

Proceedings of Workshop of *“the Production of Tourism Spaces and Interfaces between Local People, Foreign Tourists and Foreign Workers: Comparative Studies on Asian Countries”* held at Ritsumeikan University, on November 7, 2009

Preface

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This workshop is entitled **“the Production of Tourism Spaces and Interfaces between Local People, Foreign Tourists and Foreign Workers: Comparative Studies on Asian Countries”**. Through this meeting we hope to examine how and what types of tourism spaces are being produced in various regions throughout Asia. Moreover in tourist destinations and attractions, how local people, tourists, especially foreign tourists, and foreign workers engaged in the tourism industry make contact and interchanges each other as well as contest with one another. We will also look at how these interactions contribute to the formation and transformation of economic, social and cultural interfaces in the tourism spaces and places in Asia at present.

While tourism certainly facilitates economic interchanges in tourism spaces through the provision and consumption of various commodities, it also naturally generates a process that provides opportunities for people from different cultural backgrounds and values to meet. These people include not only the local people as the “hosts” but also tourists as the “guests.” It especially includes foreign tourists who provide the local people with “a living body” to encounter with different cultures. A number of studies, applying various viewpoints and concepts of intercultural exchange as well as acculturation and contra-acculturation, have revealed that the interactions with foreign tourists maybe able to trigger not only changes in the local community’s traditional lifestyles and values but also troubles or friction between the “hosts” and “guests.”

Moreover they also have explained that debates over whether tourism could bring positive or negative impact to the local community have been often accompanied by other problems with conflicts and splits within concerned community. Studies about tourism have also revealed that empowerment and development of the local community can be

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realized through the process of tourism. These studies spotlight the advantages or profits offered by community-based tourism.

Here in this workshop, however, we hope to obtain and share among us afresh and alternative insights from our field experiences in several places of Tourism [in] Asia. Focusing on a new avenue of exploration, for instance, we should have concern about presence and roles of foreign workers employed in the tourism industry and tourism spaces (Figure 1). These foreign workers play dual roles in tourist destinations or attractions. From the tourists' perspective, on the one hand, they are often the actors in the "host" side who sell and provide tourism-related commodities and services for tourists. From the local people's perception, on the other hand, they are considered as outsiders. Today, the growth of international tourism is strongly linked to the increasing international migration of workers. The growth of international tourism is underpinned and supported by foreign workers. In the tourist destinations or tourism spaces where they live and work, they are at the same time quasi-members of the "host" community as well as outsiders or guests, but cheap workers. On the economic level, their relationship with the local people is that between employees and employers. On the socio-cultural dimension or scene, their relationship tends to be intercultural and interpersonal. The relations between both can be cooperative, distant, or frictional with one another (Figure 2).

When we look at the heart of any tourism space or tourism destination, we will find essentially an interface where people from different cultural backgrounds meet and interact.

In this workshop we will take a multidisciplinary and comprehensive look at tourism spaces as an interface between peoples with different ethnicities and cultures. Citing examples from actual case studies involving small communities in Asia, we will examine that interface in light of community acculturation and empowerment as well as host-guest relationships all within a changing *ethnoscape*.

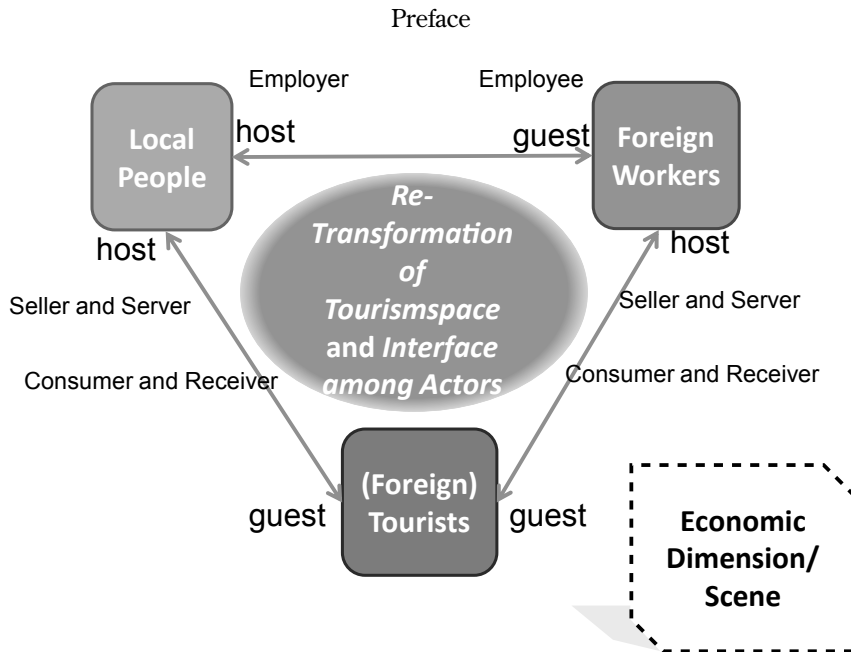


Fig. 1 Tourism Space and Interface Produced by Actors: Economic Dimension or Scene

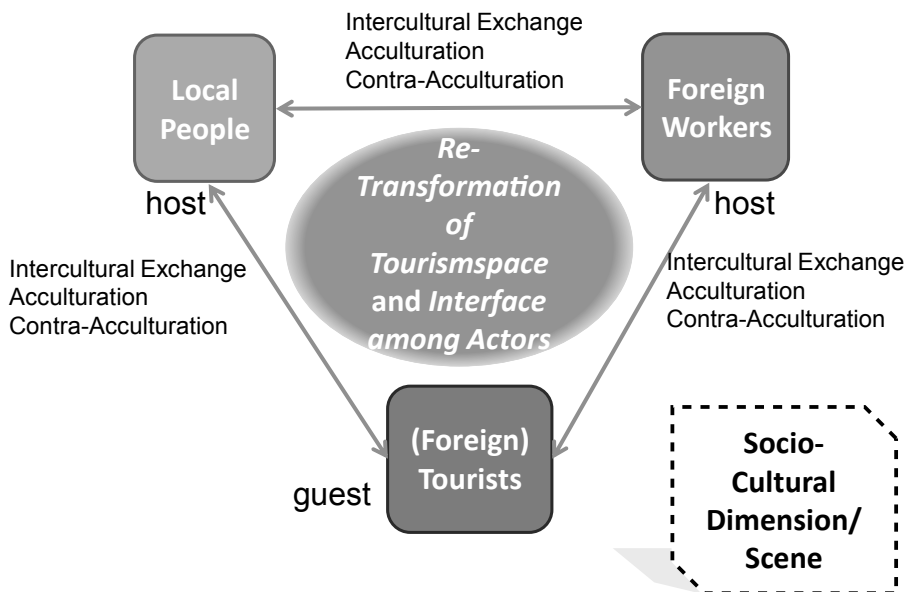


Fig. 2 Tourism Space and Interface Produced by Actors: Socio-Cultural Dimension or Scene