

Book review

K. Antoniou, *Tourism as a Form of International Relations – Insights From Contemporary Practice* (Edward Elgar Publishing, Cheltenham, UK and Northampton, MA, USA 2023) 140 pp.

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Two highly interdisciplinary fields, largely characterized by their international nature, are tourism and international relations (IR). The monograph ‘Tourism as a Form of International Relations – Insights From Contemporary Practice’ written by Katerina Antoniou provides an original and comprehensive approach to the interconnection between these two areas and analyzes the different dimensions of this binomial. Earlier publications present the matter as separated into different dimensions (Al-Saadi, 2014; Caldevilla-Domínguez et al., 2021; Carbone, 2019; Çokişler and Çokişler, 2023; Jalalpour and Shojaeifar, 2014; Prabowo and Sinaga, 2020). Thus, the great originality and contribution of this book lies precisely in this synthesis and compilation of different yet interrelated themes, offering interested parties with a global and clear perspective on the complexity of this issue.

In specific, increasingly more people travel worldwide, thereby contributing to IR through tourism. This book presents a set of theoretical frameworks that interrelate the two disciplines and outlines an evolutionary and integrated historical framework in the schools of realism, neorealism, liberalism, the English School, constructivism, and critical theory. Yet, from a methodological perspective, the author focuses on ontological and epistemological designs that stem from combining the last three aforementioned theories. The English School, constructivism, and critical theory guide the content of the four chapters that make up this book and make its organic nature very clear in terms of both organization and structure.

The introduction starts by addressing the concept of tourism as well as its exponential growth in recent decades and by analyzing its international character. Antoniou emphasizes that tourism has political, economic, cultural, and social implications, relating it to current armed conflicts and the recent COVID-19 pandemic. This approach highlights the role of tourism in IR, and allows the reconceptualization of tourism and its analysis through the lens of IR. The author also emphasizes the evolving nature of tourism as a scientific and research area, draws parallels with the discipline of IR, and states that the enlace between disciplines is crucial to the scientific evolution of both of them.

Chapter 1 is dedicated to tourism and international development. It provides an extensive and detailed theoretical clarification of development, linking it directly to globalization, global economic growth, and sustainability issues. In this chapter, the author also clarifies the concept of cosmopolitanism in international governance and

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places tourism within this theoretical framework, thereby emphasizing its contribution and disadvantages from the relationship between visitors and residents or hosts. It concludes with an approach to tourism as a driver for international development.

Chapter 2 focuses on the interplay between tourism and diplomacy. A theoretical review of diplomacy contextualizes the main objective of this chapter, which is to focus on the practice of diplomacy through tourism from the dual perspective of state diplomacy and cosmopolitan diplomacy. In this chapter, the author analyzes the individual, state, and systemic levels of tourism in the context of IR. This approach evolves in the following pages into an analysis of the role of tourism in contemporary diplomacy and, based on travel motivations and engagement with diplomatic issues during tourist dislocations, identifies four types of diplomats (namely, the international state-oriented diplomat, the coincidental state-oriented diplomat, the intentional cosmopolitan diplomat, and the coincidental cosmopolitan diplomat).

Chapter 3 deals with tourism and international security. The author describes how international security has affected tourism over time. This chronology includes events from the post-Cold War era up to the post-pandemic era, unequivocally reflecting the systemic nature of tourism as an open system in constant interaction with the systems surrounding it (social, political, economic, and environmental). In turn, the author highlights how tourism affects international security in various dimensions: military, political, societal, economic, environmental, and health. Finally, the author emphasizes the two ways in which tourism can contribute to international security and environmental security. In the first place, tourism helps raise environmental awareness and measure the ecological footprint, and second, it contributes to economic security by achieving sustainable development, as advocated by most of the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) that make up the 2030 agenda.

Also in alignment with the SDGs, Chapter 4 focuses on tourism and its intrinsic correlation with peace, based on the consideration of tourism as the ‘peace industry’. The author provides a conceptual clarification of peace and emphasizes the role of tourism in the relationship between conflict, conflict resolution, and peace. This approach is further developed from the perspective of sustainable development, diplomacy, and international security and to tourism as a peace contributor.

In the conclusion, the author provides a handy summary of all approaches presented throughout this book. This overview emphasises the dynamic and evolving nature of tourism and IR. It also analyzes the role of the tourist in the context of IR, based on the perspectives of the English School of liberalism, constructivism, and critical theory and the neorealist perspective, presented in the initial part of this book. The author concludes by referencing the limitations of the work and presenting future research perspectives on the subject.

This book highlights the interdisciplinary and systemic nature that characterizes tourism and its impacts and influence on a global scale. The monograph is an informative and fluid read, providing a comprehensive and integrated perspective that is particularly useful for and a recommended read to academics, teachers, researchers, as well as students in the fields of tourism and hospitality, IR, and politics.

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