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DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN SWAZILAND

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Abstract: The paper analyzes the development of tourism in Swaziland with specific reference to Butler's concept of a tourism destination area cycle. Tourism in this African Kingdom evolved in five stages: exploration, inactivity, transition, truncated development, and decline and attempted rejuvenation. Its divergence from Butler's ideal type is analyzed in some detail, but is attributed primarily to external factors beyond Swazi control. Initial tourism developments occurred while the country was a British colony and, as in Lesotho and Botswana, with which Swaziland is compared, further expansion was conditioned by the country's position as a periphery of the Republic of South Africa. Keywords: tourism history, international tourism, southern Africa, Swaziland.

Résumé: Le développement du tourisme au Swaziland. Cet article fait une analyse du développement du tourisme au Swaziland, selon le concept de Butler d'un cycle régional d'une destination touristique. Au Swaziland, l'évolution du tourisme s'est faite en cinq étapes: exploration, inactivité, transition, développement interrompu et déclin et reprise tentative. On analyse en détail sa divergence du type idéal de Butler; on attribue cette divergeance aux éléments hors du contrôle du Swaziland. Le tourisme est né quand le pays était une colonie britannique, et, comme il s'est passé au Lésotho et au Botswana, deux pays auxquels on compare le Swaziland, s'est développé grâce à la position du Swaziland comme périphérie de la République de l'Afrique du Sud. Mots-clés: histoire du tourisme, tourisme international, Afrique australe, Swaziland.

INTRODUCTION

In 1989, nearly 18% of all international arrivals to developing countries went to Africa, which obtained almost 10% of the receipts earned from tourism by these countries. However, less than half the international visitors to Africa were holidaymakers and, of these, most went to North Africa (Harrison 1992a:7-8). In 1989, by contrast, Southern Africa, defined by the World Tourism Organization as Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland and the Republic of South Africa, attracted less than 13% of the continent's international arrivals and earned less than 13% of its receipts from international tourism (WTO 1991:50,135). In fact, as a tourist-receiving region, Southern Africa is relatively undeveloped and relatively unknown and Swaziland, a small kingdom

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within the region, barely appears in the literature on tourism development (Figure 1).

The purpose of this paper is to examine the development of inbound, international tourism in Swaziland in the context of its past and present position in the modern world system. More specifically, the paper indicates how Swaziland's evolution was initially conditioned by its status as a British colony and later constrained by close links, which still remain, with the Republic of South Africa. Indeed, it is argued that prospects for any significant future expansion of tourism in Swaziland, at least in the short term, will be largely contingent on developments in South Africa.

The fieldwork was carried out in Swaziland in July and August, 1987, during a visit funded by the British Council to the University of Swaziland. Using structured questionnaires, basic data on the country's tourism industry were collected from hotels and other institutions involved in tourism, and other information was obtained from unstructured interviews with a wide range of non-randomly selected Swazi citizens. The country's newspapers covering the previous decade were an important source of information, as were documents at the Social Science Research Unit of the University of Swaziland, and extensive library research was carried out over many months after return to the United Kingdom.

Numerous attempts have been made to depict the stages through

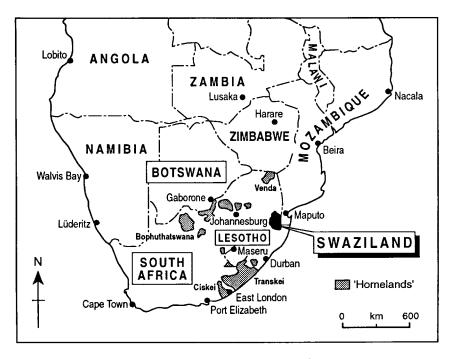


Figure 1. Swaziland in Southern Africa Source: Funnell 1991: 5.

which tourism destination areas are likely to pass (Hovinen 1982; Murphy 1985:79-89; Noronha 1977:part IV; Plog 1977; Stansfield 1978). However, in this paper, reference will be made primarily to Butler's concept of a "tourist area cycle of evolution," perhaps the most influential and most widely-cited approach in the analysis of local tourism development (1980). His conceptual framework, arising from studies of resort development in Europe and North America, is clear and coherent. Based on firmly-defined stages of tourism development, it facilitates comparison of tourist-receiving areas in different regions. Butler's assertion that "not all areas experience the stages of the cycle as clearly as others" (1980:10), is supported by evidence from several case studies which have sought to apply his approach to the development of tourism in specific destination areas, including Lancaster County, Louisiana, and the Niagara Falls, in the United States (Getz 1993; Hovinen 1982; Meyer-Arendt 1985), Malta (Oglethorpe 1984), the Scottish Highlands (Butler 1985), the Isle of Man (Cooper and Jackson 1989), the Bahamas (Debbage 1990), and the Caribbean (France 1991).

Butler's approach is sufficiently well-known to require only a brief introduction (Table 1). Tourism destination areas are considered to evolve in six stages, depending on their environmental, physical, and social carrying capacity. Initial stages of exploration and involvement lead to development and consolidation, to be followed by stagnation, and then either decline or rejuvenation.

In fact, the precise status of Butler's framework is unclear; it is variously referred to as a model (1980:5), a description of "stages through which . . . tourist areas pass" (1980:6), and a hypothesis (1980:7,11). However, this paper treats his conceptual framework as an ideal type, a methodological device first formulated by Weber which has long been established in social science. Here, as for Weber, the ideal type is neither true nor false, neither a hypothesis nor a theory, but a useful, empirically-grounded framework for measuring the extent to which specific social phenomena conform to or depart from a recognized yardstick or established pattern (Weber 1949:89-104). Used as an ideal type, Butler's destination area cycle thus becomes an aid to comparison, a method of measuring where individual destination areas may be placed along a specific developmental sequence.

