

Heritage and Tourism: Place, Encounter, Engagement, edited by Russell Staiff, Robyn Bushell and Steve Watson, Routledge, Abingdon, 2013, 302pp £80, ISBN 978-0-415-53264-8

Despite its deceptively straightforward title, *Heritage and Tourism* is an ambitious attempt to open up new perspectives on the relationship between people and heritage places. In particular, it conceptualises this relationship as a dialogue or conversation, and an act of communication in which visitors (tourists) play a central role. In a sophisticated opening chapter the editors make clear their discomfort with well-worn terms such as ‘heritage’ and ‘tourism’ and propose instead to focus on visiting places that are deemed to be special for various reasons. Such visits are considered as complex and meaningful moments of encounter and engagement. These moments are both contingent on broader representational practices but are also negotiated in more non-representational and performative ways. Heritage and tourism is, then, a constellation of people, places, representations, imaginaries and performances. It is these moments – in particular ‘what happens’ during the visit to a heritage site – that form the overarching focus of this volume.

Part I is entitled ‘The intimacy of encounters’. Denis Byrne discusses how tourists might connect with a form of heritage (a period of mass repression in Bali in the 1960s) that has left few physical traces. He focuses on the role of the imagination in establishing a dialogue between tourists and a particular past, and explores the possibilities for emotional responses (including empathy) to that past. Fiona Cameron and Sarah Mengler present a theoretically complex reconceptualization of museum objects. They propose that objects can be considered as just one element within broader assemblages of humans and non-humans that are continually being reconfigured and renegotiated. This, in turn, leads to the concept of the museum as a ‘liquid institution’ where interpretation is characterised by a plurality of opinions and expertises, and where the meaning of the institution is mobile and emergent.

The second section focuses on the role of representation. Emma Waterton examines the role of brochures in the construction of heritage in England arguing that the focus on monumental, grand and aesthetically pleasing buildings is part of the ‘work’ of the authorised heritage discourse. However, this practice also has the potential to exclude as much as include, and Waterton examines the affective and emotional dimensions of feeling alienated from official constructions of heritage. Russell Staiff argues that cinema is one of the most significant ways of ‘encountering’ the past in contemporary societies. In particular he considers how cinematic representations of Roman life shape the prior knowledge and expectations of visitors to Roman heritage sites. Thus, the visit is a dialogue between what visitors bring with them, which entangles with the experience of the material remains which they encounter. In this way there is considerable scope for visitors to produce their own interpretations independently of ‘authorised’ messages. Next, Steve Watson considers the representational practices surrounding the ‘rural-historic’ in England. This is a myth which continues to play an important role in the identity politics of nationhood but it is also frequently mobilised for - and through - tourism, and Watson examines the appropriation of country churches within place marketing strategies by local authorities.

Part III is entitled ‘Tourism and performance at heritage places’. Helaine Silverman focuses on Inti Raymi, the staged revival of an Inca rite which takes place in Cuzco, Peru. The festival is both a professionally choreographed performance in its own right but it is also a performance of national identity, intended for both domestic and external audiences. Nevertheless, the meanings of the festival are understood and negotiated in different ways by different audiences. Andrea Witcomb considers the tourist encounter with the abject (horror, depravity or terror) and she interrogates the practice of offering visitors ‘immersive experiences’ (which attempt to place the visitor in the position of the victim or perpetrator). Her concern is that although such experiences can generate an emotional response among visitors, they often function only at the level of entertainment.

Part IV is titled ‘Heritage, tradition, tourism and the politics of change’. Tim Winter critiques universalist European conceptions of what constitutes heritage and how it should be managed, and argues that such models do not necessarily transfer to other contexts. With reference to Asia he

demonstrates how European interpretations of a particular site (Angkor in Cambodia) may diverge considerably from local understandings of the place and its history. Similarly, European models of how heritage places should be managed and presented are often discordant with local practices and conceptions of heritage. Juan Francisco Salazar and Robyn Bushall consider the heritage of Indigenous peoples in Chile. While tourism is often promoted as offering new opportunities for Indigenous communities it can also disenfranchise and marginalise such groups, contributing little to community well-being. Neil Silberman considers the neoliberal narrative of heritage as something to be exploited for its contribution to local economic development. He argues that this is a Western model which has been uncritically applied in non-Western contexts and argues for the rights of all stakeholders to contribute to their own narratives of heritage development.

In the final section - 'Managing the heritage-tourism engagement' - Georgina Lloyd and Im Sokrithy focus on intangible cultural heritage (traditions, customs, ceremonies etc) with reference to Angkor. They note that tourists often have little understanding of the significance of such a heritage: indeed, tourism practices can lead to the modification and simplification of intangible heritage. Anna Spenceley and Fred Nelson discuss heritage tourism in Africa, focussing on the management of tourists at a number of World Heritage Sites. They echo other authors in questioning universalist models of both tourism and heritage management, and call for the development of alternatives that involve local stakeholders. Finally, Alfonso Vargas-Sánchez, Nuria Porrás-Bueno and María de los Ángeles Plaza-Mejía focus on motivations for visiting industrial heritage sites in Spain. They argue that such motivations are complex and include both cognitive and emotional dimensions, as well as a search for both learning and entertainment.

There are many nuanced and thought-provoking chapters in this volume. Overall *Heritage and Tourism* succeeds in elucidating the dialogic encounter between tourists and heritage places and, more broadly, it contributes to the development of alternative understandings of heritage tourism/tourists. It also develops a critique of the uncritical adoption of Western perspectives on heritage management and heritage tourism in non-European contexts. That said, despite the clarity and focus of the introduction, some chapters are more successful than others in addressing the volume's core themes. For example, some authors directly address the issue of a dialogue between heritage places, tourism and tourists; others do so implicitly; while others leave it to the reader to make their own connections. Given the diversity of approaches and topics in the volume a brief concluding chapter by the editors might have been a useful addition in order to highlight the way in which each chapter has contributed to (and moved forward) the debate. These reservations aside, *Heritage and Tourism* is a stimulating and readable volume which demonstrates the innovation and vigour of the 'new' heritage studies. It is a book that will be of interest to final year undergraduates, postgraduates and researchers in disciplines such as tourism studies, heritage studies, sociology, cultural studies and human geography. It also has a wider relevance to those involved with the management and interpretation of heritage sites who are prepared to explore new ways of understanding - and engaging with - their visitors.

Duncan Light, Division of Geography and Environmental Management, School of Science and the Environment, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, M1 5GD. d.light@mmu.ac.uk