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# ***CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN REVIEW***

**Volume 11, 2017**

**TOURISM**

**TWO REVIEWS**

**by**

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Noel B. Salazar., *Envisioning Eden: Mobilizing Imaginaries in Tourism and Beyond*, New Directions in Anthropology, Volume 31, Berghahn Books, Oxford and New York, 2013.

Noel B. Salazar and Nelson H. H. Graburn, eds., *Tourism Imaginaries: Anthropological Approaches*, Berghahn, Oxford and New York, 2014

**ISSN 1752–7503**

**10.1515/caeer-2018-0006**

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**First publication**

## *Central and Eastern European Review*

**Noel B. Salazar., *Envisioning Eden: Mobilizing Imaginaries in Tourism and Beyond*, New Directions in Anthropology, Volume 31, Berghahn Books, Oxford and New York, 2013, 226 pp. ISBN: 9780857 459309.**

Edward Bruner's Foreword outlines a system of 'circulating culture'; he describes how starting his first ethnological fieldwork in Indonesia, he was later quoted his own observations by younger Indonesians who, as students had been assigned his work, bringing him to question: 'where is the dividing line between raw data in the field and our own scholarly anthropological research reports'? And how much in active cultural activity is maintained or even enhanced for the benefit of visitors?

In looking at the questions, how does globalization work and who are the globalization workers, Salazar explains that he spent 14 months in Indonesia and 11 in Tanzania, considering how travel mobilities are operating global processes in two very different tourism destinations. In each place he spent countless hours in discussion with tour guides, both formally and informally. In 2002 Salazar participated in some of a month-long 'dialog trip' organized by a Belgian NGO for five tour guides from each, Indonesia and Tanzania. In a footnote, Salazar points out that discovery has no existence of its own, it is entirely dependent on documentation, which can often be disputed as earlier documentation is found.

A clear map of each of the two venues to which all the book relates, precedes the text. In his introduction, the author explains his aim is to treat the global as 'a project that is humanly mediated' (as suggested by earlier writers) and to 'examine more closely how translocal ideas and discourses both change and remain the same while they circulate around the globe'. He states that infrastructure of the tourism service industry worldwide, of people, ideas, images and capital, is valued at \$3 trillion (this, and even a greater figure was confirmed in a recent *Guardian* article stating that one in eleven people worldwide, gains their livelihood from tourism). Salazar explains that his focus on local guides for this research is because these are the key people responsible for (re)producing circulating tourism imaginaries. His second chapter considers the two destinations, one in Indonesia, the other in Tanzania, with one destiny.

Java is particularly known for its artistic cultural drama and classical dance festivals and for its handicrafts, greatly enhanced by their promotion worldwide

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during the 1980s and '90s; the tourism emblem is a mythical bird. Under the Dutch, the first official tourist office opened in what is now Jakarta in 1908. By the mid-1990s, tourism had become Indonesia's third most important source of foreign revenue. In the 2000s Indonesia's tourism industry has been damaged both by terrorist attacks and by outbreaks of SARS disease. However, Salazar explains that tourism is partially maintained through the myths of 'the unchanged ... the unrestrained and ... the uncivilized'. Tourism in Indonesia is now under the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, whereas that of Tanzania is under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, with a giraffe as its emblem.

Tanzania's introduction to tourism came through a UN Economic Commission: *Tourism in Eastern Africa* (1972). For the success of all tourism, it is necessary for guides to be aware of global trends and interests, alert to the vocabulary of nostalgia and eco-tourism, where skill in delivery is more important than actual knowledge. While there are instructive printed materials to train potential guides, these are all too often not available to those interested, and what is more easily available is often outdated. Training institutions are of variable value and many guides learn from materials left by earlier tourists. By comparison, Indonesia has a more advanced infrastructure for training tour guides. It is becoming increasingly important to have multiple skills, languages, ability to drive, to manage groups and to narrate. The Arusha Guide School in Tanzania, founded in 1990 provides a popular intensive one-year diploma course. On visiting, Salazar was asked to teach cross-cultural awareness and the art of interpretation. The trainers gain experience internationally. Although few students have left their own country, one student was able to distinguish over 500 different bird species within Tanzania. There is a rumour that in neighbouring Kenya, when wild life is insufficient for tourists' photographic needs, that they place stuffed animals in suitable venues.

