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Social enterprise and inclusive tourism. Five cases in Siem Reap, Cambodia

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ABSTRACT

In recent decades, social enterprise has emerged from a variety of traditions and contexts to occupy a prominent position in relation to social change. Proponents argue that people with a business orientation are uniquely equipped to identify social problems, develop solutions and to scale these up. Muhammad Yunus and the non-collateralized loans of the Grameen Bank are held to exemplify this potential. Meanwhile, mass tourism destinations are increasingly found in less developed countries, placing relatively wealthy tourists in close proximity to poor people. One response to this has been a proliferation of social enterprises within the tourism industry. This paper investigates the potentials and limitations of social entrepreneurship to achieve inclusive tourism through an analysis of five established and highly regarded social enterprises in Siem Reap. The enterprises have created worthwhile new opportunities for poor and marginalized people and contributed substantially to revitalizing elements of Cambodian culture. Beyond these significant successes, their capacity to generate broader inclusiveness in either the tourism sector or the Cambodian economy, generally, appears limited. Continued social benefits are, furthermore, contingent on the commercial success of the enterprises, in a sector which is highly competitive and volatile, with even successful, well-run businesses never entirely secure.

摘要

近几十年来, 社会企业从各种传统和环境中涌现出来, 在社会变革中占据着突出的地位。支持者认为, 具有商业导向的人具有独特的能力来识别社会问题, 制定解决方案, 并日益解决这些问题。本文以穆罕默德·尤努斯和格莱珉银行的非抵押贷款为例来说明社会企业的这种潜力。与此同时, 欠发达国家日益发展大众旅游目的地, 这样就把相对富有的游客置于离穷人很近的地方。对此的一种反应是旅游业中的社会企业激增。本文通过分析暹粒设立的五个备受推崇的社会企业来研究社会企业家推动社会变革的潜力和局限性。这些企业为贫穷的和边缘化的人民创造了宝贵的新机会, 为振兴柬埔寨文化作出了重大贡献。除了这些重大成就之外, 他们在旅游业或柬埔寨经济中产生广泛包容性的能力似乎有限。此外, 持续的社会效益取决于社会企业的商业成功, 在一个竞争激烈、波动剧烈的行业, 即使是成功、运作良好的企业也不会完全安全。

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Introduction

In recent decades, social enterprise has been vigorously promoted around the world (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010; Kerlin, 2010). Many proponents see social entrepreneurs as persistent, creative innovators who can address social problems in ways that achieve scale and reach superior to traditional business, state or third sectors (Bornstein & Davis, 2010; Dees, 1998; Drayton & Budinich, 2010). However, there are also concerns that rather than a natural 'partnership' between business and social goals, there are often tensions and trade-offs necessary which can undermine the social value of an enterprise (Alter, 2007).

This article explores the potential of the emerging social enterprise sector to enhance the tourism sector's potential to deliver more inclusive development. Following the achievement of peace in the late 1990s, Siem Reap province in Cambodia has been host to a tourism boom which has transformed the provincial town and been a major driver of national economic growth. Meanwhile, Siem Reap has remained a relatively poor province overall, even by Cambodian standards (Mao, DeLacy, & Grunfeld, 2013; Sharpley & McGrath, 2017). Siem Reap is also host to a concentration of social enterprises. In March 2015, 29 of the 73 social enterprises registered with the umbrella group, Social Enterprise Cambodia, were based in Siem Reap (SEC, 2015). Many of these were newly established, but a small number of them had been trading for several years and some had won global industry awards, and were beginning to achieve scale and stability. The coincidence of an extended, lucrative tourism boom in Siem Reap and significant socio-economic marginalization provide an excellent context in which to explore the potentials of established social enterprises to contribute to inclusiveness in the tourism sector and beyond.

This article, therefore, examines the most established social enterprises in different sectors of Siem Reap's tourism industry, featuring a hotel, a restaurant, a handicrafts company, a performing arts company and a tour company. It particularly focuses on elements of inclusive tourism identified by the enterprises themselves as important to their missions, namely enabling poor and marginalized people to obtain decent work in the tourism sector; enabling self-representation by Cambodians on terms that they find dignified and appropriate; widening access to decision-making in the tourism sector; and re-drawing the tourism map on terms that are beneficial to the newly included people and places (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2017).

Social enterprise as an emerging sector

In recent decades, there has been a surge of enthusiasm for ways in which the private sector generally can contribute to achieving development goals. Businesses have been encouraged to take a proactive role in international development and to become a 'consciously engaged agent of development' (Blowfield, 2012, p. 415). Driven in part by the global financial crisis and the subsequent tightening up of public development budgets, along with the scale of global development and ecological challenges, the private sector has increasingly been viewed as a source of funds and knowhow for social development (Dees, 2008). This shift towards a larger role for business is vigorously contested from a variety of ideological and practical positions (e.g. Edwards, 2008; Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004; Peck, 2013). Specific national factors likewise shaped the emergence of social enterprise: in the United States, the withdrawal of federal funding for voluntary organizations

spurred them to generate their own revenue, in Europe, Italy moved early to create enabling legislation in 1991 for these new hybrids (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010), whilst in the UK, the policies of the Blair government in the UK provided a different impetus by according social enterprises a central role in the restructuring of the welfare state (e.g. Palmås, 2003, 2013; Teasdale, Lyon, & Baldock, 2013).

In addition to these practical, contextual differences, there were also markedly different ideological roots. In broad brush terms, European social movements have had more of an emphasis on governance and accountability to beneficiaries which is traced back to nineteenth-century cooperative movements (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010). In the United States, meanwhile, emphasis has been placed on the role of heroic Schumpeterian entrepreneurs bringing private sector virtues to bear in the struggle for social change, with foundations such as Ashoka, Skoll and Schwab providing training and finance to those seeking to realize this vision (Kerlin, 2006, p. 255).

