

If the book has any weakness, it could be that Tyner's proposal on how to address the unequal exposure of social groups is more of a general call for social change where nuanced inquiries into the processes that generate such social inequalities would have effectively translated his ideas to context-specific examples. Yet this does not in any way diminish this remarkably well researched and skilfully written work that is a must-read for graduate students and academics in the social sciences, human rights advocates, as well as policy and decision-makers in government.

REVIEWER

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BOOK

Archipelago Tourism: Policies and Practices

Edited by Godfrey Baldacchino

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Island-hopping in tourism

Archipelago Tourism is a welcome addition to the Ashgate's series *New Directions in Tourism Analysis*. Like other volumes in the collection, it aims at filling a gap in tourism scholarship by proposing avenues for theorization while departing from the fields of hospitality management and business in tourism that have been emphasized in much of the literature up to this point. To support this effort, respected island specialist Godfrey Baldacchino gathers a group of interdisciplinary researchers and practitioners to take readers "around the world" in order to better understand island tourism development. It is not simply islands that are the focus of this book, however, but rather islands as they exist in relation to each other as parts of clusters of islands. Recognizing that "most islands are actually archipelagos" (13), this book aims at broadening the definition of what constitutes an archipelago, from a strictly geological classification to a socio-spatial entity facing specific challenges and distinct prospects for development. In effect, it not only expands the analytical reach of archipelagos, but also rescales the very notion of island.

The volume is organized like an oceanic map, with a separate section devoted to major bodies of water on the planet: the Mediterranean, the Atlantic, the Pacific, and the Indian Ocean. Collectively, the chapters delve into archipelagic case studies by addressing island logistics, place-branding, and marketing for

tourism across 13 different archipelagos. Altogether, the cases explore island tourism as an inquiry distinct from merely “tourism to and on islands”, and survey various factors affecting tourists’ decision-making in traveling from one island destination to another in the course of the same voyage. The volume also teases out the ways in which island-hopping may be encouraged, enabled, or disincentivized by local development actors and policy-makers pursuing particular agendas. The challenge for tourism practitioners is to make visitors envisage different islands in continuity within the archipelagos of which they are part, rather than as separate, unique, and final destinations. Hence, the “archipelago twist” requires changing tourists’ attitude through efficient place-branding and improved accessibility.

The archipelagos “visited” in the book offer different geographies, sceneries, colonial histories, and socio-political settings. Beyond their divergences, what is striking is what they share. Several central themes cross over the various case studies. First, the question of boundary appears crucial in deciphering the archipelagic context in all chapters. Second, throughout the book, islands are first and foremost portrayed as relational spaces where connectivity transcends separation and isolation. Third, this relationality leads to the challenge and paradox of exceptionalization in a collective context. At the same time as an individual island might seek to differentiate itself as a unique geographical and cultural entity, tourism development agendas may aim at valorizing the whole archipelago as an attractive “region”.

Islands fascinate people in part because of their finiteness. In reminding readers that “islands are easily defined but less easy to grasp, to encapsulate, to understand” (29), however, the book renders the notion of boundaries in island contexts more complex than the simple frontier between land and water. The “island lure” draws voyagers based on the promise of rupture from everything mundane in their lives. They perceive islands as places that are not only physically and meteorologically separate, but also culturally different, and unique in their terroir. Thus, the psychological boundary is important in predicting and influencing behaviors and destination choices of visitors. Where does an island stop in a tourism analysis? The answer calls for multi-layer investigations. The concept of territorial cohesion in the European Union is usefully invoked in relevant cases to understand spatial continuity between and across islands. Such policy in effect seeks to do away with boundaries in their strictest sense to disenclave territories, whether they are islands or not. As the book demonstrates, boundaries in archipelagos are further complicated when islands within the same cluster are spread across different nation-states, or are located far from each other or from the points of departure of tourists. In the end, archipelagic islands are depicted as in-between spaces in which interconnected hierarchies lead to

multi-scaled and flexible peripherality due to uneven power relationships, populations, size, or wealth distribution.