It should be noted that Butler's approach is characterized by several assumptions. First, although he recognizes that the evolution of destinations varies over time and place, the direction of the process is unilinear. Second, focus is on the tourism "product," the developmental cycle of which apparently has its own momentum irrespective of the wider sociopolitical and economic environment. Third, the empirical studies on which the framework was originally based were of (largely unplanned) tourism development in Europe and North America. In practice, destination areas elsewhere, especially those with a history of colonialism, may diverge considerably from the ideal type. Such assumptions do not invalidate the use of Butler's framework but, in so far as they are considered problematic, they should sensitize researchers to pay due regard to the overall social, political, and cultural context in which tourism development occurs.

Table 1. Butler's Tourist Destination Area Cycle and Stages of Tourism Development in Swaziland

A. Butler: Stages and Characteristics

Exploration: Few, adventurous tourists; interest in nature/culture; close interaction with local people, minimal effect on social, cultural and physical environments; local facilities are used.

Involvement: Increased tourist numbers; some advertising; start of tourist market and season; interaction stays high; some changes in social life and pressure on infrastructure.

Development: Tourists' numbers rapidly increase to equal or exceed local population; more foreign-owned facilities; loss of local control; promotion of artificial attractions; use of migrant labour.

Consolidation: Growth rate declines; tourism now a major economic sector; heavy advertising; some opposition to tourism; facilities deteriorate.

Stagnation: Tourist capacity reached/exceeded; reliance on repeats and conventions; surplus hotel capacity and changes in ownership; focus on package tourist; social, environmental and economic problems.

Decline: Tourist market is lost; vacationers decline; reliance on week-enders and day visitors; conversion of many facilities.

. . . or Rejuvenation. Changed attractions; a new tourist market is found.

Source: Butler 1980: 6-10.

B. Swaziland: Stages and Characteristics

Exploration 1800s-1902: Small but significant number of tourists; adventurers, big game hunters and settlers; hunting and concessions; interaction through mediators with elite; radically changed social; cultural and physical environments; a handful of new, foreign-owned hotels; some advertising.

Inactivity 1903-1950: Establishment of colonial government; the end of hunting tourism; a few hotels in towns and mining areas.

Transition 1951-1965: More hotels in industrial and administrative centres; some use of facilities by holidaymakers; Casino Act (1963).

Truncated Development 1966-1975: Tourist numbers increase but remain well below local population; concentration of tourist facilities; transnationals dominate with active government support; new formal tourism institutions; most tourists are week-end visitors or short-stay visitors.

Decline and Attempted Rejuvenation 1976-1990: Fewer holidaymakers and shorter length of stay, primarily because of factors external to Swaziland; Government invests in tourism and attempts are made to decentralise tourism facilities away from the Ezulwini Valley; increased promotion of "hallmark events" and Swazi tradition. These strategies have some success and tourism in Swaziland becomes more buoyant. Social interactions still constrained by the "uniform of color."

At a more general level, studies of tourism development have occurred against a backdrop of changing perspectives that may or may not be considered "theories" or "paradigms" (Harrison 1992a:8-10). The position taken in this paper is that "modernization," "development," and "underdevelopment," including tourism, increasingly occur within some form of modern world system, where domestic social, political and economic structures are best understood within the context of their linkages with external institutions, societies, and systems (Harrison 1988:163). In such circumstances, both internal and external factors, and their interrelationship, are relevant to "development," and the evolution of tourism in Swaziland is no exception.

TOURISM IN SWAZILAND

The Kingdom of Swaziland (Figure 2) is bounded on three sides by the Republic of South Africa (the Republic) and, to the East, by Mozambique. It is a small, land-locked country of about 700,000 people and, within its 17,364 km², there is considerable geographical and climatic diversity. Annexed by the Boers in 1890 and by the British in 1902, Swaziland became a British colony in 1906, eventually obtaining formal, political independence in 1968. However, its economy has been and continues to be closely tied to the Republic. Swaziland is a

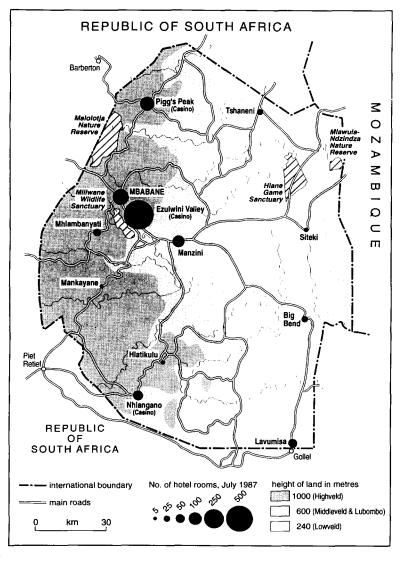


Figure 2. Swaziland: Ecological Zones and Their Tourist Accommodation, 1987

member of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) and, until 1986, was in the Republic-dominated Rand Monetary Area (RMA) with Botswana, Lesotho, and the "homelands." Indeed, the Swazi currency (the Lilangeni) continues to be informally linked to the rand, with which it has parity. At the end of the 1980s, more than three quarters of Swaziland's imports were from the Republic which, in turn, received more than one third of the country's exports. Swaziland obtains much of its export income from a few products, with sugar, fertilizers, and wood pulp providing two thirds of the revenue. In tourism, as in other industries, Swaziland is heavily reliant on South Africa which, at the end of the 1980s, supplied more than 60% of all tourist arrivals.

