

CONTEMPORARY GEOGRAPHIES
OF LEISURE, TOURISM AND MOBILITY

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Tourism and National Identities

By understanding tourist destinations through the lens of national identity, the tourist may develop a deeper appreciation of the destination. Further, tourism marketers and planners may be better equipped to promote and manage the destination, particularly with regard to expectations of the potential visitor.

Tourism and National Identities is the first volume to explore fully the relationship between tourism and national identities and the multiple ways in which cultural tourism, events and celebrations contribute to national identity. It examines core topics critical to understanding this relationship, including: tourism branding, stereotyping and national identity; tourism-related representation and experience of national identity; tourism visitation/site/event management; and the relationship to cultural tourism.

The book looks at a range of international tourist sites and events and combines multidisciplinary perspectives and international cases to provide a thorough academic analysis. The interconnecting area of cultural tourism and national identity has been largely overlooked in academic literature to date; this volume gives considerable analysis to the complex relationship between the two domains and, indeed, the multifaceted strategies used to define that relationship.

Written by an international team of leading academics, *Tourism and National Identities* will be of interest to students, researchers and academics in tourism and related disciplines such as events, cultural studies and geography.

Elsbeth Frew is a Senior Lecturer at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia.

Leanne White is a Lecturer in the School of Hospitality, Tourism and Marketing, and a research associate in the Centre for Tourism and Services Research at Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia.

Contemporary geographies of leisure, tourism and mobility

Edited by C. Michael Hall

*Professor at the Department of Management, College of Business and Economics,
University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand*

The aim of this series is to explore and communicate the intersections and relationships between leisure, tourism and human mobility within the social sciences.

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Tim Oaks</i></p> <p>Tourism and Animal Ethics
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Tourism and National Identities

An international perspective

Edited by

Elsbeth Frew and Leanne White

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Acknowledgements

Our earlier research and feedback from colleagues suggested that the intersecting domains of tourism and national identities had to date been largely overlooked in the academic literature. This became all the more apparent when our call for chapter contributions brought about an overwhelming response from researchers around the world. As such, we acknowledge the growing number of researchers in the field of tourism and national identities and recognise that a closer examination of the relationships between these two domains is indeed a subject worthy of more detailed scrutiny.

We would like to thank the twenty-six authors who contributed to this edited volume. They have been fantastic to work with, highly responsive to our many emails and always incredibly cooperative.

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Finally, we hope that this edited volume will add to and further energise this emerging and critical area of research.

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1 Tourism and national identities

Connections and conceptualisations

Leanne White and Elspeth Frew

Intersecting tourism and national identities

This edited volume explores the multiple ways in which aspects of tourism and national identity intersect, overlap and traverse. Tourism has broad appeal on account of the opportunity it gives individuals to travel to a range of destinations and become involved in a variety of new experiences reflecting aspects of their national identity. The area where cultural tourism and national identity interconnect has been largely overlooked in the academic literature to date. This complex relationship between the two domains (and, indeed, the multifaceted strategies used to define that relationship) is a subject worthy of considerable analysis. The overlapping area in need of further research attention is shown in the middle of the Venn diagram in Figure 1.1. The tourist may develop a deeper appreciation of a destination by understanding it through the lens of national identity, and in the same way tourism marketers and planners might be better equipped to promote and manage it – particularly with regard to the expectations of the potential visitor.

This introduction examines the conceptual framework, offers a brief theoretical background to the area, and then provides an overview of the rest of the book.

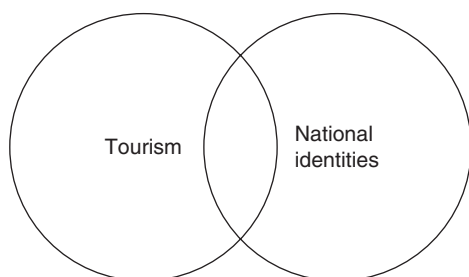


Figure 1.1 The important overlapping area between the domains of tourism and national identities.

The various chapters investigate case studies from around the world, exploring diverse tourism and identity issues in the United States, Ireland, Hungary, New Zealand, Australia, England, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Canada and Vietnam. The conclusion highlights and interconnects many of the significant issues and themes explored in the volume and illuminates the path for further possible research in the area.

Nation, nationalism and national identities

The term “nation” encompasses more than simply the body of people within the borders of a particular country. Theorists of nationalism have acknowledged that the term can incorporate political, social, cultural, historical, economic, linguistic and religious factors. When an individual is said to belong to a nation, it is generally understood that that person has their foundations in that country. The word “nation” originated from the Latin term *natio*, or community of birth. Nation is therefore associated with words such as native, nature, innate, natal and renaissant. While the focus of this book is on forms of national identity (within the context of tourism), connected terms include nation-state, nationality, national consciousness, national sentiment, nation-building and, to some extent, patriotism and citizenship.

While one acknowledges arguments that enter into the debate about the nation and the nation-state, such as the existence of states without nations and nations without states, the nation-state remains the effective political entity in terms of the way in which the world is organised. In a world which is operating increasingly at a global level, and where political and trade associations often emphasise regional alliances, some may argue that the nation-state may be becoming redundant. However, in the highly competitive tourism industry, where destinations and nations compete for a finite tourist dollar, the significance of national identity seems to strengthen rather than diminish with the passing of time.

There is general agreement that the historical moment when nationalism was first given full expression was in the late eighteenth century in Europe, and that the phenomenon intensified with the French Revolution of 1789. Groth suggests that the revolution suddenly brought the “ideas, slogans and institutional expressions of nationalism” to the attention of Europe and the world (Groth 1971: 86). Anderson (1983, 1991), however, traces the origin of the nation-state to an event two years before the French Revolution, the formation of the Constitution of the United States in 1787.

