation and legislation, at both the national and European Community levels, to control the negative impacts of mass tourism, such as over-construction and environmental and cultural damage. This is due, in large part, to the opposition of local populations negatively affected by mass tourism, environmental groups and other socially concerned forces. On the other hand, all European countries see the potential for expansion in tourism to contribute to economic growth. For example, tourism in the Mediterranean region is expected to double or even triple by 2025 from the present 100 million annual visitors (FNNPE, 1993:43). In all concerned countries, this news is welcomed. Consideration of its negative impacts remains marginal.

Overall, Europe's share of international tourist arrivals has shown a declining trend: between 1950 and 1995, this share decreased by one third (see table 2). At the same time, economic recession and growing unemployment have begun to affect leisure travel and vacationing by national and continental visitors. Tourism planners and the business community are also concerned about low holiday bookings and hotel occupancy, coupled with unstable climatic conditions — such as rainy or cold summers or warmer winters resulting in the lack of snow for skiing. To make the industry more stable, as well as less dependent on foreign visitors, governments are encouraging nationals to travel more. In France, for example, the government is considering the provision of holiday assistance to families who otherwise would not be able to leave home (*Le Monde*, 19 June 1996).

Table 2: International tourist arrivals trends in regional market share (1950-1995)

Region	1950 (%)	1995 (%)	Difference 1950-1995	% Change
Americas	29.6	19.72	-9.88	-33.0
Europe	66.6	59.41	-7.19	-10.8
East				
Asia/Pacific	0.7	14.80	14.10	+2,014.0
Africa	2.1	3.33	1.23	+58.6
Middle East	0.8	1.98	1.18	+147.5
South Asia	0.2	0.76	0.56	+280.0

Source: 1950 and 1995 statistics from WTO, 1993a and WTO, 1996b

One major complication seems to be that the patterns of travel of European holiday-makers are changing somewhat. They seem to be taking several shorter holidays each year instead of one long one; and they increasingly want to explore new destinations other than Mediterranean beaches, or mountains. In view of this situation, several new attempts are being made to diversify the tourist industry. These include "green", farm, cultural and city tourism, in addition to traditional coast and mountain holidaying. But official financial and technical assistance for these measures is still very limited, and in some cases there have been difficulties of making a

sustainable living for the participating populations. Where benefits are possible, it is often outside groups, such as urban investors, that take the lion's share (Finger-Stich and Ghimire, forthcoming).

If one looks critically at current European tourism planning, one can see that there is still much fervour in mass tourism. Although official documents now commonly mention the need to make tourism more sustainable, investment, marketing and administrative activities are geared towards increasing tourist numbers. Tourist receiving areas are attracted by short-term economic possibilities, while governments want to see the contribution of the tourism sector to GDP continue to expand. Long-term tourism planning is still rare, especially in terms of integrating tourism with other sectors of the economy, and local and regional needs. Tourism activities are tightly controlled by the business and market sectors, motivated by the sole logic of profitability. Control of the undesirable effects of mass tourism is left to the state, which is itself increasingly required to follow the logic of liberalization and profitability.

What should be the accepted scale of mass tourism, and how can state institutions be made more effective in controlling it when the decided scale is surpassed? What should be the social control mechanisms to ensure more equitable distribution of tourism-derived benefits, especially in local areas? How can local natural and cultural features be simultaneously protected and promoted? How can decision-making processes be more decentralized and the affected populations and groups have a greater participation and voice? Despite many years of experience of dealing with mass tourism, these crucial questions are far from answered within the European context.

3. NORTH-SOUTH MASS TOURISM

Mass tourism involving travel from the industrialized North to the developing countries of the South is a more recent phenomenon, beginning basically in the 1970s. Previously, well-defined groups travelled to the South — explorers, traders, colonizers, missionaries, scientists and administrators, especially in the wake of mercantile trade and colonization. In the 1950s and early 1960s, the wave of decolonization was accompanied by rapid development in communications and transport systems — in particular airplanes — providing greater mobility for Northern travellers. At the same time, Third World governments began to see tourism as an important tool for economic development — one that was also believed to result in a net resource in flow from the North. The tourism industry was considered by some a more reliable source of foreign exchange than minerals, raw materials, cash crops and manufactured goods, which had increasingly unstable prices. Tourism was also seen as an exceptional opportunity to valorize national culture, wildlife and unique natural features. Important investments were made in infrastructure, tourism training, accommodation and other tourist facilities. The private sector, and transnational corporations (TNCs) in particular, were attracted because of the high growth potential of the tourism sector, which was frequently combined with official tax breaks and provisions for profit repatriation.

To some extent, the massive arrival of Northern tourists over the past 25 years has reflected the ability of Northern travel businesses and TNCs to promote travel in the South, especially through package tourism. But this has also been the time when average Northerners have had increasing disposable income and leisure time. A small number of them have probably been attracted by adventure, learning and encounters with new territories and people. But the majority of Northern tourists seem to have been attracted mainly by the pleasures of sun and beaches — and, in some cases, sex (Hong, 1985:70-81; Truong, 1983:533-54).