Political development in Swaziland has been similarly constrained. Swaziland's politicians have had to balance relationships with the until-recently apartheid-divided Republic, whose secret services and soldiers have frequently crossed the Swazi border, and war-ravaged Mozambique. Nevertheless, this has not prevented the operation, since independence from the United Kingdom, of a unique constitution, in which the "traditional" royal family holds economic and political power in its own right, as well as through an allegedly "modern" system of cabinet government (Daniel 1986; Funnell 1991; Macmillan 1986). Indeed, "tradition" has figured increasingly in the marketing of the country as a tourism destination (Harrison 1992b).

Elsewhere (Crush and Wellings 1987:92-95), tourism development in Swaziland and Lesotho has been reported to have occurred in three stages, moving from the colonial period (1945-1966) to expansion (1967-1976) and then to contraction (1977-1981). However, for two reasons, these stages are too simplistic: first, the period preceding formal colonial government in Swaziland needs to be discussed separately and, second, tourism in Swaziland is quite different in some respects from that of Lesotho, as indicated below. It is preferable to depict Swazi tourism as occurring in five stages, which are here categorized as exploration, inactivity, transition, truncated development, and decline and attempted rejuvenation. These stages, in which the periodization is inevitably approximate, are summarized and compared with Butler's "ideal type" in Table 1.

Exploration: 1800s-1902

The exploration stage occurred during the 1800s, especially after 1850 (Crush 1980:72-73), and ended with British annexation in 1902. During this period, accommodation was provided for two types of hunter: those seeking mineral rights and other concessions from the Swazi (an early variant of business tourism), and those hunting big game (Bonner 1983).

Prior to the outbreak of the Second Boer War (1899-1902), about 1,000 Europeans (including settlers) were in Swaziland (Brown and Brown 1903/1904:103). To meet their needs, hotels were built by two Europeans: by Alfred Bremer (who gave his name to Bremersdorp, the first European capital of Swaziland), and by John Thorburn, a prominent adventurer and concessionaire, who built a "liquor canteen"

(Bonner 1983:185) which reportedly became a meeting place for concession hunters (Bulpin 1950:147).

Inactivity: 1903-1950

For 50 years, there was no significant development of tourism. In 1907, there were five hotels in Swaziland, catering primarily for business visitors to administrative or industrial centers. Two were at Mbabane, which had replaced Bremersdorp (later renamed Manzini) as the (European) capital of Swaziland, and others were at Bremersdorp and the mining settlements of Pigg's Peak and Forbes Reef. Over the next four decades, small hotels and guest houses periodically appeared at government out-stations, mining settlements, and border towns, but they did not become permanently established and, in 1949, there were only four hotels in the country (Brown 1940:648, 1949:648; Brown and Brown 1907/1908:389, 1919:432, 1928:519, 1935:619). As a result of the wanton destruction of wildlife, recreational tourism in Swaziland had come to a halt, retrospectively making the exploration stage seem an example of proto-tourism.

Transition: 1951-1965

From the early 1950s until the mid-1960s, Swazi tourism went through a transitional phase. By 1954, the colony boasted 11 hotels, all at centers of administration and industry (Brown 1952, 1954). Informants told this author that most visitors to Swazi hotels in the mid-1950s were residents of South Africa with business in Swaziland, or government officers and employees with official duties in the more inaccessible parts of the country. However, they also reported that by 1960 Swaziland was gaining a reputation as "the Switzerland of Africa," both because of its scenic attractions and its apparent stability, especially after the Sharpville massacre of 1960, when it was seen as a haven from its more unstable and repressive neighbor. An academic colleague, then teaching in South Africa, recalls regular trips with fellow expatriates along untarred roads to small Swazi hotels run by Europeans insisting on flying the British national flag, where other guests were expatriate officials from Swaziland and South Africa on domestic vacation.

In the early 1960s, some effort was made to make Swaziland more attractive to visitors. In 1963, the colonial government passed the Casino Act (Crush and Wellings 1987:93), whereby casinos, illegal then and at the time of writing in the Republic (Economist Intelligence Unit 1992:86), were allowed to operate in Swaziland, albeit under certain restrictions. However, no real attempt was made to develop holiday tourism, for even in 1960 there were no tarred roads in the country (Government of Swaziland 1966:8). When a road-building program was introduced, in the early 1960s, it was to facilitate Swaziland's industrial development and only coincidentally assisted the expansion of tourism.

Truncated Development: 1966-1975

The period from 1966 to 1975 was one of promise for the tourism industry in Swaziland. Two years after the Casino Act, the Holiday Inn Group opened the Royal Swazi Spa Hotel (with its casino, the first in southern Africa), in the Ezulwini Valley (Figure 2). The newly-independent Swazi government placed tourism firmly on the economic agenda, leaving its development mainly to the private sector, but facilitated access to tourism attractions, especially the casino (Government of Swaziland 1969:45, 1972:110). The government also established a Tourist Board, formed the Swaziland National Trust Commission to protect the national heritage, and arranged for consultants to provide a "comprehensive study of the tourist industry" (Government of Swaziland 1972:112), subsequently carried out with financial assistance from Canada (Stevenson and Kellogg 1973). From the early 1970s, Swaziland was promoted as a holiday destination.