Arguably, the US entrepreneur-driven model has dominated the practitioner discourse, supported by cases of small enterprises which have scaled up to reach millions of clients, such as Grameen Bank (Dees, 2007), Waste Concern in Bangladesh (Azmat, 2013), and Drishtee and Naandi in India (Desa & Koch, 2014). Elsewhere, the literature cautions that these may be special cases and that social enterprises have neither scaled up nor addressed root causes of poverty any more effectively than other organizations (Sayer, 2005, p. 19). European authors have suggested that scaling may more realistically be achieved through recruiting public support and leveraging action by political authorities rather than solely through growing a successful business (Gawell, 2006; Lyne, 2008; Palmås, 2011).

Authors charting the global spread of social enterprise beyond North America and Europe have likewise called for close attention to specific contexts (Defourny & Kim, 2011; Defourny & Nyssens, 2008), with an analysis of seven different regions suggesting social enterprise development in Southeast Asia 'appears to be in an emerging stage motivated by the innovative efforts of isolated social entrepreneurs who are working without established networks and stable sources of support' (Kerlin, 2010, p. 177).

Given that tourism is an industry which has long been associated with a potential for social and economic development (e.g. Ashley, Roe, & Goodwin, 2001; de Kadt, 1979; Scheyvens, 2011), the literature on social enterprise within tourism is surprisingly sparse. Mdee and Emmott (2008) looked at businesses offering volunteer tourism packages and made a case for certification for such social enterprises; Alegre and Berbegal-Mirabent (2016) looked at 'social innovation' in two businesses that switched from manufacturing to hospitality in Barcelona – also looking to identify success factors. The only published article attempting more general comments on social enterprise in the tourism sector was a study of 11 successful cases (von der Weppen & Cochrane, 2012). That article identified the enterprises as successes on the basis that they had received industry awards for responsible tourism. It categorized them using a typology developed by Alter (2007) and concluded that the 'most likely success factors are strong leadership, clear market orientation and organisational culture, which balances financial with social/environmental aims'. Whilst von der Weppen and Cochrane used a case study method, their findings are presented and discussed in aggregate form, and therefore, some of the usual benefits of case studies in revealing how cause and effect operate in specific contexts are lost. The use of award-winning as the indicator of success also pre-empted discussion of the nature and extent of social impacts and successes.

The current article, therefore, complements the existing literature on social entrepreneurship in tourism by providing a contextualized account of five social enterprises, where the social missions, business challenges and social impacts of each business are discussed in relation to each other. By explicitly discussing the current and envisioned social impacts of the enterprises in terms of inclusive tourism, it also contributes to the emerging literature on the concept of inclusive tourism (see other articles in this Special Issue). By focusing on the way in which a commercial sector is developing social objectives, it also contrasts with the existing literature on social enterprise in Cambodia which focuses on the way in which the NGO sector is seeking to commercialize its operations in order to survive (Khieng, 2014; Khieng & Dahles, 2015) and with the more environmentally oriented literature on eco-tourism (e.g. Neth, 2008)

In order to realize the aim of investigating the potential of social enterprises to deliver inclusive tourism, the following research questions are addressed:

- To what extent do the case study social enterprises contribute to elements of inclusive tourism?
- To what extent can those contributions be attributed to the fact that these initiatives are social enterprises?
- What do the insights about the specific cases of established social enterprises in Siem Reap suggest about the wider possibilities of social enterprise to contribute to inclusive tourism?

First, however, the method for the study is described and its strengths and limitations explained, then findings are presented in the form of descriptions of the five case study enterprises including their stories, their social impact up to December 2016 and their future plans and the challenges they face in implementing those.

Method

In order to get an overview of the Social Enterprises in Siem Reap, I consulted an online database created by the Phnom-Penh-based group Social Enterprise Cambodia who had attempted to survey all social enterprises in Cambodia and had identified a total of 73 of which 29 were in Siem Reap (Social Enterprise Cambodia, 2015). In a scoping visit in late 2015 (when in Cambodia conducting research for a separate project on tourism and rural livelihoods), I interviewed five social entrepreneurs in Siem Reap as well as the head of Social Enterprise Cambodia. On the basis of the publically available documentation and these interviews, I then selected what appeared to be the most well-established and successful social enterprises in five different sectors of the tourism industry, namely handicraft production, tourist performances, hotel, restaurant and tour companies. Four of the five enterprises responded positively to my overtures. The restaurant I contacted did not respond, and therefore, I selected what appeared to be the next most established and successful.

The primary research comprised interviews with the lead entrepreneurs of four out of five of the enterprises (I communicated with the CEO of Artisans Angkor by email instead) and also a self-assessment questionnaire completed by four out of five of the enterprises. See [Table 1](#) for dates of the interviews and questionnaire responses as well as background

Table 1. Five case study social enterprises in Siem Reap's tourism sector.

Name Business type	# Direct beneficiaries	Year story of the SE begins	Year SE formally established	Questionnaire dates (yy/mm/dd)	Interview dates (yy/mm/dd)
Artisans Angkor <i>Handicraft production</i>	1120 employees(750 of whom are artisans)	1992	1998	16/12/02	n/a
PHARE Circus <i>Performing arts</i>	931 enrolled students	1993	2013	16/11/24	15/11/28
Soria Moria <i>Hotel</i>	35 employees	1999	2007	16/12/06	16/11/10 16/11/16 16/12/06
ABOUTAsia <i>Tours Tour company</i>	53,000 pupils in 110 schools	2006	2006	–	15/12/01 16/12/05
Haven <i>Training restaurant</i>	14 apprentices per annum	2008	2011	16/12/01	16/12/02

Source: Author's interview notes and enterprise web-sites.

details on the enterprises. Where there were gaps or anomalies, follow-up questions were posed by email. I interviewed the lead entrepreneurs (two Cambodians and two expatriates) in English and transcribed the audio recordings.