Official statistics indicate that in 1995, just over 20 per cent of international tourist arrivals occurred in the developing world.³ Over the past 45 years, the East Asia/Pacific region has seen a remarkable growth in tourism, followed by South Asia. Africa and the Middle East have experienced more restrained progress (see table 2), probably due, in part, to political instability. Forecasts suggest that East Asia/Pacific, South Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America will see remarkable growth in international travel until 2010 (WTO News, May/June 1996). No official figures are available regarding the possible future trends in domestic travel in the South.

Of course, not all of the international tourists visiting the Southern countries come from the North. Indeed, as we shall see shortly, a significant proportion of the international visitors originate from the developing world, and the majority of travel is intra-regional. The annual rates of global tourist arrivals are impressive in several developing countries. In 1994, for example, China and Mexico received 21.0 million and 17.1 million international tourists respectively. Hong Kong and Malaysia each received 7 million tourists. Singapore, Thailand and Turkey received over 6 million each. Over 4 million tourists each visited Macao and Indonesia, and nearly as many went to Argentina and Tunisia. Over 3 million tourists each were received by South Africa, South Korea and Morocco. Egypt, Bahrain, Taiwan, Cyprus, India, Uruguay, Israel, the Dominican Republic, Brazil,

³ In light of the problematic definition of "tourists" discussed in the introductory section, it should be recalled that the figures provided by WTO on the number of international and regional tourists visiting the South are far from definite. The information on tourist arrivals is based on formal entries made at airports and border points. Such data is unlikely to capture masses of people, with varying purposes and length of stay. In some cases, travellers from the respective region or countries with specific bilateral travel arrangements would not need to register at entry points. WTO data, on the whole, is based on information from national authorities, which may have few resources to do a satisfactory job in recording visitor numbers and their expectations, or may wish to show a higher number by applying convenient methodological criteria.

Equally unclear is what economic activities should constitute tourism. Official information on tourism receipts in different countries does not clearly indicate how the tourism industry relates to such sectors as agriculture, manufacturing and commerce, and their independent or multiplier effects on the GDP. Moreover, this information does not explain how much of the income generated by tourism may eventually be leaking out of the country in the form of payment for tourism-related goods and services. The result is that the actual income from tourism may be considerably lower than claimed to be in many developing countries.

Chile, the Bahamas, the Philippines, the United Arab Emirates, Colombia, Zimbabwe and Viet Nam each received over 1 million visitors annually (table 3). In 1995, China and Mexico were among the top 10 tourism destinations in the world, with 23.3 million and 19.8 million annual visitors respectively (WTO News, February/March 1996). Moreover, China seems not to consider visitors from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao, and overseas Chinese as foreign travellers, and these are thus not included in the above figure. The information suggests that in 1992 this group of travellers constituted over 34 million people (Payne, 1993:27). South Africa has also seen buoyant growth, reaching 4.7 million visitors in 1995 (Payne, 1993:27).

Table 3: The South's top 30 tourism destinations in 1994

Country	Tourist arrivals (thousands)
China	21.07
Mexico	17.18
Hong Kong	9.33
Malaysia	7.19
Singapore	6.26
Thailand	6.16
Turkey	6.03
Macao	4.48
Indonesia	4.00
Argentina	3.86
Tunisia	3.85
South Africa	3.66
South Korea	3.58
Morocco	3.46
Puerto Rico	3.04
Egypt	2.35
Bahrain	2.27
Taiwan	2.12
Cyprus	2.06
India	1.88
Uruguay	1.88
Israel	1.83
Dominican Republic	1.321
Brazil	1.70
Chile	1.63
Bahamas	1.51
Philippines	1.41
United Arab Emirates	1.23
Colombia	1.20
Zimbabwe	1.09
Guam	1.08
Viet Nam	1.01

Source: WTO, 1996b:12.

In theory, accommodating a few million visitors annually should not cause any serious problems in large countries such as China, India, Mexico, Brazil and South Africa. In practice, however, most tourists arrive in capital cities and remain concentrated in certain regions or particular areas. Also, tourist seasons tend to be very short. In smaller countries, tourism carrying capacity is an important issue. Countries such as Singapore and many other Pacific and Caribbean island countries may already be reaching a limit in

their tourism capacity, but government policies unfailingly seek further development of tourism everywhere.

It is certain that tourism earnings amount to substantial sums in developing countries. According to the WTO, China, for example, earned over US\$ 8 billion in annual tourism receipts in 1995 (WTO News, February/March 1996). Hong Kong, Singapore and Mexico received over US\$ 6 billion, while Thailand earned over US\$ 5 billion. Indonesia and Turkey earned just under US\$ 4 billion, and Argentina and South Korea earned nearly as much. Taiwan and Malaysia received over US\$ 3 billion each annually. Indeed, the developing countries receiving more than 1 million visitors per year, with the exception of Chile, Colombia, the United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe, have earned over US\$ 1 billion each annually (WTO, 1996b:13). The five countries mentioned above have nonetheless earned several hundred million dollars each year. There are also many developing countries that may not earn as much, but tourism earnings represent an important proportion of their GDP. This is the case for Cuba, Jamaica, Kenya, Tanzania, Syria, Lebanon and several of the Asian and Pacific countries. Foreign exchange earnings are vital to all developing countries, as they are increasingly incorporated into globalizing systems of production and exchange. However, the extent to which tourism earnings contribute to sustained national economic growth, reduce poverty, increase social solidarity and protect culture and the environment is a matter of huge debate. Before proceeding to treat this aspect, it is useful to examine how Southern mass tourism is developing and how related outcomes are understood.

4. THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL TOURISM IN THE SOUTH

Mass tourism involving domestic and regional travel is becoming an important phenomenon in several parts of the Third World. Travelling for pilgrimages, health treatment and paying visits to relatives and friends has a long tradition and may periodically involve movement of a large number of people. Travel involving some elements of Western-style leisure and holiday taking patterns is also quite old amongst certain social groups. Changing of summer and winter residences, and undertaking of hunting or sports expeditions, for example, were common practices among the dominant Asian aristocracies, even prior to Western influence in the region. In China, for example, the Imperial court of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) had its summer palace and residences. In India, the British revitalized the local rulers' tradition of staying in cooler, higher altitude areas during the hot summer, often involving the transfer of the colonial government accompanied by higher Indian officials. But travelling for leisure remained unfamiliar for common people in both countries until a few decades ago.

In China, domestic tourism has expanded at an extraordinary rate since travel restrictions were removed in the 1980s. In addition, employees of government, academic institutions and commercial enterprises have begun

to receive paid holidays. In 1990, an estimated 280 million Chinese people travelled, generating revenue of US\$ 3.5 billion (cf. Gerstlacher et al., 1995:175). This seems to indicate that national tourism in the country is larger than international tourism, both in terms of the number of tourists involved and the revenue earned. There were 12.4 million international visitors to China in 1991, who generated US\$ 2.8 billion worth of receipts (WTO, 1993a:12-13).

Indian domestic tourism, especially involving pilgrimage-cum-pleasure travel, has a longer history. Because of the cooler climate and attractive landscapes, hill stations such as Simla, Darjeeling, Mussoorie, Dalhousie, Murree and Naini Tal in the north, and Ooty and Kodaikanal in the south, became popular leisure holiday destinations for the privileged and urban middle classes beginning in the 1950s. In recent years, in addition to these hill stations, coastal areas have attracted Indian tourists, with the development of hotels, beach resorts and recreational centres. With nearly 62,000 km of railway lines and 1.77 million km of road networks in the late 1980s (cf. Kamp, 1995:144), India has a vast domestic tourism potential. The actual number of Indian tourists is unknown. Specialists argue that the government has placed all its efforts in promoting international tourism, totally neglecting domestic tourism as a result (Selvam, 1989:65, cited in Kamp, 1995:144; Richter and Richter, 1985:201-217). The estimate suggests that India's domestic tourism income may be two to three times higher than that from international tourism (cf. Selvam, 1989:6, cited in Kamp, 1995:145).

National and regional tourism have expanded rapidly in all South-East Asian countries in recent years, although precise information on the actual number of tourists involved in each country is not available. This is in large part due to their remarkable rate of economic growth and the accelerated influence of Western lifestyles and leisure habits. Domestic and regional tourism have increased to the extent that some tourist authorities in Europe suspect the increase to be the cause of the depression in the European travel business, as South-East Asian tourists choose to take advantage of national and regional tourism facilities and attractions and, as a result, travel to the continent in a reduced number (*Financial Times*, 10 November 1995).

In Africa, national tourism has expanded, particularly in South Africa. The country has well-developed infrastructure as well as many tourist attractions. Annual and seasonal holidays have been common practices among the white population. Following the end of apartheid and dismantling of restrictions on access to tourist attractions and facilities, a considerable number of blacks from the middle class and higher strata of the lower class are aspiring to travel. In some cases, even the poorer urban households now seek to go on weekend trips. A study suggests that there were 7.9 million domestic tourists in South Africa in 1995, compared to 4.2 million international arrivals (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 1996:6).

Domestic and regional travel within privileged circles of politicians, business people and the urban middle class have grown steadily in

Zimbabwe, Botswana and Kenya. In West Africa, Nigeria has a large population and a correspondingly large middle class. Oil wealth, in particular, has helped to facilitate internal, regional and international travel by the middle class — and even the lower strata of its population. Among other countries in West and Central Africa, Gabon, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal have developed a prosperous middle class capable of travelling. In North Africa, national travel for leisure has become increasingly common in Morocco, Algeria and Egypt, although this has tended to involve shorter trips — frequently combined with other activities (Berriane, 1991).

It is probably in Latin America that domestic and regional tourism have a longer history. In some countries, such as Argentina and Chile, national and regional tourism had already developed before the Second World War; and it had become a notable feature in Mexico and Brazil by the 1960s. A significant segment of the urban population now attaches importance to leisure travel in all Latin American countries, although the majority cannot afford prolonged vacations in the desired destinations. In Brazil, for example, local newspapers contain numerous travel advertisements proposing prospective national travellers, especially from the lower and middle classes, competitive prices for travel involving different regions, activities and lengths of stay (personal observation). One study indicates that in some states in the Amazon region, Brazilian tourists account for over 9 per cent of the visitors to the lodges involved in nature tourism (Wallace and Pierce, 1996:854). But systematic studies on domestic and regional tourism are lacking despite its sustained growth.

