

Book review

Tourism and Religion: Issues and Implications

**Edited by Butler Richard and
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The book examines the number of issues arising from and beyond the interaction between tourism and religion from both historical and contemporary perspectives in the present-day context. The volume contains three parts: Part I “Faiths and Tourism” represents the issues stemming from tourism–religion performance; Part II “Issues and Problems” stresses the conflicts arising between tourism and religion; and Part 3 “Secular Tourism in Sacred Places” presents the hybrid nature of many religious sites.

The tourist-centric book covers two main points: the interactive relationship of tourism and religion in terms of confrontation, adaptation and benefits, and religious destination management issues. The volume presents a comprehensive view on the current form of religious tourism as it considers all major faiths and a full continuum of tourism from pilgrimage, religious tourism and secular tourism within religious spaces to address various issues and conflicts such as politics, culture, geography, commercialization, philosophy, management challenges and so on. The strength of the book is the issues whilst the limitation lies in the implications. Issues are specific to each case (chapter) but implications are not always concluded for each case but in the concluding chapter. However, these implications seem to be unapplicable to all religious sites. The management challenges are not highlighted in the book.

The title of the book *Religion and Tourism: Issues and Implications* suggests a controversial interactive connection between two huge domains of religion and tourism. The relationship between religion and tourism is not necessarily reflected in forms of religious tourism. However, religious tourism is understood to be the manifestation of the

connection of tourism and religion. Besides, in the book the authors consider many other forms of tourism as subforms of religious tourism such as dark tourism, conventional tourism, spiritual tourism and secular tourism. However, multifacets of religious tourism are lively reflected in the volume.

The contribution of the book is to bring together various problems of different religious beliefs in different tourism forms in different destinations (different religious sites) at different times in a single volume. These reflect different impacts of tourism on religion/religious sites and different respond/implications of religion/religious sites on tourists in return. The issues and problems addressed in the volume are diversified and typical. In addition, authors in various paradigms and approaches from various perspectives make the collection of writing interesting and topical.

The book provides a comprehensive insight into the religion–tourism relationship in the present context, so the readers can see how tourism and religion interact from the past and present perspectives. Understanding the past and the present of religion–tourism interactions might suggest a future connection between the two. Moreover, the evolution of the relationship of tourism and religion is presented in the book via implied “turning points” that mark the development of an original concept (i.e. hospitality), the recovery of a term (i.e. mosque tourism), the count of other tourism forms into religious tourism or the reaction of destinations to tourists. These all set a foundation for the further research of the futures of the tourism–religion relation. Besides, the authors propose implications for the future practices of tourism in connection with religion. These implications target on tourism policy.

This book is a must-read for academics, practitioners and those who are interested in tourism, religion, religion tourism, the futures and relevant issues.

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