The self-assessment questionnaire was intended to provide descriptive data on the enterprises and consisted of multiple-choice questions in three parts: part 1 on the nature and structure of the enterprise including any dependency on external funding or loans; part 2 on the future vision for the enterprise, especially in relation to its social mission and the possibilities for scaling it up; part 3 on the relevance of the social enterprise to various elements of inclusive tourism. The interviews provided more in-depth information and consisted of four parts: the entrepreneur's personal background and identity; the social enterprise that they run; their general ideas on social enterprises; their specific perspectives on social enterprises in Siem Reap. Informed by the self-assessment questionnaire, the social objectives of the enterprises were categorized according to Scheyvens and Biddulph's 'elements of inclusive tourism' (2017, pp. 6–7), with the four elements covered becoming the categories of analysis. Transcripts were re-read during and on completion of the analysis and also during major revisions of the article.

The research is part of a larger study of social enterprises in Southeast Asia and Scandinavia, which included interviews with the leaders of half a dozen smaller social enterprises in Siem Reap who also provided additional information both about the five case study enterprises and about the context in which they are operating.

The choice to sample four elements gives a better understanding of their overall inclusiveness, but at the cost of more sustained investigation of any one of the elements.

Description of cases

The five cases are presented individually with the story of the enterprise, an account of the social benefits it has delivered from its inception up until the time of writing (December 2016) and a summary of current plans for the enterprise and the key challenges that it faces. These descriptions provide the foundations for the analysis of their contributions to inclusive tourism which follows.

Artisans Angkor

Story of the enterprise

Artisans Angkor is a handicrafts production and retail enterprise which has grown out of a French development assistance project. The project began in 1992 before peace was consolidated but in anticipation of a tourism revival. A vocational training centre funded through grants, the Chantiers-Ecoles de Formation Professionnelle (CEFP), established a programme to train young Cambodians in traditional skills to produce arts and craft skills. During 1998–2001, a European Union project called REPLIC transformed the project from a training programme into a semi-public company which provided employment to trained artisans. The enterprise has been fully self-funding since at least 2008 (Bolster & Brimble, 2008, p. 290), and the workers are formally constituted as an association which owns a 20% share in the business.

Social impacts

Artisans Angkor's principal social benefit is that it now provides employment with competitive wages as well as social and health insurance to 750 artisans distributed across 48 workshops mainly in rural areas of Siem Reap, making it the largest private sector employer in the province. Recruitment is specifically targeted at marginalized rural people, and at least 5% of the workforce is people with disabilities. In addition to salaries and health benefits, Artisans Angkor seeks to cultivate a feeling of pride in its employees in relation to their role in enabling a post-conflict cultural revival and showcasing of traditional Cambodian crafts, including participating in the restoration of the Angkorian temples (Artisans Angkor, 2017).

Future plans and challenges

According to their Chief Executive Officer, Artisans Angkor has four areas where they are seeking to make further improvement: historical and artistic knowledge of staff; increasing staff sense of belonging; promoting the workshops as a cultural destination in order to promote Angkorian traditional arts; becoming the high-end brand leader for local customers and thereby contributing to Khmer cultural heritage (personal communication, Vincent Drouillard, 6 June 2017).

Phare performing social enterprise (PPSE)

Story of the enterprise

The main activity of the Phare Performing Social Enterprise (PPSE) is the Phare Circus which, after the temples, is now reckoned to be Siem Reap's second most popular tourist attraction (Sharpley & McGrath, 2017, p. 95). This funds a social programme of performing and visual arts training which has been growing since its inception in 1993 and has its roots in the refugee camps established on the Thai–Cambodian border in the 1980s. Following their repatriation in 1993 to Battambang province in north-west Cambodia, nine former refugees who had studied fine arts on the border jointly founded an NGO called Phare Ponleu Selpak Association (PPSA). Over the past two decades, this NGO has grown to a scale, where, in 2015, it had 101 employees and a budget of 1,286,169 USD.

In 2013, PPSA established the PPSE with the following three aims:

- (1) Create meaningful employment opportunities for Cambodian artists.
- (2) Create financially sustainable social businesses that provide a reliable income streams for Phare Ponleu Selpak.
- (3) Revitalize the arts sector in Cambodia and promote Cambodian art locally and internationally.

PPSE is a Cambodian Private Limited Company whose ownership shares are as follows: PPSA (71%), a social investor called Grameen Crédit Agricole Microfinance Foundation (15%), and private investors (14%). The NGO has a French chief executive and its senior management is mixed Cambodian and expatriate. The social enterprise, meanwhile, is headed by a Cambodian, Mr Huot Dara, who had worked briefly with Phare as a young volunteer interpreter in 2001 and over a decade later was recruited by them:

They reached out to me in 2012 asking me to help lead a social enterprise in their quest for self-sustainability. Now, I had no idea what social enterprise was. I had to make a search, an internet search. I had to read a lot to really understand what it was all about. I was in the corporate world and I had no idea that this movement, something new, is going on in the world that is quite interesting. ... Now we started the social enterprise, the first performance here, under the rain, under the sky, was in February 2013. (Interview, Huot Dara, 28 November 2015)

The ownership structure, with the NGO owning 71% of the business, was made possible by a change of heart from one of the business's first investors who had intended to loan them 250,000 USD for their big top:

When she came to see us in Siem Reap we were still performing outdoors. After her experience – she saw Eclipse, the show – she was emotional. The next day she had a change of mind, she doesn't give a loan, she gives a donation instead. So the donation went to PHARE Ponleu Selpak the school. Now the school owns an asset, and the school used the asset to contribute to the start-up of the company, valued at 250 000 dollars, and that translates to 71% of the share of the company. (Interview, Huot Dara, 28 November 2015)

In order to secure its long-term future, however, it was decided that PPSE needed its own land, the purchase of which resulted in a debt of over one million USD. At present, then, PPSE's revenues are devoted to paying off the loan for the land. However, the social enterprise still contributed 156,890 USD to the NGO in 2015 derived about equally from two sources. First, 10% of the social enterprise's revenues are paid in royalties to the school, and second, donations are collected from audiences after each performance.

