

## Chapter 1

# **Tourism, migration, circulation and mobility**

*The contingencies of time and place*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

New forms of mobility can be found at many scales from the local and national to the global. They also include all age ranges but particularly those near the polar extremes of the life course - young, single adults and the active elderly (in contrast, families with young children and the frail elderly tend to be some of the least mobile socio-demographic groups). The heroes of this new mobility are figures such as the young New Zealanders or Australians taking their Big OE (Overseas Experience) in Europe, or the partly retired Canadian living a peripatetic life style between Toronto and Florida, or the German and Swedish long-term travelers visiting organic farms around the world. All straddle not only international boundaries but also the worlds of work and leisure, and so of tourism and migration. There is probably no finer example of this blurring of the spheres of consumption and production than Chris Stewart, the British author, farmer and ex rock-musician, who migrated from Britain to the Alpujarras mountains in southern Spain. In his best selling book, *Driving Over Lemons*, he describes their purchase of a near derelict farm house, and the love, pleasure and sheer hard labour that went into its renovation. His income is supplemented by stints working as a sheep shearer in Sweden, a form of circulation that parallels occasional visits to and from friends and relatives in the UK.

There is, in a sense, nothing new in these examples. There have long been migrants whose love of place has over-ridden the logic of labour market material incentives, such as the British middle classes who eked out often meagre livings in Italy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (see King and Patterson, 1998). Similarly, the thousands of Europeans and North Americans who crossed the Atlantic in the second half of the twentieth century, to wash dishes or make beds in

hotels and holiday camps were driven less by employment and income prospects than by the tourist goals of adventure, exploration and discovery (Cohen, 1972). None of these forms of mobility are new, but they have increased in volume and geographical scope in recent decades, for reasons that are discussed later in this paper. However, there are new forms of mobility which were unimaginable a generation earlier. The young Asian working in New York to pay for a graduate course may simultaneously be a student, a labour migrant and a tourist. Similarly, the young Pole visiting Germany on a tourist visa, but paying for his or her trip by taking casual work and petty trading (Wallace et al., 1996) also defines new forms of mobility. If this is labour migration, then it stands in marked contrast to the mass migrations of the 1960s from Southern to Northern Europe, driven mainly by the gulf in earnings and living standards across Europe, and involving long years of hardship in cramped accommodation and tough working conditions over many years (King, 1993).

These new forms of mobility both constitute and are the results of globalisation (Held, 2000) which, as is now widely acknowledged, serve to enhance rather than diminish place differences. The places locked together by these new forms of mobility are not, of course, the outcome of a random spatial lottery but are those with particular place features whether these be climatic (the lure of the Mediterranean), cultural (the excitement of Paris or London), economic (the booming economies of the West Coast of the USA), or activity based (the seasonal attraction of ski resorts in North America, Europe and Australasia). They are also places which have been interconnected by earlier migration, trade or investment flows, such as the China Towns of the Pacific Rim, or the European colonial powers and what had once been the outposts of empire. In all these examples, place differences shape both the origins and the flows of mobility. Moreover, places may actively promote themselves in the global marketplace on the bases of these new forms of mobility – Florida and the Queensland coast as centres of easeful retirement migration, San Francisco and Sydney as vibrant, young multi-cultural cities where young in-migrants can combine party time with making a quick dollar. In short, mobility can be branded, marketed and commodified.

The consequences of these new forms of mobility extend beyond the individuals concerned. There are obvious direct consequences experienced by the real estate developer who sells a house to the second homer, the surfboard training school who hires the itinerant Australian surfer for a season, and the long lost cousin in Scotland who hosts a seemingly endless flow of distant relatives in search of their ancestral roots. But the implications of the new forms of mobility, directly or indirectly, touch most people in the communities of origin or destination: on the one hand, the consequences include gains and losses in labour supply, innovation and contact networks whilst, on the other hand, they include changes in house prices, services, and in the cultural images of places.

We have already provided an initial exploration of some of these themes in an earlier paper (Williams and Hall, 2000), and this chapter revisits some of these discourses. In places we have drawn substantially – sometimes literally – on our earlier paper, whereas elsewhere we have sought to reformulate or extend some of those arguments. In the remainder of the volume, the contributors have examined various aspects of the tourism-migration nexus, and these are grouped around three main themes: tourism and labour migration, tourism and consumption migration, and visiting friends and relatives (VFR) tourism which is an outgrowth of migration, but – as will be argued later – also has the capacity to generate new migration and mobility flows. But although we have grouped these papers under three broad headings, we are mindful of the potential of creating new barriers to understanding, while seeking to dissolve those between migration and tourism studies. This is a point powerfully made by Ateljevic (2000) in her critiques of the production/consumption dichotomy in tourism, and which we repeat here by insisting that the study of tourism-migration relationships requires an holistic approach.

Data constraints, together with a weak theoretical base in the face of the need for an holistic approach, have contributed to the overall lack of research on circulation and temporary mobility related to tourism. The main exceptions are the burgeoning literatures on counter-urbanisation (e.g., Jaakson, 1986; Champion, 1989; Halseth, 1992, 1993; Sant and Simons, 1993; Buller and Hoggart, 1994; Halseth and Rosenberg, 1995) and retirement migration (e.g., Murphy, 1981; Mullins, 1984, 1990; Hall, 1990; Rogers, et al., 1992; King, et al., 1998, 2000; Williams, et al., 1997). These are production and consumption led migration, which have both been informed by tourism experiences and investments. However, there has been a singular lack of attention to the role of tourism in these new forms of migration, with some exceptions (e.g. Monk and Alexander, 1986; Myklebost, 1989; Williams and Patterson, 1998; Williams et al., 2000) and very few attempts to disentangle the changing relationships between tourism and migration which are inherent in the life courses of such individuals. Similarly, there has been only a modest volume of research on the phenomenon of the tourist-worker (Bianchi, 2000) (but see Mason, Chapter Four). Surprisingly, there has not been substantially more progress in respect of the other area which this book addresses, that is VFR tourism – surprising in that this does not, at first sight, appear to be so conceptually opaque as consumption led, and tourism-informed migration. However, as our later discussions indicate, this is also an area where research is problematic because of the prevalence of mixed motivations and behaviour, and the weakness of secondary data. This brief review indicates that the tourism-migration nexus represents a fertile and still largely virgin territory, offering rich rewards for tourism and migration researchers. Not only is this a potentially fruitful interface between different research traditions, but it also represents an increasingly important component of the new forms of mobility. Before seeking to disentangle some of these tourism-migration relationships, we first turn to the problem of definitions.

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