The information on regional travel in the South is somewhat more precise. This is because most governments tend to keep data on travellers coming from foreign countries, except those who do not require travel documents. Regional travel patterns provided by WTO for the Americas, Africa, East Asia/Pacific, Middle East and South Asia are presented in figure 1. They suggest that there is a substantial flow of tourists between developing countries in the respective regions. About 80 per cent of the tourists arriving in the Americas are from that region itself. Since the United States and Canada are included in this figure, it is difficult to discern how many of the tourists came from Latin America, but country level information suggests that this number is quite high. For example, in the case of Brazil, over 58 per cent of the visitors in 1993 came from the Latin American region and up to 57 per cent from South America itself (WTO, 1995b:18).

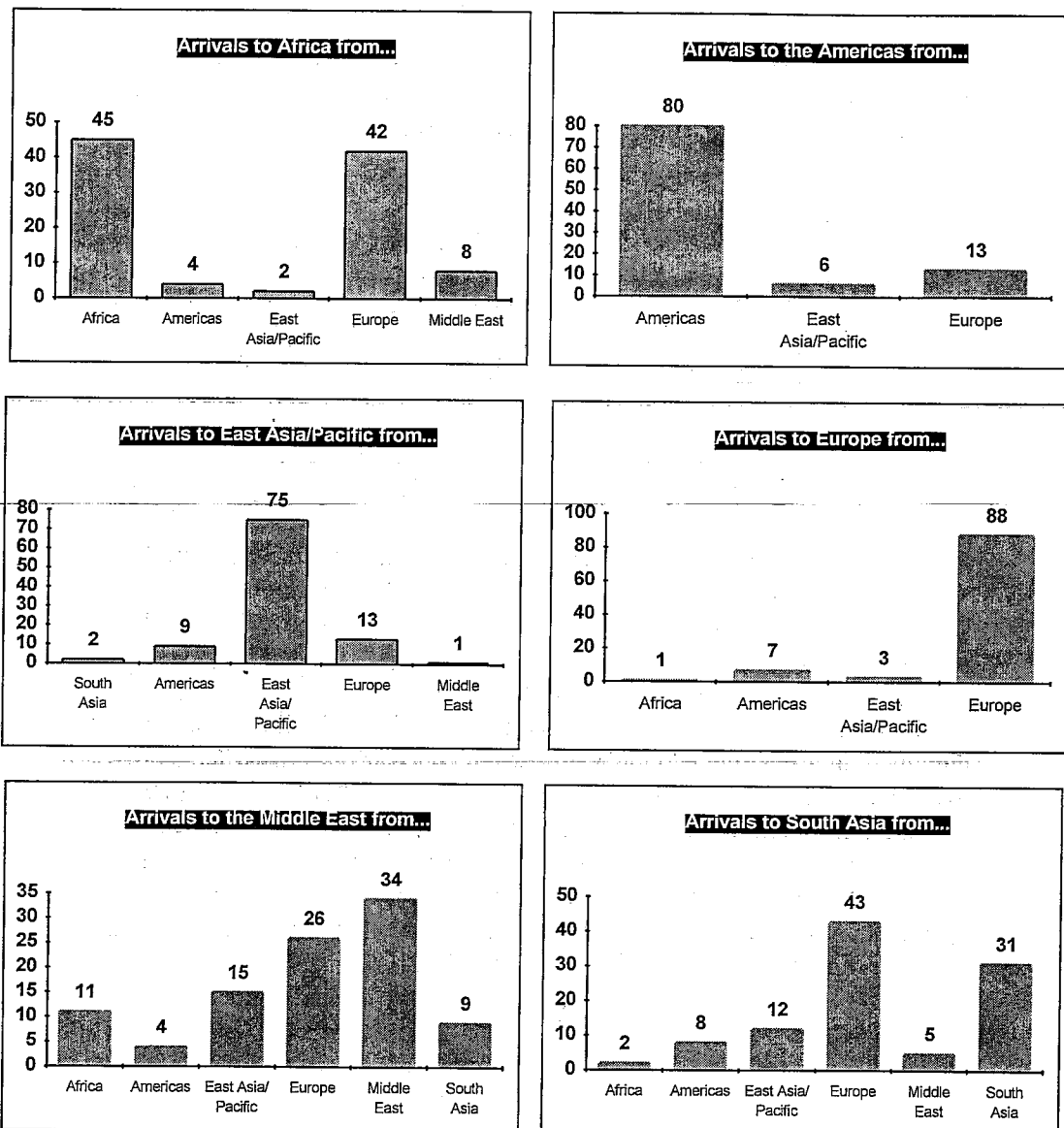
The information on Africa, the Middle East and South Asia is less ambiguous. Some 45 per cent of the visitors to Africa originated from the continent (figure 1). In the case of South Africa, visitors from Africa constituted over 80 per cent of the arrivals (WTO, 1995b:18). In the Middle East and South Asia, 34 and 31 per cent of the visitors respectively came from their regions. The percentage of regional arrivals to East Asia/Pacific is very high, reaching to 75 per cent (figure 1). Again, the problem is that the tourists from the developed countries in the region (i.e., Japan, Australia and New Zealand) are included in the figure. However, available country level data give a clear idea of the importance of regional tourism. In China, if visitors from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao are included, over 90 per

cent of the visitors came from Asia (excluding Japan, Australia and New Zealand) (Payne, 1993:26-28). In Malaysia, tourists from South-East Asia constituted over three fourths of the travellers (ibid.); Singaporeans, in particular, constituted over 62 per cent of the tourists from abroad (WTO, 1996c:96). In Thailand, Singapore, the Philippines and Indonesia, the ASEAN and other visitors from developing countries in the region made up well over half of tourist arrivals (WTO, 1996c:1993).