In his fourth chapter, Salazar discusses 'Framing the Encounter', 'Narrative Performances' and 'Touring Languages', as well as the interest of tourists to learn a few words of greeting in the local language, but it is up to the tour guide to enable the tourists to feel any sense of understanding and belonging, whether in 'Java's Erotic Eden' or 'Northern Tanzania's Ecological Paradise', in all cases avoiding negative, criminal or particularly worrying accounts. Salazar likens the tour guide to tourist relationship, to the parent/child one. He found that some tour guides were able to use targeted transcultural comparisons and references in their game of staging

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authenticity, while positioning themselves outside the observed culture, which sometimes surprised their tourists.

Salazar notes that travel in the Middle Ages was primarily in the form of pilgrimages. Later as the Grand Tour became popular for young men, others took on the role of their personal guides. After the First World War, when many wished to see the battlegrounds, the British War Department decreed in 1915 that only licensed guides would be allowed to conduct visitors through the battlegrounds. From 1887, white guides have operated in South Africa taking wealthy US and British hunters on hunting safaris—it is only very recently that such safaris have been limited to shooting photographs. Currently local guides may receive commission on bringing customers to safari organizers. From the 1990s many local guides have become driver-guides. In the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, visitors are only permitted when accompanied by qualified local guides. Tanzanian tour guides formed a union, though lack of funds has hampered their work. Only in 1988 was tour-guiding recognized there as a profession, paralleling the growth of the local tourism industry (1980s–90s). Since then a wider selection of languages is required of guides, and regulations for guides are increasing. The tour guiding in Tanzania and Indonesia are at different stages though both are increasingly controlled, with many following the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. The life of tour guides is quite precarious, with only seasonal work and whimsical changes in travel trends and fashion.

In a chapter ‘Fantasy Meets Reality’, Salazar describes how Muslim guides in Indonesia need to practice pragmatism rather than dogmatism regarding action in the case of a call to prayer whilst working at guiding. While normally trying to steer tourists away from trouble spots of any kind, in the case of major catastrophes, they can sometimes benefit by actually showing devastation.

In conclusion, Salazar opines that for tour guides serving international tourists: production of cosmopolitanism has become their means for mobility, not necessarily spatial but both social and transnational. Years after the 2002 ‘dialog trip’, Salazar met up with all the participants; although they had all lost touch with one another they were eager to hear their news.

Besides the maps, the book is further enhanced by 20 ‘figures’ (illustrations, some of which are in two comparative or contrasting frames).

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**Noel B. Salazar and Nelson H. H. Graburn, eds., *Tourism Imaginaries: Anthropological Approaches*, Berghahn, Oxford and New York, 2014, 292 pp. ISBN: 9781785–333354.**

Divided between Imaginaries of Peoples, and Imaginaries of Places, this collection of writing focuses on the perceptions of tourists in their eagerness to experience life amongst the Other, and how this is picked up in regions hoping to benefit from the income that such tourists bring. Thus there is a balance between focusing on ritual, but preventing it from becoming too much of a performance put on simply for the tourists. Tourists are guided to the chosen destinations by diverse publications about places through brochures, TV documentaries both popular and more serious publications (as the *National Geographic*), additionally by anthropological studies and through websites. Blogs from previous visitors, through fiction, literature, postcards, photographs, travelogues, diaries, videos, guidebooks, coffee-table books, exhibitions, museums, art, fairs, trade cards, magazines and news coverage, all play a part.. Some cultural tourism, exploring the little known, may be seen as ‘a kind of conquest’ akin to colonialism, or glimpsing the soon to be extinct before it is too late. This also may be commodified by tour companies, making their own profit, but enabling the visited community to continue to exist through tourism. As this change begins to take place, yet contradictorily the host community often seeks to become more like the people who visit them. As they learn the benefits that they gain from the income of the visitors, they also learn to perform their expected role, and to dress traditionally when visitors are expected. There is a place too for those of the indigenous group to learn a more widely spoken language such as English and then benefit from being able to explain rituals and customs not only to tourists, but also to businessmen, and potential investors (often ex-pats living nearby), as well as NGOs, entertainers and suppliers. ‘Tour operators exploit the exoticism experienced by tourists’. The fact that tourist imaginaries are widely shared makes them culturally powerful and worthy of anthropological analysis.

