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Book review: Dictionary of Geotourism

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Contents

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This book is a companion to *The Principles of Geotourism* (Chen, Lu, & Ng, 2015). That book and the *Dictionary of Geotourism* are two great contributions to the literature by the esteemed Chinese geologist Professor Anze Chen. The books provide a magnificent insight into Chinese thinking about, and development of, geotourism, which they labelled *Tourism Earth Science*.

According to the promotional material for this book, 'geotourism is a new, emerging scientific discipline by applying the principles of earth science in the study of natural and human tourism resources. It involves the principles and methodologies of art, landscape architecture, environmental science and tourism in dealing with earth science issues of tourism activities and provides guidance to the establishment, management and protection of geoparks, forest parks and scenic areas'.

In the Preface, geotourism is defined as 'tourism which focuses on an area's geology and landscape as the basis for providing visitor engagement, learning and enjoyment. In China, this form of tourism is referred to as *Tourism Earth Science* and falls under the discipline of 'Earth Science'. *Tourism Earth Science* was founded by Professor Chen in the 1980s and this led to the development of China's tourism industry through a focus on geology, landforms and the landscape. In addition, it gave impetus to the establishment of national geoparks in China, and later UNESCO Global Geoparks.

The book states that 'theories and methodology of earth science, together with other disciplines such as art, aesthetics, landscape, and environmental and tourism sciences, are adopted to address tourism issues associated with the Earth' (p. x). These challenges are derived mainly from the tourism market, resources, planning, development, and management. Thus *Tourism Earth Science* in China focuses on the four research areas of the tourism - market, resources and facilities as well as geopark establishment and management.

Another concept to help the reader understand *Tourism Earth Science* is its 'Development Background', also outlined in the Preface. Whilst the history of geotourism is outlined with reference to a number of international papers from the 1930s, its development in China is divided into four stages. The first, the *Early Stage* (1978–1985), reflected a time of rapid development and the sudden growth of the tourism industry. It culminated in the *First National Symposium on Tourism Earth Science* organised

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in Beijing in 1985. A second *Developing Stage* (1986–1991) saw the publication of the book *An Introduction to Tourism Earth Science* by Anze Chen (Beijing Press, 1991).

The third *Growing Stage* (1992–2000) was a period of growth and internationalisation. In 1996, Anze Chen and Maoxun Chen presented the paper *Tourism Earth Science – A New Frontier of Earth Science* to 6000 earth scientists from 120 countries at the 30th International Geological Congress held in Beijing. During this period the Chengdu College of Geology conferred the first master and doctoral degrees in the subject. Finally the fourth phase of *Recent Development* (2001 to date) has seen *Tourism Earth Science* contribute to the rapid development of China's numerous national and global geoparks. Today it has more geoparks than any other country. Of the 169 UNESCO Global Geoparks in 44 countries, China has 41 or 25% of the world's total.

The Dictionary of Geotourism had its origins in 1995 with the preparation of the manuscript *A Terminology of Tourism Earth Science*. A more formal *Dictionary of Tourism Earth Science* was published in 2013 leading to the English edition in 2020, being reviewed here. It contains over 3000 entries ranging from 'aa lava landscape', with its focus on *geology* to 'zoo tourism' which has a *tourism* orientation. Thus the dictionary easily straddles both disciplines bringing elements of geology into the tourism sphere and vice versa. The text is supported by hundreds of diagrams and pictures with explanations and illustrations in six different parts covering the concepts, principles, tourism earth science resources, applications, geopark establishment and management, geology-related parks and world heritage sites. It contains many Chinese concepts and examples of nature-based tourism, natural and cultural landscapes, sustainable and rural developments, conservation systems and methods, park development and management.

It is described as 'a reference for geological heritage survey, assessment and research. It is also for designing and planning of geoparks, national parks, heritage protection, museum, exhibitions and scientific interpretation. It is a useful teaching resource for teachers and students of geoscience and tourism as well as for geopark and national park managers and tour guides. In addition, it offers scientific knowledge of the surrounding natural and cultural landscapes to the general public.

Whilst the book has a range of definitions, it does not include one on *Geotourism* itself as defined in the *Handbook of Geotourism* (Dowling & Newsome, 2018). Instead the relevant entry is *Tourism Earth Science*. I suggest that the book could have been enriched by an entry about geotourism and how it relates to the 'earth science' approach of the Chinese. Notwithstanding this, the book makes for an interesting read and allows the reader to delve deep into an understanding of how the Chinese interpret the earth and its landforms for tourism. This represents an excellent addition to the literature.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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