5. A FEW HYPOTHESES ON THE IMPACTS OF SOUTHERN DOMESTIC AND REGIONAL MASS TOURISM

The impact of any form of tourism — international, regional or domestic — varies depending upon specific socio-economic and ecological contexts. Much of the early research and debate seem to have been limited to showing the impact of tourism on the national economy and culture (Butler, 1974; Vickerman, 1975; de Kadt, 1979; Noronha, 1979; Marfurt, 1983; Pye, 1983; UNESCO, 1984; Krippendorf, 1986; Sid Ahmed, 1987; WTO, 1988). In recent years, there has been a great deal of discussion of the environmental effects of mass tourism (Singh, 1989; Butler, 1991; Eber, 1992; FNNPE, 1993; McIvor, 1994). Generally speaking, the bulk of the literature tends to demonstrate a positive economic impact of tourism but a more negative or even net negative impact on the local culture and environment. However, the existing literature is concerned mainly, if not exclusively, with the consequences of North to South tourism. Surprisingly, even general and superficial “impact-assessment”-type studies that characterize much of the international tourism research have not been carried out on the nature, scale and potential impacts of Southern mass tourism.

Figure 1: Region of origin for tourists from the six WTO regions in 1990
(% of total arrivals in each region)



Source: WTO, 1995a:9

Investigation of the emerging trends of national and regional mass tourism in the South is useful because any growth in the number of tourists in an area is generally likely to have certain local level impacts. Some of these impacts might be quite serious, unless policy measures — based on dialogue with all concerned social actors — are taken to avert them. In addition, the type of tourism that is evolving can generate many specific impacts. The relevant questions are: Who are these new tourists? Where do they originate from? Where are they concentrated? What are their leisure tastes and perceptions? What are their main activities during their vacation? What is their level of awareness regarding tourism-related socio-economic and environmental impacts? Do they differ from Northern visitors in their behaviour as tourists?

A review of the literature on tourism sheds light on the principal areas of impact of domestic and regional tourism that require careful investigation. First, the economic magnitude of tourism at both local and national levels is an important area of inquiry. It is known that tourism in general is a high-spending industry because of its capital-intensive nature and the subsequent dependence on foreign capital, technology and services which it tends to imply. Will national and regional tourism be different in this respect, especially in terms of their ability to influence positively the country's balance of payments? Some specialists have indicated that as much as two thirds of the tourism earnings in developing countries may be repatriated to industrialized countries through the airline industry, travel business, hotel services and food products consumed by tourists (Prosser, 1992; Pleumarom, 1994).

Ideally, therefore, a substantial proportion of the income generated through the development of national and regional tourism should remain in the country or region concerned. This should encourage the subsequent development of indigenous enterprises and the formation of skills. It should also lead to the generation of increased employment and income in the transport, accommodation, service and other sectors related to tourism.

It is true that the development of national tourism, in particular, would essentially involve the utilization of the existing domestic capital or individual savings. Nevertheless, it may lead to certain spatial or social benefits — such as the flow of more financial resources from urban to rural areas or from more privileged sections of the population to poorer social groups within the country. What is especially true is that the failure to develop domestic tourism facilities may induce national tourists to leave the country in significant numbers for vacations, thereby causing an out-flow of foreign exchange. It is surprising that in a country such as Thailand, where international tourism has been known for its generation of substantial economic earnings, tourism income has recently been outstripped by the expenditure of its nationals going abroad (*Financial Times*, 25 September 1995). There are several other developing countries where tourism expenditure is already quite large, notably in the case of Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, Nigeria, Malaysia and Indonesia. This suggests that even though national tourism does not earn foreign exchange, it should help to keep it within the national economy.

Another related point is that domestic and regional tourism are likely to be less susceptible to international political crisis or economic recession than is international tourism, thereby allowing developing countries to develop the industry in a more "self-reliant" manner. What are the current trends in this regard? What are the real economic opportunities and associated costs?

Various contradictory social impacts are likely from the emerging national and regional mass tourism in the South. Although major benefits generated may remain in the tourist localities, we do not know how these are or will be shared by different social groups. Local élites in association with urban business people may receive most of the benefits, while politically weaker social groups may face such negative repercussions as land dispossession, resource alienation, food shortages, rising prices and increased economic hardship. These may result in increased social stratification, as well as growing conflicts with tourists. The central issue here is whether these processes are qualitatively different from those that result from international tourism.