Social impacts to December 2016

According to its 2015 Annual Report, Phare had 931 direct beneficiaries, being students enrolled in its Visual and Applied Arts School, its Performing Arts School and its kindergarten. Additionally, there were 12,300 indirect beneficiaries, who were members of the community who experienced this revived culture by attending performances by Phare students. This is in line with its mission to provide 'a nurturing and creative environment where young people can access quality arts training, education and social support' and vision, which is stated in terms of PPSE's passionate belief 'in the power of the arts as a tool for human development and social change'.

Future plans and challenges

As the head of the social enterprise, Huot Dara sees his mission as being to guarantee the financial security of the NGO by repaying the loans for the permanent site, which he anticipates 'will be a lot of hard work in the next five to ten years' (Interview, 28 November 2015). Another challenge, alongside clearing its debts, is that of taxation. While Dara is proud that the company shoulders its tax-paying responsibilities, and is fully transparent and accountable in its financial affairs, he regrets the absence of a separate category of business registration for social businesses whereby they might receive a lighter tax burden. Currently, Phare pays 10% VAT, 10% performance tax and a 1% minimum profit tax, which, once debts are repaid, will be replaced by a 20% corporate tax on profits.

Soria Moria Hotel

History of the enterprise

Soria Moria is a 38-room boutique hotel managed by its staff who also own 51% of the business. The enterprise was originally established by a Norwegian couple who had arrived in Cambodia during the late 1990s. Kristin was a tourism student who established another hotel in town called Earthwalkers, which was a socially responsible business, specializing in educational tours. Ken who was to become Kristin's partner in establishing Soria Moria was, at that stage, a long-term guest at Earthwalkers as he was both travelling and looking for opportunities to set up social enterprises, or in other ways to give back to society having left his own successful career.

In 2007, having sold Earthwalkers, Kristin established Soria Moria with Ken. This was to be a socially responsible boutique hotel with a 10-year lease on a 38-room property located centrally just east of the Siem Reap river. Many of the key staff, including the current leadership group of Soria Moria, were originally recruited to Earthwalkers as entry-level staff from rural areas.

In 2009, Kristin and Ken decided to return to Europe. They had discussed selling Soria Moria but were worried that potential buyers would not stay loyal to the founding ideas of responsible tourism and social enterprise. They, therefore, decided to hand over ownership and management of the hotel to the staff, and initiated a process to facilitate this. A social investor, Insitor, provided a loan to the business and also advised on the legal form for the staff to register as the owners the business as a limited company. After two years of training and handover Kristin and Ken moved to Norway in 2015 at which point Roen Samnieng and four other staff members took over as the management committee of the hotel, with Samnieng legally responsible. During 2013–2016, an exchange scheme was run between Soria Moria in Siem Reap and a hotel group in Norway, enabling senior management from Soria Moria to gain experience of hotel management in a European context.

Social impacts to December 2016

In accordance with its responsible tourism orientation, Soria Moria has undertaken a wide variety of initiatives and collaborations supporting social and environmental objectives. In the lobby of the hotel, various fair trade and environmentally friendly products are sold on behalf of NGOs or social enterprises. On the wall are brochures which provide guests with information about a range of socially responsible tourism products. Outside the hotel

are a row of White Bicycles, part of a cycle hire initiative set up by Ken and now run by Samnieng, which has channelled funds for sponsoring local students through university; the White Bicycle initiative alone had had financed accommodation and tuition fees enabling 10 Cambodians to obtain university degrees. On Wednesdays, tapas evenings were held as a means to offer opportunities for hospitality trainees to gain work experience in the Soria Moria restaurant.

However, the core social impacts relate to the employees of the hotel. Young rural people without formal training or work experience were trained in a range of functions, were promoted within the hotel to take on management roles, and in many cases were sponsored to either attend vocational training courses or university degree courses.

Finally, by handing over the business to the workforce and enabling them to fulfil the roles of managers and owners, Soria Moria has created a potential template for a shift in power relations in the tourism industry. A Cambodian-owned hotel is nothing unusual in Siem Reap, but a hotel managed by people who grew up in the countryside with no business background, no senior government connections and no family wealth, and a hotel owned by its staff, have represented a radical departure from established ways of doing business.

Future plans and challenges

In late 2016, it became clear that the radical promise of Soria Moria as a model worker-owned hotel in the tourist sector would not be fulfilled. Since the handover to the staff, and for a variety of reasons, the profits of the hotel have declined. Meanwhile, the landlord has been unwilling to fund needed renovation and has also been looking to raise the rent when the current lease expires in 2017. As a result, the personnel have made the decision not to continue the business. They discussed the possibility of continuing to trade in another location, including the possibilities of downsizing and/or changing their ownership structure but have decided against these. They see the decision to cease trading as a temporary rather than permanent cessation of the concept of Soria Moria, although if they were to resume trading, they do not expect to use the worker-owner model:

It is hard to have too many owners, because everyone is an owner now – it is hard, they don't listen, even though they have a manager talking, they have a manager but they want to demand their own civil rights or whatever. (Interview, Ms Sem Sokha, 14 November 2016)

The current challenges for the business, therefore, relate to maximizing profitability and staff retention during the final year of trading as well as ensuring that all staff are able to transfer to good alternative employments.¹

ABOUTAsia tours

Story of the enterprise

ABOUTAsia Tours is a tour company founded in 2006 with the specific aim of funding educational programmes in Siem Reap province. As such, in this study, it shares with the other social enterprises a fundamental motivation and orientation towards a social mission, but differs from the others in the degree to which the social mission and business mission are kept separate in the day-to-day running of the enterprise and even, to some degree, in the marketing.

