

BOOK REVIEW

A Time Traveller's Guide to Tourism

Paulin PL Wong^{1*}

¹Faculty of Business and Management, Quest International University

*paulin.wong@qiu.edu.my

A review of *The History and Evolution of Tourism* by Prokopis A. Christou aims to persuade future readers of students, academics and practitioners on the highlights of the book and how it is useful for them.

It is necessary to review what has gone before in order to understand tourism fully (Butler, 2015). However, there has been a scarcity of literary books focusing on the historical evolution and transformative developments within the field of tourism. Most books that were published in the recent decades were focused on geographical areas such as at the Himalaya (Nyaupane & Timothy, 2022), the Middle East and Africa (Cleveland, 2021; Timothy, 2018, 2023). One of the earliest attempts at describing the history of global tourism was published by Zuelow (2015) - 'A History of Modern Tourism'. Later, Smith (1998) put together a 4-volume book, 'The History of Tourism: Thomas Cook and the Origins of Leisure Travel'. While these two publications should be alluded for their attempt at describing global tourism history, both attempts appeared to be somewhat skewed. Smith (1998), a Thomas Cook Archivist, dedicated two out of the four volumes by Thomas Cook that documented his journey to different parts of the world, a volume on the first tour of Switzerland and only the final volume on the history of holidays. Meanwhile, Zuelow (2015) described the history of modern tourism based on specific travel trends/ categories to label the aesthetics to scientific change in tourism; undeniably up until its published year. This book review assesses the latest text in this field by Christou titled 'The History and Evolution of Tourism.'

According to Butler (2015), tourism development is an iterative process that characterized human behaviour for many centuries. Christou aptly presented a comprehensive and insightful exploration of the history and evolution of tourism phenomenon through the exploration of time – each chapter represented a specific period that corresponded to a particular era of the human history. This thorough analysis of the development of tourism over time, highlighting the complex interplay of political, economic, social, and technological factors that have shaped the tourism industry into what it is today. While the book presents a description of the origins of tourism, tracing the history of tourism from ancient times to the modern era, its structure also addresses research and analysis conducted in the field of tourism in a notable endeavour to bridge theory with practice with highlights of the discussions conducted academically and published evidence from well-respected media sources. As such, the extensive use of case studies connected with philosophical or theoretical notions within the field used in this book present a dual-faceted perspectives of practical and theory pushes for the need for evaluation and critical thinking within readers.

Christou effectively set the stage in Introduction that the book was not about detailing tourism history itself but rather focused on evolution thoughts and the idea that tourism is a constantly evolving industry; presented on a timeline. The chapter succeeds in establishing the main aim of the book, which is to provide an overview of tourism evolution in the past, present and future. The scope itself is significant where beyond detailing tourism history and highlighting important events, Christou bridged these events with modern issues, concerns, challenges, and implications; generating anticipation for thought-provoking discussions. The structure of the book was also laid out to set a solid foundation for understanding the changes and expectation of tourism in the future.

Christou's Chapter 2 on the ancient history of tourism is a comprehensive summary of the structures, events, and religious tourism of various cultures during this period. The chapter managed to highlight the rich heritage of tourism in ancient civilizations, showed a glimpse into the diverse cultural and spiritual experiences of the past. The discussion of

religious pilgrimages and their significance provides valuable insights into the motivations and practices of ancient travellers in a meaningful way. Using case studies, Christou effectively linked these travel motivations and tourist satisfaction logic to the present; offering readers a reflection of these past and bridging them with the present.

In Chapter 3, Christou focusses on the significance of medieval/Middle Ages pilgrimage travels and in addition, introduced the birth of gastronomic tourism. Christou provides an insightful examination of the journeys undertaken to religious shrines and places of sacredness around the globe, offering a nuanced understanding of the significance of pilgrimage as a form of travel during this period. A unique trait of events/ practices highlighted during this period is the wide spectacle of human torture and suffering in the form of public display events inspiring themed museums or perhaps dark tourism. It is interesting to learn that these events, with local food and delicacies playing an essential role, inspired gastronomic tourism. The multidimensionality of tourism experiences and the importance of having a comprehensive discussion of tourism changes is perhaps what is intrinsically expressed in this chapter – from the discussion of death, to spirits to gastronomy; and its power of commercialisation and globalisation through its case studies.