Rupert Stasch, writing on ‘Nudity and payment in Tourism to Papua’s “tree-house people”’, illustrates how the 4,000 or so Korowai, live by tending sago and banana plantations and fishing, living, until about 1980, in separate areas of about one

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square mile per family. It was the opening of an airstrip in the region which changed these patterns, followed by the arrival of Dutch missionaries (who left in 1991). The people live in houses build high up in the trees. Tourists started to visit around 1990. Since then about 5,000 tourists have visited, in groups of between 4 and 12 people. Indonesian guides enable communication between the locals and the tourists. However, with only one interpreter, discussion is mostly amongst the two groups, each forming their views of the Other. For the Korowai, all tourists are seen as one group: at first they were thought to be demonic and threatening, later they were seen as sources of food, clothes and goods without having to work for them. For the tourists the Korowai are seen as transhistorical naked people of the Stone Age and the embodiment of a desired primitive ideal. .

Dimitrios Theodossopoulos writes about Tourism Imaginaries, Exoticization and Ambivalence in the Emberá Indigenous community who first settled in the Chagres National Park in Panama in the 1950s. This community has realized the benefits of tourism through the continuation of their rituals causing an ‘oscillation between the desire to make the :less civilized” Other more like the tourist self and a yearning to preserve and uncontaminated version of indigeneity—and expectation of unshakable cultural integrity and purity’. However this juxtaposes the opposite, an expectation of assimilation, that may be imperialistic, nationalist or evolutionist in its orientation. By 1985, some of the Emberá had to take on laboring work nearby. As tourists started to visit their community, they saw the advantage of setting up indigenous settlements. With political leadership, the community has been able to develop suitable authentic trading souvenirs, and to negotiate locally, ensuring that they are not undersold. Tourists see the authentic local life; hidden from them are plastic toys and TV in the background.

Alexis Celeste Bunten’s chapter ‘Deriding Demand: Indigenous Imaginaries in Tourism’ describes the phenomenon of ‘cultural tourism formula’ whereby those being visited by tourists start a process of taking control of their representations towards those tourists. The formula includes eight stages, starting from the greeting and ending with a Westernized native feast. The first such Aboriginal attraction in Australia was founded in 1987 at Tjapukai, which followed the formula so successfully that it gained awards. For the hosts, this required some to learn to play the didgeridoo which had already been viewed as iconic through the work of outside visitors. At the same time the many hosts enjoy the appreciation of their cultural

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heritage; while some communities see this as an extension of colonial domination in an unequal power structure. Tourists learn what to expect; many find this satisfying, though some feel that it is too staged, while appreciating that cultural perpetuation and ecological preservation promote international peace. It is noted that up to 2012, the Park had earned \$25 million which not only paid for its upkeep and running, but also paid wages to workers, and funding for health and schooling of the locals.

Margaret Byrne Swain discusses ‘Tales from Southwest China and Beyond,’ by contrasting the Sani and Axi branches of the Yi minority. The Axi community, lacking any writing system, attracts tourists with its Dance under the Moonlight in which the hero discovers fire. Nearby Sani tourism focuses on its impressive limestone landscape and their lore of a golden girl who turned to stone. A film featuring a particular stone, served to promote tourism further and to feature as an imaginary to entice more. Swain describes how, since 2011, with state enthusiasm for tourism, local homes have been torn down and replaced by smaller, shoddily built homes, in the interests of growing tourist demands on space in Wukushu village.

João Alfonso Baptista’s chapter covers the ‘moralization of tourism’ following his fieldwork in Mozambique, studying the implementation of its first community-based tourism in the southwestern village of Canhane. The locals saw their distinctiveness as a valuable capital and developed and named their tourism lodge and created their history, where such consideration had never been suggested before. Thereafter community capacity building projects were brought to help the community develop various skills as tourist hosts.