Andy Booth, the founder of ABOUTAsia, traces his motivations to establish the company back to his rural childhood where educational opportunities at school set him on a path to Oxford University and then a successful career in Options trading. The target market for the business is high end tourists:

Explore thriving jungles with world-class naturalists, dine at our private countryside villa, sip sunset drinks on ancient Angkorian waterways and be guided by leading academics to the temples with our range of exclusive experiences. (ABOUTAsia tours website)

After 10 years, ABOUTAsia is a successful and growing business which has won multiple awards for its tours. Its educational programmes provide support to state schools to enable them to deliver the officially mandated state curriculum. This includes providing school materials, and some construction and maintenance services to, and also the provision of English teachers and teaching materials for 50 English classes per day (ABOUTAsia schools homepage). In addition to the main activities, ABOUTAsia Schools are also starting to build and fund community learning centres which can be hubs for extracurricular activities for children as well as for adult education activities.

Social impacts to December 2016

The ABOUTAsia school programme provides material support to 110 schools, with the assistance varying dependent on regular assessments of the schools' needs. As at late 2016, ABOUTAsia was employing 20 teachers to give approximately 50 English language lessons per day in schools supported by the programme. ABOUTAsia has opened two community learning centres which, unlike its previous activities, are focused on complementing the state curriculum rather than gap filling within it. For children, they include a focus on art and sports, and they are also founded with the ambition of supporting adult education.

Future plans and challenges

While ABOUTAsia tour company continues to be a successful brand, attracting customers and winning awards, Andy Booth is unequivocal in saying that the main challenges relate to generating substantial and sustainable profits. So whilst the schools programme is the *raison d'être* for the social enterprise, 95% of his time is focused on the business side:

We've just been renamed again as Condé Nast top travel specialists for the country, we've just been taken on by Wendy Perrin's WOW List, and things like that, which basically from the business side says this company is at the leading edge of travel. But it doesn't mean it makes money. (Interview with Andy Booth 5 December 2016)

In this respect, he points to the challenges of a commercial market which is very competitive, especially amongst wholesale travel agents who even at the luxury end of the market are concerned to minimize costs and (unlike the end customer) tend not to be interested in whether or not a tour company generates social benefits.

Haven, training restaurant

The story of the enterprise

During 2008, the co-founders of Haven, Sara and Paul Wallimann, spent seven months working in a Cambodian orphanage where they taught English to 12–16 year olds. It

became clear to them during this time that the orphanage directors did not have a clear idea of what would happen to the residents of the orphanage once they left. Sara and Paul were familiar with the strong tradition of apprenticeships in Switzerland and inspired by this tradition they decided to establish a social enterprise which would provide apprenticeships to young adults like the graduates of the orphanage where they had worked. In order to secure the capital for this, when they returned home from their travels, they formed an association, largely from their own personal networks, with 50 members.

The association, called Dragonfly, had membership fees, which covered the administrative costs of the association, and donations, which contributed to a project fund. One of the rules of the association was that only projects that could become self-sustainable after a certain time were to be supported. Each project is, therefore, required to replenish the project fund will then be used as start-up money for further projects in Cambodia.

Sara and Paul thus returned to Cambodia in April 2011 with a budget of 100,000 USD to finance the opening of the Haven restaurant and the first two years' running costs following its opening in December 2011. Neither Sara nor Paul had ambitions to open a restaurant but they each had some relevant skills. Paul had served an apprenticeship as a baker and had worked as a food hygiene inspector and teacher, and had also worked in marketing. Sara had 15 years of experience in public relations and marketing. Another member of the association, Steffi, was an accountant who came out to help two months before the restaurant opened and remained as a third Managing Partner alongside the two co-founders.

Two key recruitments were a chef and a 'house mother'. The chef had a grandmother who had worked as a cook in an orphanage and he liked the idea of doing similar work. The house mother was to provide a suitably homely environment in the house that was rented for the apprentices. She was a woman who had been working long hours in a hotel and saw little of her own three children. Haven afforded her an improved salary and allowed her children to live with her, which also contributed to the family environment they sought to cultivate in the trainees' house and in the restaurant. At the back of the restaurant is a classroom so that the trainees have theoretical lessons to complement their work experience.

The Managing Partners did not take any salary from the restaurant until it had started to break even. At their first property, they had a five-year lease, but the landlord then demanded a 400% increase in the rent, which led them to establish themselves in a new, larger property outside the centre of Siem Reap. Shortly after moving into their new site, the property adjacent to them became available. In order to avoid having a potentially noisy, disruptive neighbour (a quad bike tour company had bid for the land), they decided to purchase that land and to invest in a bakery and a herb garden on it.

The restaurant business has been very successful with the restaurant fully booked in advance during the high season, and therefore even with the unexpected acquisition of an extra business they are on course to become self-sufficient and to replenish the Dragonfly project fund.