Although all published statistics on Swazi tourism must be treated with caution, the general trends are evident. Initially, efforts to develop tourism were successful. In 1969, hotel visitors (the bulk of all non-Swazi arrivals) numbered 42,000, rising to 79,840 in 1971 (Government of Swaziland, 1972:110) and, in 1975, to more than 130,000 (Table 2). The increase was both caused by and reflected in the improved standard of Swazi hotels. Between 1965 and 1978, Swaziland's hotel room capacity tripled, with 83% of the new hotel rooms operated by the Holiday Inn franchise or the Southern Sun group (Crush and Wellings 1983a:214-220). Hotels became larger, of international stan-

Table 2. Tourists Staying in Hotels in Swaziland, According to Purpose of Visit (1972-1990)

Year	Total Tourists	Holiday Tourists	%	Business	%	Other	%
1972	89,015	54,509	61	17,882	20	16,624	19
1973	89,153	55,478	62	17,704	20	15,971	18
1974	96,123	61,805	64	19,731	21	14,587	15
1975	130,568	90,408	69	24,871	19	15,289	12
1976	108,069	75,512	70	22,150	20	10,407	10
1977	103,159	67,715	65	26,387	26	9,057	9
1978	81,970	49,830	61	21,329	26	10,811	13
1979	94,034	54,213	58	25,676	27	14,145	15
1980	98,531	48,623	49	30,273	31	19,635	20
1981	76,407	42,749	56	20,336	27	13,322	17
1982	107,657	63,691	59	27,630	26	16,336	15
1983	122,905	71,398	58	35,220	29	16,287	13
1984	154,095	89,516	58	44,158	29	20,421	13
1985	200,078	116,829	58	55,659	28	27,590	14
1986	234,034	132,216	57	47,175	20	54,643	23
1987	199,710	125,259	63	44,201	22	30,250	15
1988	201,438	126,343	63	44,584	22	30,511	15
1989	257,997	161,817	63	57,102	22	39,078	15
1990	287,796	180,507	63	63,697	22	43,592	15

Source: Central Statistical Office (1975, 1979, 1983, 1986, 1989, 1991).

dard, and were mainly under the control of transnational companies. Furthermore, tourism became (and remained) heavily concentrated in the Ezulwini valley (Figure 2) which, by 1977, contained 59% of all hotel beds in Swaziland (Government of Swaziland 1978:120).

As a result of tourism development in the early 1970s, female prostitution, long considered a "problem" in Swaziland and previously associated with the return of Swazi workers from the mines of the Union of South Africa (Commission 1956:8-9) and with civil servants in Swaziland (Committee 1970:33), came increasingly to be centered on hotel bars. It eventually led to assertions that Swaziland was benefiting from the appeal of "forbidden fruit [gambling] and the export of vice [prostitution across the color line]" (Crush and Wellings 1987), a view which undoubtedly oversimplifies the relationship of tourism and prostitution (Harrison 1989:45-55, 1992b:156-158). In general, optimistic views on tourism were the mood of the day and the consultants' report "conservatively" estimated that, by 1984, tourist arrivals would be in the region of 273,000 (Stevenson and Kellogg 1973). In fact, the estimate was almost 120,000 too high (Table 2).

Decline and Attempted Rejuvenation: 1976-1990

From 1975, when hotel guests numbered more than 130,000, tourism in Swaziland declined, primarily as a result of economic and political change in South Africa, as detailed below. The downward trend was not reversed until the early 1980s (Table 2). Ironically, the Swazi government demonstrated its willingness to join with private capital in developing tourism precisely when the industry was entering a period of decline. By the end of the 1970s, the government and the monarchy, operating separate financial institutions (Harrison 1992b:152) together invested in Swazi tourism. Indeed, without their involvement, hotels at Nhlangano and Pigg's Peak, away from the Ezulwini Valley, would not have been built. While the Swazi Government and the Crown were investing in tourism, Holiday Inns and Southern Sun recognized the market trends and, in 1983, merged to form Sun International. By the end of the 1980s, the new company, based in South Africa, owned most and controlled all casino hotels in southern Africa and its interests extended through Bophuthatswana and the Transkei to Lesotho, Botswana, and Mauritius. It also became the main shareholder in most of the major hotels of Swaziland, jointly owning or operating others in partnership with the Swazi government and monarchy.

The tourism industry attempted to reverse the decline in tourist numbers in two ways. First, it deliberately promoted Swazi tradition (Harrison 1992b). The two major annual festivals, the First Fruits and the Reed Dance, are single but repeatable events, and now feature prominently in all the tourist brochures. In addition, the coronation of the young King Mswati III, in 1986, attracted thousands of visitors, as well as dignitaries from all over the world, and by the early 1990s brochures from the Swaziland Government Tourist Office introduced potential visitors to "Swaziland: the Royal Experience."

Second, specific efforts were directed at producing "hallmark" events, a strategy also followed elsewhere (Wall 1988). Capitalizing on

the political and economic isolation of South Africa, the Swazi tourism industry decided that if beds could not be filled for two or three nights, attempts should be made to fill them for one night. Visits were organized of such top English soccer teams as Tottenham Hotspur, Liverpool, and Manchester United (in June 1983 and June 1984) and stars of popular music performed in Swaziland (for example, Peter Tosh, the Jamaican reggae singer, in October 1983), thus attracting thousands of week-end visitors from the Republic, who were denied the experience in their own country because of sanctions. The televising of the 1984 and 1988 Olympics provided other opportunities to attract residents of the Republic.

The promotion of Swazi tradition and "hallmark" events had some success and tourist arrivals increased during the 1980s (Table 2). In addition, efforts to reduce the country's reliance on South African tourists, an objective dating back to the 1970s (Government of Swaziland 1978:121) bore some fruit (Table 3), even though the majority of international arrivals to Swaziland continue to be from the Republic, generally entering Swaziland by road (Central Statistical Office 1989:19).

By the end of the 1980s, tourism in Swaziland was playing an important role in the economy. Few detailed figures are available for recent years. But, in 1985, more than 2,000 workers were directly employed in the country's hotels and restaurants, some 3% of all wage earners, themselves a small proportion of the working population (Central Statistical Office 1985:20,28). In 1988, Swaziland earned the equivalent of US\$18 million from tourism, retaining a net balance of US\$4 million on its tourism account (World Tourism Organization 1991: 155,162). Indeed, between 1983 and 1989, foreign exchange earnings from tourism quadrupled, "putting tourism roughly on a par with the mining sector in the scale of its gross contribution to the balance of payments (The Economist Intelligence Unit 1990:76). By 1988, international tourism was accounting for more than 4% of exports and nearly 3% of Gross Domestic Product (Harrison 1992a:14).