Many of the negative cultural impacts of international tourism are well known, such as the spread of Western-style consumerism; loss of traditional values and ways of life; increase in drug taking, crime and prostitution. Some specialists argue that this is especially critical as tourists are increasingly attracted to those areas and cultures in the South which have been bypassed by other modes of economic and political integration. Furthermore, tourism influence may lead to new forms of "artificial culture" promoted especially for tourist consumption (Wood, 1980). Will the cultural impacts of the emerging domestic and regional Southern tourism be much different? Will there be greater understanding of local cultures by national and regional tourists, or will they be looked down upon and considered culturally inferior? A closer examination of the potential socio-cultural impacts of national and regional tourism may reflect various aspects of prevailing centre/periphery relations, urban/rural discord and socio-economic stratification.

It is especially pertinent to examine in specific contexts whether consumer culture and lifestyle will actually be less evident among these groups of tourists, and whether such problems as drug taking, crime and prostitution will be less likely to occur. The behaviour of domestic and regional tourists will depend upon their values. To what extent have these people been influenced by Western values, and what are their perceptions of how tourists should behave? In what ways and to what extent is the drug/crime/prostitution culture already part of the local and regional social reality for certain categories of people who are likely to participate in tourist activities? How do such values feed into the tourist industry? Also, will there be prospects for "cultural revival" — for example, the restoration and protection of historical sites and cultural practices — as a result of growth in the number of national and regional tourists?

Finally, certain environmental effects can be expected. Environmental problems generally associated with tourism — such as pollution, waste and

sewerage management, over-construction, excessive use of certain resources (e.g. water, wood), soil compaction by vehicles, disturbance of wildlife habitats by large numbers of visitors, and fire hazards — are commonly referred to in the mass media. Will the environmental impacts of Southern domestic and regional tourism be significantly different? Will national and regional tourists from the South use less energy for their travel and provisioning of consumer items than international tourists? Will they be more respectful of the local environment than those coming from overseas? Generally speaking, in most developing countries the urban youth, middle class and élites have become increasingly vocal in favour of environmental protection initiatives because of the unhealthy urban environment that they experience in their everyday life, as well as their frequently romantic perception of the rural environment as unspoiled and pristine. Will Southern regional and national tourism contribute to the success of socially-responsible initiatives to protect fragile ecological zones — such as watershed areas, forests and coastlines? Or will environmental protection initiatives result in population displacement, social conflict and erosion of traditional resource use practices as national and regional networks of protected areas increase, in part for tourism development (Ghimire, 1994)? Only thorough local and national level investigations can begin to provide responses to these questions.

6. THE FUTURE EXPANSION OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL TOURISM IN THE SOUTH

Future tourism expansion in the South, as suggested above, depends to a certain extent on the general economic situation in the affluent North — both the economic situation of the population in general and its economic investment capacity abroad. Nonetheless, a general impetus to tourism growth should continue to exist because of the South's ability to offer "exoticism" for Northern travellers and emerging business prospects in the tourism sector for Northern-based TNCs.

Within the South, political stability and the physical security of tourists are crucial for the development of tourism in the future. In addition, it goes without saying that the existence of exceptional scenic beauty, forests, wildlife, mountains, rivers, lakes, waterfalls and coast-lines will provide advantages to certain countries and regions. The accessibility of tourist areas and the provision of visitor facilities are also important. The South's cultural diversity, albeit declining in favour of a more homogenous Western culture, is likely to continue to be a major asset for some time.

Three processes, in particular, are likely to result in accelerated national and regional tourism within developing countries.

◆ Changing Leisure Ethic

There have been dramatic changes in Southern lifestyles over the past four or five decades. These have been characterized by the rapid spread of consumerism and an increase in the demand for leisure activities. It is true that every society, regardless of its level of "modernization", has specific leisure expectations. It is at times also difficult to determine what constitute "consumeristic lifestyles" and what is educational and socio-politically useful exposure. Nevertheless, the influence of Western lifestyles and consumer practices through television, the mass media and Westernized education systems has never been greater. Popular tourism literature often affirms that tourism is a growth industry motivated by "human curiosity". To a certain degree, this is true. However, Western mass media, education systems and lifestyles have also promoted tourism as a major leisure "necessity".

In some cases, the arrival of Northern tourists has induced major changes in recreational thinking. Because holidays and leisure activities were traditionally the privilege of national élites and foreign tourists, taking vacations to visit tourist sites or staying in recreational centres has come to symbolize higher social status for the average inhabitants of tourist destinations. Indeed, as we saw above, this was how the European working classes had perceived leisure travel before it became a mass phenomenon. Furthermore, as in Europe, the rapid development of transport systems and communications now provide greater mobility for Southerners wanting to travel.

◆ Urbanization

A major stimulus to national and regional mass tourism in developing countries is likely to come from the continuously rising rate of urbanization and the evolving attitudes of urban people. There has been a rapid growth not only in mega-cities, but also medium cities, urban clusters and regional towns. In developing countries as a whole, the urban population doubled between 1950 and 1990 (UN, 1994:6-7). In 1950, for example, there were no urban agglomerations in the South with a population over 8 million. But by 1990, 14 such mega-cities were in the developing countries; and this is estimated to reach 22 in the year 2000 (compared to 5 in the North) (UN, 1994:58-59; Chen and Heligman, 1994:17-31). Given that Third World cities are increasingly crowded, noisy and polluted, many urban dwellers want to escape when they can from their urban surroundings.