Social impacts to December 2016

We are not here to change Cambodia, we are not here to save Cambodia. But we can improve, for a certain amount of young adults, their future. And that is what we are doing. (Interview with Paul Wallimann, 2 December 2016)

At present, Haven employs 14 apprentices, who have graduated from local orphanages or similar institutions, for 16 months each, as well as 18 regular staff (some of whom are ex-trainees). The 14 apprentices constitute two shifts. They have been very successful in going on to well-paid jobs in high-end hotels and restaurants in Siem Reap.

The restaurant also seeks to source food and other materials from organizations and projects which produce in environmentally and socially beneficial ways.

Future plans and challenges

Haven as a business is very successful with Paul confident that its revenues can cover its costs, including the new bakery, and return the capital to the association. Furthermore, the association provides Haven with a degree of security which means that it can withstand unexpected shocks, much better than if it were reliant on commercial sources of financing. In these circumstances, one might expect the management team at Haven to feel extremely confident about the future. To a large extent they do, however, they do also feel a sense of insecurity, which relates to the general vulnerability of the tourism industry to disease and security-related scares, and is heightened by the awareness of the damage done to the tourism industry in Thailand as a result of civil unrest in recent years.

Analysis – established social enterprises and elements of inclusive tourism

In the analysis, four elements of inclusive tourism are selected from Scheyvens and Biddulph's (2017) menu of seven, on the basis that these best match the social objectives of identified by the lead entrepreneurs of the five case study enterprises: (1) overcoming barriers to disadvantaged groups to access tourism as producers; (2) facilitating self-representation by those who are marginalized or oppressed, so their stories can be told and their culture represented in ways that are meaningful to them; (3) widening the range of people who contribute to decision-making about the development of tourism; (4) changing the tourism map to involve new people and places.

Widening access to the production of tourism – ethical and beneficial?

One element of inclusive tourism is the engagement of relatively marginalized people in the production of tourism. Scheyvens and Biddulph demand attention to both who is included, and the terms of that inclusion. Three of the social enterprises were oriented towards engaging relatively marginalized people, though on different scales, at various levels and with different groups in mind. Artisans Angkor has created employment opportunities for 750 rural people, and also includes a 5% quota of positions for people with disabilities. Haven has an apprentice scheme which at any given time provides opportunities for 14 apprentices to enable them to make the transition from institutionalized life in orphanages to becoming regular members of the workforce. Soria Moria, meanwhile, has recruited staff from rural areas, trained them in hotel work and sponsored some of them through undergraduate and graduate studies.

Artisans Angkor is the largest of these social enterprises, employing 1120 people, including 750 artisans; this compares with the calculation of the Department of Tourism that 6400 people are employed in the tourism handicrafts value chain in Siem Reap (Mao

et al., 2013, p. 123). Over time, as the tourism market has expanded, so has the amount of handicrafts that are produced overseas; Schultz (2002) noted this emerging trend in the late 1990s, whilst by 2013, an estimated 80% of souvenirs sold in Siem Reap were international imports (Mao et al., 2013, p. 124). As such, Artisans Angkor is enabling poor people who would not have the capital, access to raw materials or the marketing capacity to establish themselves and compete with these cheap imports to find a secure foothold as tourism producers. Measured only in salary, artisans working for Artisans Angkor do not appear to be much better off than other artisans working in Siem Reap. Workers interviewed in their workshop were earning about 5 USD per day (tied to their productivity) which matches the 150 USD per month which Mao et al. (2013, p. 123) found to be the average monthly wage for an experienced sculptor in Siem Reap. However, in addition, they were provided with health insurance, social insurance, and security and stability of employment, which are not readily available in the small private workshops in and around Siem Reap. Artisans Angkor is thus creating a large quantity of jobs that would not otherwise have been available to rural people in Siem Reap, and these are jobs with relatively favourable terms and conditions.

The core contributions of Haven and Soria Moria are perhaps more transformational for individuals, but are at a smaller scale. Ms Sem Sokha now a senior manager at Soria Moria who has spent six months on a work exchange in a hotel in Norway recalls her first interview for a cleaning job which was in Khmer because she could not speak English. She speaks of her pride now at the fact that she is a woman but can support her parents, especially since her father lost his sight, and talks of her great uncle's awe at her advancement.

What does your daughter eat? Because she is so smart. Why is she so different?" And then my mum says "We eat prahok, she eats prahok" and he would say "But she's so different compared to people in the village" and when I have been to Norway he starts to say to my mother, "Your daughter is strange, where does it come from?" And then they say to me that I have a different brain you know. And I say no, I have the same. My mum is laughing all the time. (Interview Ms Sem Sokha 14 November 2016)

Comparable transformations are affected by Haven, as entry-level kitchen workers are able to obtain work in the best paid hotels and restaurants in the city at the end of their 15-month apprenticeships.

Supporting self-representation

The emphasis within inclusive tourism on 'self-representation in ways which people find dignified and appropriate' (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2017) is in contrast to forms of tourism where tour operators and other tourism actors shape the representation of host communities and the interaction (or lack of interaction) with local people in ways that are demeaning. While extreme forms of exploitative representation are easy to diagnose, e.g. in forms of slum or poverty tourism which proceed without the consent of residents (Frenzel & Koens, 2012), its absence is much more difficult to identify with confidence. Tourism, like any product, relies on a coincidence of supply and demand. Notions of 'traditional hospitality' may be used to camouflage underlying inequalities of wealth and power, and it may be in the interests of all actors, hosts and guests, to maintain such notions. As MacCannell (2008) has argued, wherever relations are commoditized, there will always, inescapably, be an element of staging involved.