Table 3. Hotel Guests in Swaziland, by Country of Permanent Residence (selected years)

Place of	1976		1980		1985		1990	
Permanent Residence	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Swaziland	3,244	2.9	6,278	6.4	6,964	3.5	24,970	8.7
Republic of								
Ś. Africa	92,844	83.0	68,945	70.0	139,325	69.6	172,677	60.0
Other Africa	1,607	1.4	9,358	9.5	15,311	7.6	48,673	16.9
N. and S.								
America	164	0.1	2,754	2.8	3,879	1.9	5,500	1.9
Europe	12,231	11.0	8,506	8.6	21,426	10.7	30,474	10.6
Other	1,722	1.6	2,690	2.7	13,173	6.6	5,502	1.9
Total	111,812	100.0	98,531	100.0	200,078	100.0	287,796	100.0

Source: Central Statistical Office (1979, 1983, 1989, 1991).

Indirectly, taxi drivers, retailers, carvers, and sculptors also benefited from tourism. However, the most widespread benefits accrued to rural workers producing handicrafts, primarily women, and it has been estimated that about one third of all households in Swaziland have at least one individual involved in handicraft production. Not all the items produced are designed for the tourism market, but there are continuing efforts by government and the private sector to increase the proportion (Harrison 1989).

In 1990, compared with the mid-1970s, more tourists were visiting the country, but they were staying for a shorter period. In 1974, for example, hotel tourists stayed, on average, for 3.1 nights, an average that declined to 2.5 and 1.2 nights in 1977 and 1990, respectively. Put differently, between 1974 and 1990, while the number of tourists increased by 200%, hotel bed nights increased by only 16% (Central Statistical Office 1975, 1979, 1983, 1986, 1989, 1991).

In 1987, when the author visited Swaziland, tourism officials were aware of the considerable excess capacity in the hotel sector. They wanted to cooperate with other African countries, especially Kenya and South Africa, in promoting Swaziland as a destination within a more comprehensive tour package, but felt that the distance of Swaziland from, and lack of direct air connections with, major tourist-generating markets, generally operated against such an option. Indeed, tourism officials and hoteliers interviewed considered that Swaziland possessed neither the infrastructure nor the variety of attractions required for mass tourism (a view supported by the author). However, by 1993, some tour operators were offering packages combining Swaziland with a visit to South Africa's Kruger National Park or Zululand or to Mozambique's Magaruque Island (Ministry of Broadcasting, Information and Tourism 1993:28–31).

The existence of excess capacity did not discourage ideas of further expansion. In 1989, there were plans to expand the industry still further by constructing two hotels, with a combined total of 494 rooms and at a cost of US\$150 million, to be managed by the Sheraton Group. Both projects were eventually abandoned through lack of finance (Economist Intelligence Unit 1990:77, 1992:87).

Destination Area Cycle and Swazi Tourism

Swazi tourism diverged from the stages depicted in Butler's (1980) tourist destination area cycle in several notable respects (Table 1). From the start, Swazi tourism was operated by expatriates for expatriates and, as part of the wider and deeper process of colonization, the arrival of the newcomers led to radical changes in the social, cultural, and physical milieu.

In Swaziland, exploration was not followed by involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, and decline or rejuvenation. Instead, it led, first, to half a century of inactivity and then to some 15 years of transition, with the casino as the country's leading attraction. The hotels built in this period, however, were primarily for business travelers. A few years of development then followed but, even at its

peak in 1975, most tourists stayed only for a short period and total international arrivals were only 130,568, or 26% of the Swazi population (Government of Swaziland 1978:51). By contrast, a key feature of the development stage in Butler's model is that numbers of tourists equal or even exceed those of the local population. The arrival of transnational capital, and its later partnership with the Swazi government and monarchy, led to an upgrading of tourism facilities. While it prompted the development of new tourism institutions at government level, it did not alter the basic structure of the industry, with foreign ownership and management and Swazi workers in the lower positions (Harrison 1989:21-22). By the end of the 1980s, non-Swazi owned 70% of all hotel rooms in the country and more than 90% of all those in the Mbabane-Manzini corridor (Figure 2), where tourism facilities are heavily concentrated (Harrison 1989:29). Furthermore, even at its height, tourism did not place a great strain on the physical infrastructure. During the years of expansion from 1973 to 1975, occupancy of beds in Swaziland's hotels was barely 50%. By 1977, when further capacity was still being added, the figure declined to less than 40% (Government of Swaziland 1978:119).

The development of Swazi tourism was soon truncated, for reasons discussed later, and then followed a period of decline. There could be no reduction in vacationers, for Swaziland had never been more than a short-stay destination, but alternative tourist types were sought, and to some extent found. However, increased arrivals were accompanied by further reductions in average length of stay. As a consequence, by the late 1980s, Swazi tourism was still struggling to maintain its momentum, apparently vulnerable to unpredictable changes in tourist demand.

From the very start, Swazi tourism clearly diverged from the pattern depicted in Butler's ideal type. This does not invalidate the ideal type, for its purpose is precisely to help indicate where empirical reality diverges from expectations, and a lack of "fit" simply directs attention to other factors, lying outside the internal dynamics of any individual product "cycle." In the case of tourism in Swaziland, this means that attention must be directed towards the wider environment, where the tourist "product" originates.