In addition, most cities lack open or green spaces for recreation because of the increased land demands for housing and infrastructure, on the one hand, and land speculation and growth in office and commercial complexes, on the other. Some sections of the younger generations in urban areas have also begun to consider travel an escape from modernity and their stressful urban lifestyle. Since the majority of urban dwellers cannot travel abroad, pleasure and holiday spots inside the country or region have to be popular destinations. Even poorer households in most mega-cities are beginning to

attach importance to leisure activities and holiday travel, although they may generally be able to afford only weekend and shorter trips.

◆ Economic Growth and Dynamics

National economic growth is often an important factor determining the development of domestic and regional tourism. In recent decades, certain parts of the developing world have seen remarkable economic growth. In particular, South-East Asia, more recently China and India, and indeed Asia as a whole, have seen notable economic growth. One recent study by the European Community suggests that by the turn of the century there will be 1 billion Asian people with significant consumer spending capacity, with 400 million having average disposable incomes at least as high as the typical Western Europeans or North Americans (quoted in *Financial Times*, 14 July 1994). This prognosis is verified by other studies as well (e.g. Stern, 1994). Greater prospects for economic growth are now expressed in several Latin American countries as well (Giret with Ville, 1996), although domestic and regional tourism increased in many of these countries even during the period of economic recession as most households could afford to go on vacation in their home country or region.

It is known that when standards of living rise, households worry less about subsistence needs and allocate more expenditure to leisure. People with increasing disposable incomes are likely to have more diversified leisure interests and activities, involving even travel abroad, than are poorer households. However, a major impulse to domestic and regional mass tourism comes from the large and affluent middle class as well as from the aspiring low income classes. In some cases, poorer households may reduce spending on necessities to pay for vacations. For example, this phenomenon is occurring in urban and south-eastern regions of China (personal observation). Obviously, the most wealthy and powerful elements in any developing societies may have sufficient purchasing power to take vacations even during times of slow national economic growth. For example, Brazilians and Argentineans are now among the fastest-growing visitor categories in France and Italy (*Midi Libre*, 25 August 1995). Nevertheless, there has to be some economic growth and distribution across principal social groups and the participation of the large middle class, as well as the relatively better-off strata of the lower classes, for domestic and regional tourism to develop on any substantial scale.

7. CONCLUSION

National and regional mass tourism in the South constitute an already large, and growing, industry in several developing countries. But from the above discussion it should be clear that their continued development merits careful consideration. If Southern national and regional mass tourism were to follow the same evolution as Northern mass tourism, it could prove disastrous on various grounds. Imagine a scenario in which more than 1 billion Southerners, in addition to the Northern population, adapt Western-

style leisure and consumption practices. Construction of luxury hotels⁴, airports, tourist resorts, etc., to Western standards — which has essentially been the case so far — would likely result in developing countries becoming more dependent on foreign capital, technology and services. While many of these tourist facilities are not affordable to average Southern national and regional tourists, costly tourism development expenditure may reduce the government's ability to fund health, education and other programmes related to social provisioning. Lofty investments are being made by numerous Third World governments to improve tourism infrastructure — frequently through international borrowing — while the TNCs and powerful national business interests may be reaping most of the ensuing benefits.⁵

It is also worth asking what the usual perceptions, attitudes and behaviour of Southerners are as tourists. Do they consider travel merely a form of "relaxation" and "escape from everyday life" or an instrument for education and exchange? Do they respect and help to strengthen local cultures, or are they yet another vehicle promoting Western culture? How are local people and communities looked upon and understood by them? What are the needs and views of tourists regarding such social problems as prostitution, drug abuse and alcoholism? How are youth and other local population groups influenced by their contacts with tourists? How do tourists exacerbate urban consumerism, individualism and the money economy — which may lead to inflation and economic hardships for many local population groups? Do they take any care in terms of how economic benefits occurring from tourism are shared locally? Similarly, do they pay any attention to how their travel, lodging and consumption patterns might exert pressures on the environment or contribute to the insecurity of local livelihoods? If Southern tourists are not different than their counterparts from the North, national and regional mass tourism in the South is clearly likely to have many enduring, painful social costs.

However, the existing knowledge is insufficient to draw any explicit conclusions on many of the above questions. Critical reflections and detailed research focused at local, national and regional levels are crucial. Since national and regional tourism is a relatively new phenomenon in most developing countries, it would be interesting to find out if many of the negative impacts generated by international tourism could not be better handled in the case of Southern national and regional tourism, while exploiting advantageously the emerging economic possibilities. For example, could national and regional tourism in the South develop in a more

⁴ It should be noted that in many developing countries, governments have emphasized construction of four and five star hotels to satisfy the demands of international tourists. The occupancy rates of these luxury class hotels have, however, remained generally low. For example, in Indonesia, national hotel occupancy rates were just over 50 per cent (Payne, 1993:57). But many Indonesian tourists are unable to use these hotels (personal communications with officials at the Ministry of Tourism, Jakarta, March 1996). Indeed, in Asia as a whole, there seems to be strong demand on the part of national and regional tourists for less expensive accommodation facilities (*The Economist*, 20 May 1995).