In such a context, firm judgements about what might be considered ‘self-representation’ in the context of cultural preservation and artistic production and performance are difficult. In the case of the Phare circus, there is a degree of artistic freedom for the performers who are involved in designing their own repertoire of shows. These, furthermore, involve improvising on contemporary issues and technology and are therefore not simply a slavish reproduction of past artistic practices. More fundamentally, the performers at Phare are the adult graduates of the performing arts schools, and therefore have a degree of choice and self-determination quite different from those at competing tourist performances, such as those notoriously staged in Cambodian orphanages (Guiney & Mostafanezhad, 2015; Reas, 2013).

Artisans Angkor's workshops, like Phare circus performances, combine rehabilitation of cultural traditions with the commodification of art for the tourist market. While the artisans are clearly benefiting from decent work, that work is much less clearly an instance of self-expression. For the most part, what the artisans are doing is faithfully copying the templates that their teachers in the workshops provide for them:

At the Banteay Srei Rachana and Artisans d'Angkor workshops subject choice is primarily market driven, based on specific commissions and is largely drawn from pre-Angkorian and Angkorian masterpieces. Designs are finalized on a computer using image manipulation software which is adjusted according to the size of the sandstone block to be carved upon. (Polkinghorne, 2009, p. 11)

The French humanitarian assistance to rehabilitate Khmer culture after the ravages of genocide and war during the 1970s and 1980s was a specific post-conflict intervention, which also has echoes of French colonial attempts to preserve Cambodian art and crafts in the face of the modern influences (Edwards, 2007, pp. 148–158). The ironies inherent in colonial cultural preservation projects endure; the buyers for these products which are marketed as ‘essentially Cambodian’ are largely western, with national and regional tourists far less likely to buy them (Winter, 2014, p. 305).

However, notwithstanding the presence of a Western aesthetic and a Western market to frame these cultural representations, the activities of Artisans Angkor do enable the artisans to connect with elements of their own culture that they would recognize from both the walls of the Angkorian temples, and from their everyday lives. Meanwhile, commissions that Artisans Angkor have undertaken include restoration of sculptures at the Angkor Wat temples and pieces for the Royal Palace; the enterprise is thus engaged in work that is symbolically connected with the representation of the nation. What this means for individual artisans and whether they find this a dignified and appropriate form of self-expression would require more in-depth research than was possible in this context.

Widening participation in decision-making

Both Soria Moria, where workers own 51% of the business, and Artisans Angkor, where an employee share scheme gives the workers a 20% share in the business, represent schemes to strengthen the position of workers within the businesses where they are employed. The Artisans Angkor scheme is focused on benefit sharing and corporate solidarity, whereas in the case of Soria Moria, there has been an explicit attempt to challenge existing power relations, enabling the hotel to function as a worker cooperative in the short term, but also with the intention of proving this as a model which might be replicated elsewhere in

Siem Reap and beyond. By late 2016, however, these ambitions for Soria Moria had been set aside and plans were being made to cease trading. Nevertheless, for the five years from the departure of the Norwegian entrepreneurs in 2011, the workers, none of whom had a university education or a background in business before they were recruited by Soria Moria, successfully ran a 38-room boutique hotel in central Siem Reap. As such, the initiative may serve as an inspiration for similar initiatives, and as a source of lessons learned.

It would require a more in-depth case study to draw authoritative lessons from the Soria Moria experiment with worker ownership. However, the interview findings suggest some tentative observations. One is that the model of worker-ownership and management was not the original plan. It was inspired by the wish (shared by both the Norwegian entrepreneurs and the senior Cambodian management) to preserve the responsible tourism ethos of the hotel when the founders left. If conceived as a worker cooperative from the beginning, it may have had stronger foundations. Second, and relatedly, the two managers interviewed for this research were clearly high-achieving and highly motivated individuals. However, when asked about their future ambitions, one wanted to lead an NGO, and the other to get a senior management role in one of the large international hotels in Siem Reap. A hotel run as a social enterprise effectively requires a hotel manager, an NGO manager and a business manager. Soria Moria's leadership arguably contained only two of these three and as such perhaps illustrates the scale of the management challenge of establishing such an undertaking sustainably. Finally, a significant factor rendering the hotel unviable was the steeply rising rent. Social investors wishing to establish viable hotel co-operatives may need to seriously consider investing not only in the people but also in the property.

Re-drawing the tourism map in inclusive ways

Some of the key inclusive tourism initiatives in developed countries have involved deliberate attempts to redraw the tourism map, specifically taking tourists away from town centres and the sites that destination marketers usually place in the fore, and instead finding opportunities for interaction and enjoyment in the less celebrated areas of cities and regions. In the context of a tourism boom town such as Siem Reap where tourism is dominant and expanding, this search for new attractions and complementary activities is part of the expected pattern of development and is thus not, in itself, necessarily to be interpreted as inclusive. None of the case study enterprises was primarily focused on opening up new areas for tourism activities, though some influence in that direction come from ABOUTAsia tours establishing a lodge in a rural village, and also conducting research and devising new routes so that its clients can explore the temples without the presence of other tourists (Dattani, 2013), and through Phare circus providing a shop window for its schools in Battambang and therefore possibly awaking more tourist interest in that province.

The Siem Reap day-time tourism map is dominated by the temple complex, which is mainly concentrated in two districts immediately north of the provincial town. Many hotels and tour companies offer 'village tours' and 'rural experiences,' which potentially widen tourism benefits. However, in practice, these are often in peri-urban areas of the provincial town, or very close to the main temple routes. In this context, the social

enterprises have geographically expanded the *benefits* of tourism, especially the large-scale, more dispersed impacts relating to the 48 rural workshops established by Artisans Angkor and the 110 schools assisted by ABOUTAsia tours.

