

BOOK REVIEW

Creating heritage for tourism, edited by Catherine Palmer and Jacqueline Tivers, Routledge, 2019, £115.00 (hbk), ISBN 9781138572713/ from £20.00 (eBook VitalSource), ISBN 9780203701881

Heritage is often considered as “the contemporary usage of the past” (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 1999, p.105). With the growing of tourism industry, heritage is often treated as product for tourism or that heritage is promoted and presented for tourism purpose (Ho & McKercher, 2004; The World Tourism Organization, 2011). Yet, according to the editors of this book, how heritage is created for the contemporary use is not well known. The purpose of this book is thus to “explore how heritage is socially constructed; how it is created in the present, how it is ‘used’, interpreted and experienced” (page 5).

This book consists of twenty chapters, with an introductory chapter by the editors Palmer and Tivers discussing the use of heritage for tourism and followed by nineteen cases addressing various issues related to the construction, creation, interpretation and experience of heritage. These research-based chapters successfully presents nineteen heritage cases concerning various types of tourism (from cruise to heritage, from literacy to film-induced) and within a variety of geographical contexts (from Asia to America, from Europe to Australasia). Numerous subjects were investigated and presented, including Welsh linguistic heritage in Patagonia in chapter 2; Catalan historic national memory in chapter 3; Estonian Museum of Occupations and the Forest Brothers Bunker in chapter 4; cultural festivals at Hampi World Heritage Site, India in chapter 5; heritage attractions at various cruise destinations in chapter 6; Argentine tango in chapter 7; Sherlock Holmes’s England in literary tourism in chapter 8; the story of the nineteenth-century Australian bushranger Edward (Ned) Kelly in chapter 9; the city of Dubrovnik or King’s Landing of Game of Thrones in chapter 10; the Japanese television drama Amachan in chapter 11; the colonial heritage attraction ‘The Rocks’ at Sydney Harbour in chapter 12; the heritage centre of St Kilda, Scotland in chapter 13; ‘Made in China’ tourist souvenirs in chapter 14; the Italian village of Alberobello in chapter 15; a heritage casino hotel in Macau in chapter 16; Turkish coffee in chapter 17; the crab fishing activity of Northeast Brazil in chapter 18; a case of mycological tourism in central Mexico in chapter 19; and the natural heritage in Aotearoa, New Zealand in chapter 20.

The book successfully addresses the co-creating roles of various actors, including entrepreneur (chapter 15), host/community (chapters 3, 13, 16), tourist (chapter 3, 13), government/authorities (chapters 5, 13, 16), tour guide (chapter 10), writer (chapter 8), and film producer (chapters 10, 11) in the construction and creation of heritage. Numerous related concepts are also included such as authenticity (in chapters 7, 14, 16), shifting narratives (in chapter 14), reverse-diaspora (chapter 2), cultural vitalisation (chapter 2), national and local identity (chapter 3, 18), ‘prosthetic memories’ (chapter 9), performativity and materiality (chapter 17), and natural heritage conservation (chapter 20).

Although this book presents research-based contributions, its writing style is readable and interesting. Numerous chapters use first person writing style, which is not conventional in academic writing, yet becoming more common. This is understandable as many studies presented in the book adopted ethnography or autoethnography research approach. This writing style could receive criticism in terms of subjectivity. It, however, makes the book 'friendlier' to non-researcher audiences.

The book successfully includes various heritage cases within different contexts, and examines numerous concepts relevant to the creation of heritage. Unfortunately, it misses heritage cases from Africa, an emerging and important destination for cultural and heritage tourism. It is however understandable that the editors might have to rely on the interest of the contributors and not be able to include scholars or research from all region. Another criticism of this book is the lack of a conclusion chapter. A conclusion which addresses a synthesis of the nineteen cases or a summary of themes and direction for future studies would be extremely useful for academic readers in the field.

Overall, this book is well edited, all chapters are relevant to its aim, and the contents are diverse yet well connected. It is a valuable contribution to the literature of heritage studies and heritage tourism. It is therefore a useful reference source for research concerning heritage and its creation, particularly for tourism purpose. Considering the writing style and the vivid descriptions and analyses of different heritage cases, this book also provides valuable materials of international case studies on heritage management for undergraduate as well as graduate programmes in cultural studies, heritage studies and tourism management.

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