Swaziland as a Tourist "Periphery"

In development studies, theorists of underdevelopment generally depict the world system as constituted by capitalist "centers" or "metropoles" differentially articulated with their dependent "peripheries" or "satellites" in an interlocked system of global production (Harrison 1988:62–145). Some scholars have indeed situated tourism development in this context (Britton 1989; Harrison 1992a:8–11, Forthcoming; Høivik and Heiberg 1980; Lanfant 1980; Nash 1978). More specifically, the expansion of tourism in Africa has been linked to the changing nature of accumulation in the capitalist core (Crush and Wellings 1983a; Rajotte 1981:3–5).

The influence of colonialism on tourism development was not

unique to Swaziland. Hunting tourism was common in other parts of southern Africa and in East Africa, where tourism facilities were also developed by expatriates (Rajotte 1981:4). As in Swaziland, tourism in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania remained on a small scale until the mid-1960s, after which it was developed either by transnational capital alone (as in Kenya until the mid-1970s) or by transnational capital in partnership with parastatal organizations (as in Kenya after the mid-1970s and as in Tanzania). By contrast, political anarchy over nearly two decades in Uganda has prevented the successful expansion of tourism in that country (Bachmann 1988:142-145; Rajotte 1981: 24-39).

In the Caribbean, too, tourism infrastructure was developed by the colonialists rather than the colonized, few of whom "had the capital or the expertise to undertake such enterprises" (France 1991:7). Nevertheless, even within formal colonialism, it cannot be assumed that tourism development will follow a specific pattern. In East Africa, for example, the "organic" or "exploration" stage is said to have occurred with "a minimum of disruption" (Rajotte 1981:3). In Swaziland, it was part and parcel of the initial colonization, which was highly disruptive of indigenous social structures. By contrast, Caribbean tourism was comparatively late and was introduced into the region long after colonialism had become established (Bryden 1973:99).

In colonized societies generally, however, tourism development is more likely to be initiated by those in power, or by groups or classes close to them, than by the colonized, whose access to capital and influence is usually minimal. In addition, where the power structure also reflects perceived differences in race or culture (whether or not in formal colonialism), patterns of interaction among "hosts" and "guests" may be less intense than in more homogeneous societies. In these circumstances, although more case studies are undoubtedly required, tourism regions once characterized by colonialism (formal or otherwise) may evidence a markedly different cycle from Butler's ideal type.

This certainly seems to be the case in Swaziland. In a colonial society of dominant whites and subject Swazi, when a high proportion of men worked as migrant laborers in the Republic (Booth 1986), interaction across the racial divides was rarely intense. At the exploration stage, differences in language and culture prevented all but the most instrumental (and exploitative) links even with the monarch and the chiefs. This imbalance continued into the 1930s and 1940s, when Swazi relations with whites were generally limited to domestic service, laboring in the mines, or providing custom for European traders. Noting that "the European's ignorance of the Swazi is equalled only by the Swazi's ignorance of the European," Kuper emphasized the mutually exclusive social networks of blacks and whites and concluded: "Colour is a uniform that individuals are not permitted to discard" (1947:40,42,52). Leaving aside the debate about the role of white tourists in prostitution in Swaziland (Crush and Wellings 1983a, 1983b, 1987; Harrison 1989: 48-51), there is certainly no evidence that tourism development increased the levels of interaction of blacks and whites in any other way. Indeed, in the 1980s, personal observation by this author and

informants' reports confirmed that Swazis and Europeans continued to meet mainly in the roles of the servant and the served. Several non-Swazi, of different ethnic backgrounds and resident in the country for many years, informed the author that close relationships with Swazi were hard to develop and extremely rare.

Whereas Swaziland is a specific example of tourism development in a colonial context, analysis is complicated by the country's closeness to the Republic, which dominates the Swazi economy (Economist Intelligence Unit 1992:72). Because of such links, Swaziland has been described as "a periphery mediated through the South African semiperiphery with the Western, industrial core" (Harris 1993:72). When combined with internal factors specific to Swaziland, these external linkages help to explain the mixed fortunes of Swazi tourism during the 1970s and 1980s.

First, like other industrialized countries, South Africa's economy experienced a sustained period of growth from 1945 until the mid-1970s. Unable to absorb its surplus labor and continually dependent on imports for its manufacturing industry, it then entered a period of crisis, which was reflected in stagnation, increased production costs, declining rates of investment and personal savings, and rapidly declining rates of economic growth:

Between 1946 and 1974, South Africa's real GDP (gross domestic product, adjusted for inflation) grew at an average rate of 4.9 percent per annum. In the subsequent decade to 1984, the rate dropped to only 1.9 percent, while during the 1980s as a whole, annual GDP growth averaged a mere 1.5 percent (Gelb 1991:4).

Second, such factors, internal to South Africa's economy, have been related to exogenous developments outside southern Africa. As Gelb again notes, the Republic's economy was crucially influenced by "the oil price rises of 1973 and 1979, the gold price drop in 1981, and the capital flight cum sanctions experiences of 1976 and 1985" (1991:6). After 1975, for example, fuel prices were raised throughout Southern Africa, thus contributing (along with student unrest in Swaziland in 1977) to the decline in tourism (Crush and Wellings 1987:94). Along with the world recession of the 1980s, these variables inevitably influenced the extent to which residents of the Republic were willing or able to take holidays in Swaziland. The figures suggest that demand was fairly elastic, declining rapidly from the mid-1970s (Table 2).

Third, the decline in Swazi tourism in the early 1980s may partly be explained by the fact that more South Africans were choosing to take their holidays outside the region (Crush and Wellings 1983a:211-214). Within southern Africa, too, more destinations became available. In 1979, the Southern Sun group opened two casino complexes in Bophuthatswana and, two years later, Rennies opened a Holiday Inn in the Transkei. If the "homelands" could provide hotels, casinos, and first-class entertainment, there was less reason for some South Africans to travel to Swaziland or, indeed, to Lesotho, which is also reported to have experienced a rapid decline in holidaymakers in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Economist Intelligence Unit 1986:46). As in the Ba-

hamas, the corporate strategy of a transnational company was able to "shape the product life-cycle of a resort area" (Debbage 1990:515).