Nevertheless, these activities and benefits are still concentrated in the districts within Siem Reap province that are closest to the temples. These are substantial contributions to extending the tourism's reach and making it more inclusive. However, these are not the scale-able innovations which some social enterprise proponents have hoped for (Dees, 2007, p. 26); they do not promise to yield benefits for the half a dozen districts in Siem Reap that are remote from the temples, or the 23 provinces in Cambodia that are not hosts to the tourism boom.

Concluding discussion

By viewing established social enterprises in Siem Reap through an inclusive tourism lens – asking who is included, on what terms and with what significance (Scheyvens & Biddulph, this issue), these five cases in Siem Reap provide examples of how social enterprises in the tourism sector can be socially inclusive and, to some degree, empowering. They show marginalized people becoming established producers in the tourism sector, whether this is the 750 artisans employed by Artisans Angkor or the 35 people with rural backgrounds employed at Soria Moria. In the short term, employees experience terms and conditions which compare favourably with those elsewhere, inside and outside the tourism sector. In the long term, they are able to develop career paths, as evidenced by the graduates of the Haven apprentice programme gaining employment in high-end restaurants and hotels through Siem Reap and the graduates of the Phare performing arts school providing artistic direction to the Phare circus which is now a leading attraction in Siem Reap. Meanwhile, benefits of tourism have been extended beyond the tourism sector, as, for example, with the 50 daily English language classes sponsored by ABOUTAsia and the 110 state schools receiving equipment from them. As earlier research in Siem Reap has shown, opportunities for individuals from one family or village can set up path dependencies which positively influence the opportunities of relatives and neighbours for years and even generations (Biddulph, 2015).

The ways in which these enterprises have contributed to inclusive tourism are quite different to the trajectories suggested by the more Schumpeterian strands of the social enterprise literature. They are not characterized by an entrepreneur who has (like Mohamed Yunus with Grameen) identified a social problem, developed an innovative solution and then scaled it up (c.f. Dees, 2007, p. 26). They are, rather, conventional tourism businesses (a tour company, a hotel, a restaurant, a souvenir production and retail company, and a performing arts company) which have integrated a social mission into their business model in different ways. The two largest, and arguably most established, of the five cases in this study, Phare and Artisans Angkor, have both received a huge subsidy in the form of substantial, long-term aid projects dating back to the 1980s and 1990s. Their strong market positions are largely attributable to decades of human resource development and product development delivered through humanitarian assistance, before the decision to commercialize. While this partly intersects with the commercialization of the NGO sector documented by Khieng and Dahles (2015, p. 237), there are important distinctions. First, the successful tourism social enterprises in this study, including those that

were previously aid dependent, employ experienced private sector managers at senior levels in their organizations. Second, their customers are tourists and not their beneficiaries, and therefore, the harmonizing of commercial success and social accountability that Khieng and Dahles celebrate in commercializing NGOs is not part of the narratives of success in this study.

The three businesses which do more closely resemble the entrepreneur-centred model are rooted in the experiences of foreign travellers in the 2000s who saw opportunities to address social needs. In this respect, Haven, which (in the European tradition of co-operatives and governance-orientation) is financed through an association of 50 sympathetic supporters in Switzerland, has a degree of security not afforded to those at Soria Moria and ABOUTAsia. This might be interpreted as a cautionary note regarding the potential of entrepreneur-driven owner-operated social enterprises in tourism boom towns. What seems realistic in the early stages of a tourism boom may quickly become unrealistic as margins tighten and competition intensifies. While ABOUTAsia's enduring success demonstrates that social enterprises without aid subsidies and social investors are possible, the support that the other businesses have received in order to become established commercially should not be overlooked when the potential of social enterprise in the tourism sector is evaluated. This relates to two further cautionary notes which may be drawn from this study in relation to, first, regulatory environments and, second, the contingency of social benefits on business results.

The social enterprise literature stresses the importance of a 'supportive infrastructure' (Dees, 2007, p. 29; Kerlin, 2010, p. 177; Khieng & Dahles, 2015), but in Cambodia, the only options are to register as an NGO or, as in these five cases, a fully-fledged business with no tax benefits or concessions to incentivize the social orientation of the businesses. Furthermore, a major challenge that most social entrepreneurs in Siem Reap reported was the inconsistency with which tax regulations were implemented. While it is possible to advocate for a more favourable and more consistently implemented regulatory environment (and there are moves afoot in this direction with the Ministry of Commerce in Phnom Penh), it is also necessary to draw a more sober conclusion. It is in the nature of a developing country that it is not 'Denmark' but 'Djibouti' (Pritchett & Woolcock, 2004) and therefore likely to be plagued by poorly functioning and unpredictable institutions, a situation which the tourism sector is unlikely to be immune from. A social enterprise which seeks to publish honest accounts and pay taxes in full will struggle to survive in direct competition with businesses which do not feel obliged to play by the same rules and which make informal payments in order to avoid their obligations.

As a number of the entrepreneurs in this study stressed, tourism is a highly volatile and vulnerable sector. The social benefits of these enterprises are contingent on the success of the businesses, which are in turn contingent on the overall success of the sector. The social enterprises in this study have demonstrated a variety of ways to make tourism more inclusive. Their potential to provide social security that can withstand the ups and downs of business cycles is, however, more limited. This point is often overlooked by social enterprise proponents when they compare social enterprises favourably with state institutions and government programmes (Dees, 2007). At the time of writing, notwithstanding their substantial social contributions, there is nothing to suggest that these enterprises can either fundamentally transform the tourism sector, or that their business models can radically change social security and inclusion in wider society beyond the tourism sector.

Note

1. While this article was under review, I learned that Soria Moria would continue trading at new premises with new ownership (so no longer an owner cooperative model) but retaining the responsible tourism orientation and the commitment to support local social enterprises and NGOs (personal communication, Mr Rouen Samnieng, 29 September 2017).

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