

Book review

H. Andrews (ed.), *Tourism and Brexit: Travel, Borders and Identity* (Channel View Publications, Bristol, UK and Summit, PA, USA 2021) 248 pp.

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Brexit represents a turning point in the present and future of the United Kingdom in the global world. The implications for the geographies of travel and tourism are several. On the one hand, British residents, both at home and abroad, will have to travel to and from the European Union (EU) countries under a more stringent travel mobility scheme. On the other hand, the immigration rules announced by the British Government will impact on the EU citizens residing in the UK as well as on the seasonal workforce employed in the leisure, tourism, and hospitality sectors coming from Continental Europe. Regardless of the political and ideological stands *for* or *against* Brexit, there is no doubt that Brexit represents a step away from the visa-free and job market openness envisioned by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) and the World Economic Forum (WEF).

Only time will tell the impact of Brexit in the United Kingdom as a tourism market and as a destination. However, as academics, we have the duty to debate and discuss tourism and Brexit as events unfold. To this end, *Tourism and Brexit: Travel, Borders and Identity* represents an interesting and informative edited collection that brings together insights from the perspectives of the United Kingdom, Spain, Poland, British Overseas Territories, and the Commonwealth. The 13 chapters featuring in this volume encompass different research approaches rooted in qualitative geography and cultural anthropology. The result is a combination of critical reflections on the origins, the current debates, and the future directions of the United Kingdom from the perspectives of tourism geographies and geopolitics.

Three of the book's chapters address the implications of Brexit from the perspectives of external national identity, the Crown and the Royal Family, and the Commonwealth. Chapter 3 contends that there are elements of perceived nostalgia for the old days of *Rule Britannia* and English nationalism behind the result of the 2016 referendum, yet Brexit is unlikely to disrupt the official portrayal of the United Kingdom as a tourist destination to overseas markets. Chapter 5 provides a reflection on the relationship between Queen Elizabeth II and the Commonwealth throughout her reign and the role of the Royal Family in the international relations of the United Kingdom in the post-Brexit era. Chapter 10, meanwhile, provides an overview on how tourism and travel can facilitate connections between the Anglosphere, Britain, and the broader Commonwealth. The chapter addresses areas for opportunity and expansion of tourism in these regions, but also remarks on the contested narratives within the

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Commonwealth that can be traced back to the slave trade, land expropriation from native peoples, and colonialism.

Two of the chapters focus on the display and performance of Britishness in tourist enclaves in Spain. Chapter 7 discusses the framing of British tourism identity in juxtaposition with Spanish stereotypes in two British television series (*Duty Free* and *Benidorm*). As the chapter highlights, both series depict Spain and the Spanish people from the gaze of the British mass tourist, and reinforce the narrative of the British tourist bubble and of the staged Spanish authenticity. Chapter 8 provides a reflection from the editor on the paradox of ‘taking back control’ and ‘freedom’ for British tourists in Mallorca. The chapter depicts a sense of Britishness that has changed over the years and how the United Kingdom’s withdrawal from the European Union has de facto inhibited British tourists’ freedom of movement to Spain. Chapter 9, instead, provides a review of British tourists in Magaluf from the eyes of tourists, migrant workers, and the host community. The chapter also provides a comparison with the German tourist enclave of S’Arenal to show how mass tourism destinations in Spain have contributed to spatial and cultural juxtapositions between different national cultural groups.

Chapter 6 focuses on tourism mobility between the United Kingdom and Poland. The inclusion of Poland is, in my opinion, a valuable addition if we consider that the Polish community in the UK became the target of anti-immigration slogans during the ‘Vote Leave’ campaign. The chapter provides evidence on incoming tourism from the UK to Poland as portrayed in the National Polish Tourism Organization campaign. It then illustrates outgoing tourism from Poland to the UK through the narratives of travel guidebooks. Undoubtedly, Brexit will have implications for both British and Polish prospective tourists in terms of free movement in and out of the European Union. Free movement is the focus of Chapter 12, which provides a valuable discussion on Associate EU Citizenship at a time negotiations for a Brexit deal were underway (2020). As the chapter observes, EU Citizenship and related rights are overlooked, as ‘there is fragmentation between perceptions of European identity and the reality of EU Citizenship as it is accessed and experienced’ (p. 184).

Brexit also has implications for borders, identities, and tourism within the United Kingdom itself. Chapter 4 presents the results of a fieldwork at Tintagel Castle, Cornwall to explore the relationship between English national identity and heritage in the wake of the Brexit referendum. The chapter provides an insight on how the narrative around the site is highly contested, with the legend of King Arthur and Merlin downplaying the local Cornish history and identity. Chapter 11, instead, looks at the relationship between the United Kingdom and its Overseas Territories following Brexit. Issues such as access to EU funds and relations with the EU are central to these territories, and it is likely that Brexit will represent a challenge as well as a turning point for remote islands such as St Helena and the Falklands.

Tourism and Brexit is a timely contribution that provides a much-needed snapshot of the politically charged debate on Brexit. Looking back, Chapter 1 provides a critical reflection on the political climate of the United Kingdom around Brexit; the contrasting sentiments of the public opinion and how key political figures strongly supported the Vote Leave campaign. From an incoming tourism perspective, it is revealed that certain sections of the media regarded Brexit as a boost for the visitor economy in the United Kingdom. However, it is also noted that there were tourism lobbying groups forecasting economic drawbacks in the event of Brexit. The economic repercussions of Brexit for tourism in the United Kingdom are also addressed in Chapter 2, which explores the purposes behind the process of European integration.

The chapter contends that Brexit represents a challenge for the tourism sector due to its reliance on a non-British workforce. It concludes that the political debate ahead of the Brexit referendum was sold to the public without a detailed explanation of what the UK's withdrawal from the European Union would mean.

Chapter 13 and the annex at the end of the book address Brexit from the perspectives of globalization and COVID-19. Undeniably, Brexit represented a big geopolitical shift in which the United Kingdom finds itself anxiously unprepared. The chapter brilliantly assimilates the triggers of Brexit with the persisting colonial mentality among the elites and argues that, apart from London, the stepping of the United Kingdom *alone* into the new global world will bring more harm than good. The coda to the book, meanwhile, argues that, just as with Brexit, the COVID-19 pandemic has been politically charged and has further shown the short-sightedness of the British Government in managing a crisis.

Tourism and Brexit: Travel, Borders and Identity is recommended for research students and academics in human, cultural, and political geography seeking a glimpse of the inextricable complexities of Brexit. The chapters are not designed to give a verdict on whether Brexit will do more harm than good to the United Kingdom, the British citizens travelling abroad, and the role of the United Kingdom in the new order of things. As the contributors to this edited book argue, it is too early to draw conclusions, as the heated political debate on the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union is still underway. From a reporting perspective, I believe that the book would have benefited from a more structured core narrative, as there is overlap on themes and topics across the chapters. That said, one of the strengths of this collection is the provision of different angles to discuss Brexit and tourism. Undoubtedly, Brexit is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that needs extensive research and further discussion in the years to come.