Fourth, decisions made within Swaziland were also held responsible for the reduced demand for tourism. As well as pointing to the "stringent petrol and speed limit controls enforced in South Africa," a government publication noted "the strict cholera innoculation entry requirements placed on all arrivals by the Swaziland authorities" (Government of Swaziland 1982:218). A few years later, government agencies again provided alternative explanations, with one attributing stagnation in Swaziland's tourism industry to increased prices for Swazi accommodation and reduced tariffs in South African hotels (Department of Economic Planning and Statistics 1987:44), and another focusing on the opening hours of border posts, the attitude of officials, and tax restrictions on "give-aways" and demonstration goods at conferences (Government of Swaziland 1987:35).

Finally, domestic unrest and violence are known to discourage tourism (Richter 1992; Teye 1986, 1988) and political instability in the Republic and in Swaziland cannot be ignored. While holidaymakers from the Republic may use Swaziland as a temporary safe haven (Economist Intelligence Unit 1992:86), potential visitors from Europe and elsewhere may be discouraged by any publicized violence in the region. In addition, during the 1980s, unrest in the Republic was sometimes extended to Swaziland. In 1987, for example, politicallymotivated arson at two Swazi hotels was held responsible by government sources (Department of Economic Planning and Statistics 1988: 42) for the decline in tourist arrivals the following year (Table 2). Assassinations and kidnappings, allegedly involving the Republic's Special Branch, further tarnished Swaziland's reputation (Harris 1993: 77-78). Sometimes the violence affected tourism institutions directly: one informant, the owner of a small, down-market hotel in a border town, told the author that during the mid-1980s his hotel had been raided on several occasions by South African police searching for members of the African National Congress.

Such an array of internal and external factors makes it difficult to isolate specific causes for the vacillating fortunes of Swazi tourism in the 1980s. However, some comparisons are possible with Lesotho and Botswana (Table 4), politically independent territories which, like Swaziland, are bordered by and economically dependent on the Republic of South Africa (Figure 1).

Lesotho is similar to Swaziland in several respects. Although tourism statistics for the 1970s are few and highly unreliable, recreational tourism in Lesotho reportedly peaked at about 75,000 in the mid-1970s, after which it declined drastically in arrival numbers, lengths of stay, and hotel occupancy rates (Crush and Wellings 1983a:207-211). The decrease has been attributed to such external factors as the corporate strategy of Sun International in developing recreational tourism in the "homelands" and to changed preferences of South African travelers (Crush and Wellings 1983a:211-220; Economist Intelligence Unit 1986:46). However, since 1977, Lesotho has also experienced "repeated waves of domestic repression" (Harris 1993:192), some of which have reflected South African involvement, and the role of internal

Date	Botswana	% of all Int'l Arrivals	Swaziland ^b	% of all Int'l Arrivals	Lesotho ^a	% of all Int'l Arrivals
1974	54,839	NA ^d	61,805	64	NA	NA ^d
1975	66,885	NA^d	90,408	69	$75,000^{\circ}$	NA^d
1976	64,978	18	75,512	70	NA^d	NA^d
1977	49,980	13	67,715	65	NA^d	NA^d
1980	83,700	14	48,623	49	NA^d	NA^d
1981	57,900	10	42,749	56	45,312	30
1983	82,000	11	71,398	58	20,348	13
1985	60,323	8	116,829	58	19,917	10
1987	81,182	9	125,259	63	16,721	8
1988	60,839	7	126,343	63	12,304	7
1989	136,985	20	161,817	63	17,321	8
1990	137,778	16	180,507	63	$19,200^{\circ}$. 8c
1991	120,482	13	181,571	63	$27,200^{\circ}$	8°
	•		•		•	

Table 4. Holidaymakers in Botswana, Swaziland and Lesotho (Selected Dates)

Sources: Botswana: Central Statistics Office (1986, 1993); Crush and Wellings 1983a; Swaziland: Central Statistical Office (1975, 1979, 1983, 1986, 1989, 1991); Lesotho: Bureau of Statistics (1983, 1990, 1992); World Tourism Organisation (1991); Economist Intelligence Unit (1992, 1993).

factors cannot be ignored. Like Swaziland, Lesotho's tourism development, concentrated in Maseru, the capital, and catering almost entirely for the South African market, has been dominated since the 1970s by Sun International and has allegedly been based on the attraction of gambling and inter-racial prostitution, considered immoral in the Republic (Crush and Wellings 1983a, 1983b). However, whereas tourism in Swaziland recovered in the 1980s, in Lesotho it declined even further and, in 1988, a little over 12,000 holidaymakers (7% of all international arrivals to Lesotho) visited the country (Table 4). More recently, there have been signs that the number of holidaymakers visiting Lesotho is increasing, and plans have been announced to construct "a major ski resort-casino complex" (Economist Intelligence Unit 1993:58). But, at the time of writing, it is too soon to predict that this slight recovery will be sustained.

Tourism development in Botswana differs from that of Lesotho and Swaziland (Table 4). From the mid-1960s until the end of the 1980s, Botswana experienced an economic boom, mainly through the discovery of large diamond deposits (Harvey 1992), and it was only at the end of the 1980s that tourism was accorded a high priority (Economist Intelligence Unit 1992:32). As in Lesotho (Funnell 1991:27), international arrivals in Botswana are dominated by returning nationals, mainly from the mines of the Republic, and the percentage of holiday-makers is equally low. Tourism in Botswana is also dominated by Sun International, and until recently the industry has followed a similar

^aInternational arrivals in country for holiday purposes.

^bHolidaymakers staying at hotels.