Going against the insularity discourse, the book highlights archipelagos as relational spaces instead. The various case studies emphasize how islands are (or ought to be) connected within archipelagos, rather than isolated. Island relationalities are analyzed at multiple scales in terms of inter-island linkages (e.g., in Hawaii), but also of intra-island relationships (e.g., between a rural inland and coastal areas in the Sardinian case study). Island-to-island connectivity and intra-archipelago dynamics are described as centrifugal and often organized around core-periphery relations dominated by “main islands” or “archipelago internal cores”. These are often privileged in accessibility and hospitality infrastructure development decisions. Along with distance, regional imbalances in resources and status constitute obstacles to connectivity and influence touristic opportunities. Furthermore, “double insularity” may emerge in a multipart interplay of hierarchies and scales, while “nested peripheries” often characterize the relation between islands and the main land or continent where the nation-state on which they depend may be situated, which can be at a far distance, as in the case of La Réunion and France. The book succeeds in highlighting the many factors affecting inter- and intra-island relationships and whether those are collaborative or competitive. Finally, the relationship between tourists and residents is analyzed in terms of place-making, competition in land use (“space wars”), social transformation, socio-economic sustainability, and levels of local consultation in tourism development projects.

The edited volume is a call for archipelagic spaces to “effectively acknowledge and incorporate this geo-physical condition into their branding initiatives, tourism marketing plans, and tourism infrastructure blueprints” (13) as well as to capitalize on the fact that “archipelagos are more than the sum of their parts” (246). Archipelagos are presented as dynamic and fluid spaces where transport and mobility is key to the transformation of relational spaces that come to function as “regions”. To incite tourists to island-hop, however, the region must offer differentiated destinations within itself. This is the paradox of archipelagic imagination and archipelagic tourism development with which islands must contend to assert themselves as competitive destinations in the region. While it is shown that efforts are made to emphasize islands in relation to others within their archipelago, several chapters focus on the counterbalancing need of promoting each island as its own brand, based on a variety of local factors. Destination-makers controlling visitor flows are numerous, from cruise companies to local (and not so local) governments. Competitive destinations are those that are made accessible and which tourists perceive as unique and worth the extra investment of time and money. Archipelagic island-branding and inter-island

travel rests on “diversity management” and the fostering of destination plurality. Successful marketing strategies can at the same time consolidate the brand (the archipelago) and differentiate the products (the individual islands) through the development of island identity or the re-invention of local island heritage.

The book gives an excellent overview of tourism in archipelagic contexts across various parts of the world, making useful rapprochements as well as drawing on differences to explain development challenges in island spaces. As the chapters collectively address many interconnected facets of island development that go beyond tourism, the edited volume will be of great interest to “islophiliacs” in a variety of disciplines. While illustrating the difficulty of theorizing such diverse milieus, it succeeds in redefining archipelagos as regions within which regional disparities and inter- and intra-island inequalities are questioned. By advocating action in the archipelagic context, the book constitutes an important engagement for territories in the periphery and ultra-periphery, and questions the scale of analysis better suited to understanding island development.

Where the book may be less convincing is that it is not evident why its conclusions should specifically pertain to islands in archipelagic contexts. Rather than approaching the behavior of tourists as island-hopping, could it be that this is basically about “place-hopping” in tourism, whether island-to-island, city-to-city, site-to-site? Moreover, how would tourists who island-hop over time fit in this theorization? Could not diachronic island-hopping (i.e., return travel to the archipelago but to a different island) also constitute “archipelago tourism” and reflect successful place-marketing? These questions, instead of weakening the impact of the book, *au contraire* show that the archipelagic “patchwork” approach can be more generally applied to other place-branding models that rely on relationality and the construction of place networks for success. Thus, in seeking answers to the specificity of tourism in the archipelagic context, this collection of essays also contributes responses for tourism inter-place mobility outside of island environments.

REVIEWER

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