

BOOK REVIEW

RESEARCH THEMES FOR TOURISM

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Nikola Naumov
King's College, London, United Kingdom

Research Themes for Tourism is an edited book which is aimed at students, researchers and practitioners engaged with tourism studies. The volume includes twenty chapters covering some popular topics such as heritage tourism, culture, authenticity and sustainable development as well as some relatively less researched areas such as cruise tourism, medical tourism and slow tourism. The book critically examines a wide range of contemporary tourism research areas and provides theoretical explanation about some emerging concepts in tourism literature.

Although the book is designed to assist both students and academics, there are some notable aspects which need to be taken into an account while considering the volume as a teaching or learning tool.

As a hospitality management graduate, choosing a completely different field for a doctoral study was a difficult and longitudinal process which involved a thorough literature review. *Research Themes for Tourism* was one of the first books which helped me through the process of choosing a suitable direction for my study. The book opened up new horizons and directions for a possible research and served as a cross-reference for some conceptual and empirical studies. The volume can be strongly recommended for those students who have not already chosen the direction or specialization of their future postgraduate degree. Moreover, the chapters provide a comprehensive review of topics included and offer a good standpoint for students who are about to start their literature review section. For instance, *Chapter 1* concerns the evolution of mass tourism to more alternative forms of tourism activities which are referred to as 'niche tourism'. The topic is very well

Nikola Naumov is a PhD student at the Department of Geography at King's College, London, UK. His research interests are in cultural and heritage tourism, sustainable development and religious tourism. Author's contact: nikola.naumov@kcl.ac.uk.

researched and structured to a high level giving a detailed picture of the differences between mass and niche tourism by giving a detailed review about their positive and negative impacts. The chapter also provides a huge number of references which lead to relevant case studies.

In addition, the book is structured at a very high level. The introduction briefly explains the history of tourism and introduces the contents of the book. The chapters are designed in the same style giving a brief introduction of the topic, comprehensive analyses, case study examples, suggestions for future research and review questions to be used for teaching purposes. This structure is a clear demonstration of a high level of clarity and offers students a good example of how to structure a report.

From a teaching perspective, the book may be useful as a teaching resource for those engaged in tourism related subjects at an undergraduate level. The volume can be used as an introductory text and provides a good theoretical base supported by case studies and questions in the end of each chapter. However, the style of writing requires a certain level of academic ability and subject knowledge which suggests that the book is not appropriate for first year students. Additionally, the number of references is quite limited in some chapters. For example, Chapter 4 and Chapter 13 are related to authenticity and heritage tourism which are among the most researched areas in the field, but contain only a small portion of references.

From a researcher's perspective, the book fails to provide the reader with new insights and concepts. The chapters explore a number of familiar topics and ones which have been previously researched, such as heritage tourism or religious tourism, although some of the examined concepts are analysed through a different perspective. The theories and paradigms examined are not new and some of them lack clarity and justification. Few exceptions are found in the second part of the book, such as Chapter 19 and Chapter 16, which examine medical and LGBT tourism respectively. However, the case studies used in the chapters may be used for practitioners working in the industry as they offer useful insights and examples which can be easily adjusted to one's practice or business. Useful examples are the studies about North Korea (Chapter 15), Cape Town (Chapter 16) and Jerusalem (Chapter 12).

In conclusion, the book is a well-structured, easy to read and useful volume which can be a useful addition to any university library or personal collection. I would highly recommend it to students wishing to learn more about contemporary forms of tourism and be inspired by a new topic for their research.