Christou's Chapter 4 on tourism during the early modern period sheds light on the development of forms of tourism that are still prevalent today; highlighting the connection to cultural activities such as dark tourism sites and more popularly, visitation to museums. The exploration of the "Grand Tour" and the establishment of restaurants provides a fascinating insight into the cultural, educational, and pleasurable aspects of travel during this time. The chapter effectively captures the essence of this era, emphasizing the emergence of travel itineraries and the growing interest in cultural experiences still evident today through immersive cultural and technological experiences of modern brand museums. As this chapter plays a significant role in the beginning of leisure travel, Christou leaves readers craving a more comprehensive understanding of the period broader societal and cultural implications.

In chapter 5 during the late modern period delves into the pivotal role of railways in shaping travel and tourism. Christou highlights the significance of railways in facilitating the tourism experience, discussing the development of scenic rail experiences leading into luxury travel and luxurious experiences in hospitality. Christou presented the 'luxury triangle' which essentially summarizes the three main aspects to 'attention to detail' within the context of hospitality and tourism. The author further discusses reasoning behind modern challenges in providing such luxurious experiences. Christou's justification of such tourism demand led to a natural progression in presenting the formation of travel operators and tourism organisation beginning with the delineation of the Thomas Cook brand and how these functions are slowly taken over by the emergence of the internet. The inclusion of an overview of war or dark tourism as a growing phenomenon during this period adds depth to the analysis, showcasing the evolution of tourist interests and experiences.

The subsequent Chapter 6 revealed the exploration of tourism during the contemporary period offers insights into the profound changes brought about by economic development, the rise of the airline industry, and the emergence of amusement and theme parks. The analysis provides a comprehensive overview of the major developments and trends in tourism during this era. The chapter effectively addresses the influence of tourism personnels and organisations within the industry, particularly in relation to understanding concept of quality – products, services, and experiences towards being 'green' and ultimately upholding the concept of sustainability. Christou brought out the sense of resilience, adaptability, and humanity support of the industry amidst multiple unexpected major events such as the September 11 terrorism event and more recently, COVID-19.

In the final chapter, Christou presents a thought-provoking discussion on the future of tourism and hospitality. He presented a matrix of tourism in the future that is based on four basic dimensions. The first and second dimensions examines potential future impacts and trends on and of the industry. This includes the effects of global crises, climate change, and sustainability challenges. The consideration of both positive and negative impacts on destinations and the need for sustainable practices highlights the ongoing importance of addressing these issues in the future. The third dimension lies on the trends on human continuous pursuit for fulfilment and seeking new experiences which overflows into the fourth dimension of having the call to constantly respond to emerging tourism-related challenges due to these impacts and demands. This chapter successfully prompts readers to reflect on the future trajectory of the tourism industry and its

implications – making the matrix a powerful tool to provoke the thoughts of tourism industry practitioners, regulators and the academics.

Overall, "The history and evolution of tourism" by Christou provides a comprehensive exploration of the subject matter. Each chapter offers valuable insights, supported by well-researched content and a clear narrative. The book succeeds in delivering a nuanced understanding of the historical progression of tourism at different eras, allowing readers to grasp the complexities and transformations of the industry over time and practice deep thinking about the future and tourism – now and in the future.

BIODATA

Paulin Wong Poh Lin is Senior Lecturer and Head of Programme at the Faculty of Business and Management, Quest International University, Malaysia. She obtained her PhD from Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS). With 16 years of experiences both working in the hotel, gaming, events, and the F&B industry and; teaching and tutoring at secondary and tertiary level academic institutions, Dr Paulin is a travel enthusiast academic who sees the world from the eyes of those forming the basis of a destination and she cannot imagine a destination without ‘seeing’ the host community. Her academic pursuit including understanding place meanings, especially among host community in tourism destinations; sustainable tourism, other Place studies, community-based tourism, rural tourism, and park management.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to express her gratitude to CABI for sending her the book and allowing the review opportunity.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

The author reported no conflict of interest.

ORCID

Paulin Wong Poh Lin ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0450-8798>

REFERENCES

- Butler, R. (2015). The evolution of tourism and tourism research. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 40(1), 16-27.
- Cleveland, T. (2021). *A History of Tourism in Africa: Exoticization, Exploitation, and Enrichment*. Ohio University Press.
- Nyaupane, G. P., & Timothy, D. J. (Eds.). (2022). *Tourism and Development in the Himalaya: Social, Environmental, and Economic Forces*. Routledge.
- Smith, P. (Ed.). (1998). *The history of tourism: Thomas Cook and the origins of leisure travel* (Vol. 4). Psychology Press.
- Timothy, D. J. (Ed.). (2018). *Routledge handbook on tourism in the Middle East and North Africa*. Routledge.
- Timothy, D. J. (Ed.). (2023). *Cultural Heritage and Tourism in Africa*. Taylor & Francis.
- Zuelow, E. (2015). *A history of modern tourism*. Bloomsbury.