

# Guest editorial

Roberto Bruno Gozzoli and Timo Ohnmacht

The papers presented in this special issue are the result of a call of papers planned for The Third International Conference on Tourism and Business, held at Mahidol University International College between 27 and 29 August 2019 and jointly organised by Mahidol University International College, Tourism and Hospitality Management and Business Administration Divisions, and Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Switzerland (<https://muic.mahidol.ac.th/tourism2019/>). With a biannual frequency, the fourth edition of the conference is now planned in Lucerne for 2022.

Although the papers presented at the conference spanned tourism and business in a worldwide perspective, the call for paper herein was focussed about Asia tourism and hospitality business in particular, which originates the title “Tourism and Business Research from Asia and Beyond”.

The geographical area under exam spans from Iran in one side to Fiji islands on the other. The choice of Asia in particular was not simply dictated by the fact that one of the academic institutional organisers had its seat in Southeast Asia. As Asia represents the next economic force within worldwide economy, tourism is one of the major sources of income for many countries in the region.

Such a statement is to be considered even more relevant at the light of the COVID-19 pandemic that has afflicted countries and economies worldwide. When the initial call for papers was announced almost a year ago, millions of travellers in the region were a viable perspective for countries such as Thailand having reached 39 million visitors by the end of the 2019. Twelve months later, such hopes lay shattered by a pandemic still far to be under control, and the collapse of tourism had many small enterprises disappear – and many families left without income. But as it happened at the time of the tsunami in December 2004, such as the mythical phoenix, tourism in Asia will resurrect from its own ashes, on its due time obviously.

Asia in general remains an unexplored territory. With some exceptions – Hong Kong, Taiwan, Macao, China and Japan are the countries that usually come to mind – many countries in the region are just opening to further academic research within tourism and hospitality: Laos, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam have enormous potentialities, which have been only partially touched upon in the past few years.

Moreover, business models and tourism perspectives within Asia in general have been underrepresented. More than 40 years ago, Edward Said used the word Orientalism to classify culture and behaviours different from a generalised Western perspective. The view of Asia as “Oriental” in Said’s meaning of the term remains imbued in many perceptions of the region – mostly political, it is fair to say.

The focus on Asia also aimed to break the case of academic subjugation that is present in other research fields. Kaye Chon, the Dean of Hong Kong Polytechnic University, School of Hotel and Tourism Management, remarked in a talk a few years ago about the importance of a more Asian approach to tourism and hotel business and research. It is fair to say that tourism and hospitality research offers a cultural diversity and a variety of approaches that more consolidated academic disciplines have been not able to pursue.

On this basis, a call for papers was opened in November 2019, both inviting the papers presented at the original conference, as well any papers dealing with such geographic area.

Roberto Bruno Gozzoli is based at the Tourism and Hospitality Management Division, Mahidol University International College, Salaya, Thailand.

Timo Ohnmacht is based at the School of Business, Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Lucerne, Switzerland.

Since the call for papers announcement, 46 manuscripts were received. Passing through the various review stages, the papers published here offer a glimpse of tourism and hospitality research in Asia.

We would like to conclude with a personal note. As first time guest editors, the enterprise of seeing this special issue till the end, from the initial planning to the final volume has been exciting, and sometimes overwhelming. As guest editors, we have to thank all the reviewers who devoted their time to review the papers to be considered for the special issue. We also give heartfelt thanks to all scholars who were invited to review papers, but they had to decline the invitation owing to academic shortages during the long months of Spring–early Summer 2020.

---

For instructions on how to order reprints of this article, please visit our website:  
[www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm](http://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/licensing/reprints.htm)  
Or contact us for further details: [permissions@emeraldinsight.com](mailto:permissions@emeraldinsight.com)