⁵ Some experts indicate that tourism earnings have largely tended to escape from national taxation systems in most developing countries (Bird, 1992:1145-55).

self-reliant manner, using local materials, labour forces and skills and creating new sources of employment and income? What are the realistic prospects for redistributing more equitably the accrued benefits, as well as costs, across regions and social groups? How could local traditional land rights, cultural diversity and ecological management systems be protected?

Southern domestic and regional tourism is on the rise at a time when much international discussion, at least at a theoretical level, seems to be centred on how to reduce the number of visitors in order to minimize the negative socio-cultural and environmental impacts associated with tourism. Some authorities have proposed a controlled industry based on the "carrying capacity" of the resources (Ekins, 1986; Richter, 1989; de Kadt, 1990). Others have claimed that ecotourism initiatives may tend to increase the environmental and cultural sensitivity of incoming tourists (Dixon and Sherman, 1990; Boo, 1990; Lindberg, 1991; Brandon, 1993). In essence, fewer, richer tourists are sought. However, the spending power of the majority of national and regional tourists would by no means be comparable to that of tourists from the rich industrialized countries. Similarly, as domestic and regional tourism are likely to involve relatively large numbers of people, controlling their movements would be very difficult and politically unfeasible. The involvement of a large number of people contradicts the very logic of "sustainable tourism".

Also, as noted in the introduction, the concept of sustainable tourism has so far been used principally to refer to environmental considerations. It is rarely applied in practice when it comes to developing detailed tourism plans, investment policies, promotion and marketing activities by governments, international funding agencies and corporate business groups. At times, the concept has been used as a clever marketing strategy to open up new tourism activities, such as the recent trend in "green" or ecotourism.

On the whole, tourism projects and plans have been guided by an unbalanced consideration of economic returns on the part of the business community, through marketing unique landscapes, climates and culture, as well as cheap labour, resources and favourable government financial incentives. The Southern governments, too, have sought to maintain their stake in the process. The state and associated socially concerned forces have a vital role to play in guiding market forces to greater social advantage.⁶ It is

⁶ Recent tourism policies around the world, promoted by international lending institutions, bilateral donors and UN agencies have strongly emphasized privatization of the industry and the greater involvement of the private sector, with a reduced role for the state. It is questionable, however, how issues such as labour conditions, consumer regulations, public awareness campaigns, sustainable land use planning and cultural and environmental protection could be handled satisfactorily by the private sector. Unsupervised market involvement and expansion is often socially divisive and economically unfavourable at the local level. Syabru village in Rasuwa district (some 150 km north of Kathmandu), Nepal, observed by this author over the years, provides one anecdotal example. This village is situated on the Langtang/Helembu trekking route and receives a couple of thousand trekkers each year. In 1976, a tourist paid Rs 5-10 for overnight sleeping at local lodges. Very surprisingly, this rate seemed to have remained the same in 1996, while the annual rate of inflation over this period in the country has been around 10 per cent. The rate

not yet possible to determine whether domestic and regional tourism present bright prospects in this regard, especially in view of the growing popularity and influence of economic liberalization everywhere. At the least, Southern governments should attempt better integration of national and regional tourism into other sectors of the economy, making them more supportive of local livelihood requirements. Such policy changes could also reflect the perceptions and expectations of domestic and regional tourists. It seems that leisure tourism is here to stay, as are market forces. The dilemma is that the state can neither ignore nor fully command this process at present.

National and regional tourists, popular organizations and local population groups may constitute important social forces to influence the evolution of national and regional tourism so that they become economically more equitable, socially sound and culturally and environmentally less damaging. Increased awareness of the problems and potentials of national and regional tourism among tourists and mobilization by local communities are especially important. Ideally, locally controlled and small-scale tourism initiatives based on local resources and competence should receive priority, with the collaboration of the state and business community. This implies a new concept of "participatory tourism", with local communities having more power in crucial decision-making and a greater share of the ensuing tourism benefits. Ultimately, what matters to local communities is that tourism activities lead to improved livelihoods, ecology and social cohesion. To what extent such a strategy is feasible is difficult to say, especially under the present global patterns of production, consumption and distribution. Nevertheless, the development of national and regional tourism in the South seems to present certain new advantages for the governments of these countries, national enterprises and local communities that should not be overlooked. For this process to be socially opportune, however, it is imperative that appropriate policies and institutions be set in place and that there be direct initiatives on the part of those who are most concerned.

for lodging per night suggested by the tourism authority for 1996 was Rs 50 (about US\$ 1). But the market competition had merely divided the village lodge operators, making them accept tourists at negligible rates provided that they eat with the household. For an average Northern tourist, the per night lodging cost of around US\$ 1 is surely affordable. In short, stronger involvement on the part of the state, NGOs or institutions to strengthen local solidarity would be essential in a case such as this to allow village hoteliers and other concerned community members a greater share of the benefits from tourism.

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