Estimate.

dNot available.

pattern to that of Lesotho. There was a peak in the mid-1970s, with almost 67,000 holiday visitors in 1975. Decline followed, blamed on high oil prices and economic recession (Matenge 1983:82-83), but by 1980 numbers improved, only to be badly affected by unrest in Zimbabwe (Economist Intelligence Unit 1986:25). For the rest of the 1980s, the industry appears to have stagnated. However, at the end of the 1980s, air transport facilities were considerably upgraded and, in 1989, numbers of holidaymakers were substantially increased (Table 4). This improvement was sustained in 1990, when the Gaborone Sheraton was opened, and other up-market accommodation facilities expanded, and the country was vigorously promoted as an "environmentally-sensitive, low-volume, high-cost" tourism destination (Economist Intelligence Unit 1993:29-30).

At first sight, Botswana differs from Swaziland and Lesotho in that holidaymakers from southern Africa are a relatively small proportion of all hotel guests. Throughout the second half of the 1980s, residents of southern Africa, Zimbabwe, and Malawi occupied only about one third of hotel beds (Central Statistics Office 1991:75). However, while Botswana may rely more on European holidaymakers than either Lesotho or Swaziland, many visitors to Botswana, attracted by its wildlife, prefer to camp rather than stay in hotels (Matenge 1983:84). In addition, there is a high percentage of day visitors: in 1991, more than double the number of holidaymakers (Central Statistics Office 1993: 16).

Śwaziland, Lesotho, and Botswana are all "peripheral" to the Republic of South Africa (Funnell 1991:1-34; Harris 1993:17-50, 167-193), but their tourism industries have followed different trajectories. Botswana, with a stronger economy than either Swaziland or Lesotho, relies less on tourism and less on tourists from the Republic, and its tourist arrivals vacillated throughout the late 1970s and during the 1980s, increasingly markedly at the end of the decade. In addition, the type of tourism it promotes is based on its wildlife, described as "one of Africa's best-kept secrets" (Nolting 1990:76), rather than the more "sophisticated" attractions of Lesotho and Swaziland (which also promotes its own national parks and game reserves). Although tourism in both these countries held considerable promise in the mid-1970s, both suffered a decline in demand from the Republic, their main tourist market. In Swaziland, the industry staged a recovery during the 1980s, whereas tourism in Lesotho has become almost insignificant.

CONCLUSIONS

The prospects for Swazi tourism are unclear. Swaziland has few direct air links with the major tourist-generating regions and only a small proportion of its visitors currently comes from Europe or North America. In the light of the country's landlocked location and its inability to provide attractions not also found in other tourism destinations further north, its reliance on tourists from the Republic of South Africa is likely to continue. However, at the time of writing, the political situation in the Republic is highly unstable and domestic unrest and violence seem likely to continue for the foreseeable future, even after

the scheduled multi-racial elections. With the removal of sanctions against the Republic, Swaziland will no longer be able to attract that country's citizens by televising programs or staging other forms of entertainment previously denied them.

However, with or without majority rule, unrest in the Republic might maintain and even increase Swaziland's appeal as a "safe haven." In this case, a modest expansion of short-stay tourism in Swaziland is to be anticipated. But much will depend on Swaziland's ability to keep political unrest in the Republic from permeating its own borders. Unrest in southern Africa generally will deter visitors from Europe and North America, and unrest in Swaziland would deter many even from within the region. Alternatively, in the event of a peaceful transition to majority rule in the Republic, Swaziland could actually lose some of its appeal as a destination for week-end breaks for South African residents. In tourism, as in so many other areas of Swazi life, Swaziland is dependent on events outside its borders and the dividing line between success and failure is extremely fine.

It is argued in this paper that tourism development in Swaziland does not follow the path indicated in Butler's ideal type (1980). In the initial period of exploration (1800s-1902), basic hotel facilities were provided by and for white expatriates but, with the introduction of formal colonial rule, tourism entered a long period of inactivity (1903-1950). The following years (1951-1965) were transitional: in the administrative and industrial areas more tourism facilities were provided but relatively little use was made of them by holidaymakers. Truncated tourism development followed (1966-1975), dominated by government-supported international capital, but physical carrying capacity was rarely overloaded (except for weekends when especially popular entertainment was being provided) and the industry continued to cater for short-stay visitors, overwhelmingly from South Africa. From the mid-1970s, tourism in Swaziland declined, due to a combination of external and internal causes. But by the end of the 1980s, there were signs that strategies to increase tourist numbers had been successful.

Three issues of theoretical importance arise from this study of tourism development in Swaziland. One, it indicates the value of Butler's tourist destination life cycle when used as an ideal type, against which specific developmental cycles can be assessed. Two, it highlights the need to situate the destination area concerned (or any other product cycle) within the modern world system. In the Swazi case, the development of tourism was clearly conditioned by Swaziland's status as a British colony and its proximity to South Africa, to which it remains inextricably linked, and through which much of Swaziland's political and economic standing in the rest of the world is mediated. Expressed differently, "development" occurs within an international system of dependence, interdependence, and power relations, and specific product cycles cannot be properly understood until these relations are taken into account. Clearly, when these issues are recognized, the assumptions inherent in Butler's approach - of unilinearity, universality, and the internal dynamics of product cycles – are called into question.

Finally, three, this focus on Swaziland illustrates the value of case studies of tourism development. In what can only be described as a

form of intellectual snobbery, they are sometimes considered inferior to social "theory." While it is recognized that theoretical perspectives frame and help organize empirical data, in tourism research, as in other applications of social science, empirical data are crucial in prompting questions and in assessing the value, relevance, and limitations of theories. Seen in this light, theoretically-informed case studies are an integral part of tourism research which, without them, is deprived of a key focus of its enquiries. \square

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