Michael Di Giovine describes the Refashioning of the Italian village of Pietrelcina, birthplace of the sainted Padre Pio (born 1887). Although the Padre was born there, he moved away and lived the rest of his life in the nearby town of San Giovanni Rotondo, which gained great notoriety due to Padre Pio’s work (much of it seen as miraculous). This in turn brought millions of visitors. Pietrelcina also benefitted from this, but only 10% of those visitors to San Giovanni came to Pietrelcina, and those only for an hour or two to the village. Gradually, as the importance of San Giovanni Rotondo became an ever greater place of pilgrimage, attracting six million visitors a year, enriching the town, the people of Pietrelcina saw the advantages to smartening up the village and renovating relevant buildings, especially Pio’s childhood home (with a fresco depicting the saintly Pio convalescing with his parents). This, combined with film showing the peaceful countryside around

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Pietrelcina, helped to create the image of Pio's simple rustic youth. More recently the enlarged piazza has served as a stage for concerts and other performances. Thus Di Giovine notes that Pietrelcina is 'one step in a broader, more historically situated process of producing, consuming, reacting to, and re-producing conflicting imaginaries'.

Federica Ferraris discusses Cambodia's dual tourism draws of the ancient Angkor Wat and the new Killing Fields Museum. She discusses the archaeological remains from the now mythical empire of Anghorian Cambodia, powerful between the ninth and fifteenth centuries; and the very recent wartime history, strongly affected by the Khmer Rouge era which sought to deny the past (periods of colonialism) and how these narratives are reflected among Italian tourists, for whom Cambodia is one of the favourite tourist destinations.

Paula Mora Santos observes that Portugal was the first European nation to embark on colonial projects (1415) and the last to dismantle them (1975). Her chapter focuses on the exhibition, Portugal dos Pequenitos (Portugal of the Little Ones), in Coimbra, a theme park depicting all of Portugal's colonial empire, represented through miniaturized examples of the vernacular architecture of each mainland province and colonial possession. Its creation started in 1938 and was completed in the early 1960s (under the Fascist regime of Salazar). Santos' focus is to observe the changing perceptions with which this exhibition is seen, as Portugal's political situation changed. Coimbra is the seat of the oldest Portuguese university (founded in 1290), yet the theme park attracts more visitors than the university. A section recreating 'savage nature' and 'savage men', can still be viewed, but needs some perseverance to locate. Although the theme park is extremely popular amongst Portuguese visitors, Santos notes that amongst the visitors there are *very* few of African descent. She considers that many visitors may be defined as posttourists: those who lack concern with authenticity.

Kenneth Little's chapter on tourism in Belize, focuses on imaginaries of intense sexual excitement, and how a beer mat served as a conduit for his memories of experiences among the Belizean Jewels—a group of twelve highly selected boy strippers at a beach bar. Little relates this to Walter Benjamin's 'profane illuminations'. He considers not only his own and other tourists involvement, but interviews some of the 'Jewels' to understand the effect tourism has had on them.

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Anke Tonnaer's interest in tourism focuses on the recent work in the Netherlands to return parts of the country to their primeval wilderness state (the Dutch Serengeti is an alternative name for the large nature reserve, Oostvaardersplassen), and in the interests of preservation, only permitting individual tourists to visit, and then only with permission. This reserve, modelled somewhat on the Yellowstone National Park in the US, is an hour's drive from Amsterdam, in former marshland, measuring six by ten kilometers, now populated by large grazers, such as red deer, konik horse, heck cows and tens of thousands of grey geese. With changing attitudes, Tonnaer remarks that this rewilding initiative gained significantly more funding recently than heritage campaigners were able to procure. It is speculated that this could be due to its contrast to places of overabundance of events elsewhere.

The Afterword by Naomi Leite provides a comparative resume of all the contributions, also explaining Edward Bruner's term 'metanarratives' (tourists' anticipation [pre-tour narratives], experience and making sense of their journeys). She suggests that further research could be made concerning the tension between imaginaries of commonality and imaginaries of difference, even though she accepts that the concept of imaginaries has not been universally embraced within Anthropology. She also notes that voluntourism and heritage tourism are booming—in this connection I should mention the cross-border Balkans Peace Park Project ([www.balkanspeacepark.org](http://www.balkanspeacepark.org)), which has usefully employed over 100 volunteers in the last decade..

Each contribution is accompanied by an extensive bibliography, affording researchers in the field ample material.

### **About the reviewer**

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