Smith defines nation as a “named human population”, with shared territory, myths, history, culture, economy, and rights and responsibilities by all members of that community (Smith 1991: 14). While his notion is useful, it has been Anderson’s (1983) theories on the subject that have made a significant contribution to the discourse of the nation in recent years. Anderson claims that the nation is an “imagined political community”. Unlike previous theorists, he breaks away from the interpretation that the nation is intrinsically bound up with

factors such as religion or kinship by emphasising the imagined status of the community by the people: "It is imagined because members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 1983: 15). Anderson asserts that the imagined community is limited because even large communities have restricted boundaries beyond which other countries exist. His concept of the community stems from the myth of fraternity – the perceived rather than the actual comradeship (*ibid.*: 16). His definition of the nation presupposes a close connection both among citizens and between citizens and their country. He contends that official nationalism is the "willed merger of nation and dynastic empire" and argues that the concept came about in response to popular nationalism that emerged in Europe from the 1820s (1991: 86). He explains that official nationalism emanates "from the state" and has as its primary feature a focus on "serving the interests of the state first and foremost" (*ibid.*: 159).

Of the books produced on theories of nationalism over the past twenty years, Anderson's is among the most frequently cited (Culler and Cheah 2003: vii). Ozkirimli argues that his work "constitutes one of the most original accounts of nationalism to date" (Ozkirimli 2000: 151), while James claims that Anderson's key text "remains the most insightful book written in the area" (James 1996: ix). However, James departs from Anderson in characterising the nation as something more than a representation – a "distinctive kind of abstract community" (*ibid.*: xi).

Building on Anderson's theory of imagined community, Appadurai puts forward the term "imagined worlds" to describe "the multiple worlds that are constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe" (Appadurai 1996: 33). Appadurai's five dimensions of global cultural flows consist of *ethnoscapes* – the movement of people; *technoscapes* – the shifting of technologies; *finanscapes* – the moving of money; *mediascapes* – the transfer of images; and *ideoscapes* – the progress of ideologies. The two "scapes" which are of most relevance to the issues examined in this book are *mediascapes* and *ideoscapes*, with *mediascapes* providing complex repertoires of images and narratives. Bennett also states that, in as much as they are "imagined communities", nations exist and represent themselves in the form of "long continuous narratives" or "never-ending stories" (Bennett 1993: 74).

The development of the printing press, and in particular the mass production of novels and newspapers towards the end of the eighteenth century, provided the vehicle through which members of the imagined nation could share their perceived alliance. Print media "provided the technical means for 're-presenting' the *kind* of imagined community that is the nation" (Anderson 1991: 25). Commentators understand the imagined community of the nation as being maintained by cultural artefacts and institutions such as literature, art, media and the education system, and argue that a sense of nation is established and sustained "by the quotidian rhythms of print and electronic media output, along with periodic national ceremonies" (O'Sullivan *et al.* 1994: 196–7).

While the nation-state is an important concept for this book, the enormous cultural, social and economic impact of globalisation deserves some further attention. Smith contends that global culture is comprised of a number of discrete elements, including efficiently promoted mass commodities, ideological discourses concerned with human rights and values, and a constantly changing cosmopolitanism. It is a culture which is universal and timeless, fluid and fundamentally artificial (Smith 1991: 157–8). Smith's conception of a global culture is inherently postmodern in its shapelessness and lack of structure.

If global influences on culture are part of the lifestyle of the twenty-first century, one might then wonder if the ideology of the nation will continue to play a significant role in the future. Smith maintains that the nation displays little indication of being transcended and that nationalism does not seem to be failing in its power and meaning (Smith 1991: 170). He predicts that the nation will continue to produce for the people its "central cultural and political identities" fully into the next century (*ibid.*: 177). There appear to be two main reasons for suggesting that nationalism will remain an important ideology. Its attraction has much to do with two key elements – the issue of immortality and the flexible nature of the ideology. Participating in the national arena, even in a seemingly insignificant way, is perceived by many to transcend the personal and mortal and to enter into the more honoured realm of the immortal. Also, the different interpretations that can be placed on nationalism provide the ideology with its popular appeal.

Nationalism can be considered as either a positive or a negative force. On the positive side, it is regarded as a source of distinction, while those in the negative camp claim it to be a source of aggression. Hobsbawm raises its negative aspect when he states that nationalism by definition excludes "all who do not belong to its own nation, that is, the vast majority of the human race" (Hobsbawm 1990: 169). However, Seton-Watson explains that nationalism is intrinsically neither good nor bad. He claims national identity is at least "passively treasured by nearly all citizens of modern societies, even if they don't know it" (Seton-Watson 1982: 13). After the 11 September 2001 attacks in the United States, American citizens showed their patriotism and stance against "the enemy" by proudly flying the flag. Some might perceive this as a proud gesture, while others might argue that it may either deliberately or inadvertently promote aggression. Across the United States, around New York City and what became known as "Ground Zero" in particular, the stars and stripes were prominently displayed in an almost defiant stance.

The intensity of an individual's feelings about their national identity seems to be directly related to their level of national sentiment. Sentiment for the nation involves a sense of personal identification and empathy with something larger and greater than oneself. As a particular level of emotion is involved, national sentiment is highly subjective and can vary enormously in different circumstances. To illustrate the point, while it is possible that possessing citizenship of a country might not register any emotional involvement, it is often the case that being a member of the nation-state does carry some meaning, even if it is regarded as one of the more abstract identities enjoyed by the individual. Additionally,