



Tourism and Borders

**Contemporary Issues, Policies and
International Research**

Edited by

Helmut Wachowiak

TOURISM AND BORDERS

New Directions in Tourism Analysis

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Although tourism is becoming increasingly popular as both a taught subject and an area for empirical investigation, the theoretical underpinnings of many approaches have tended to be eclectic and somewhat underdeveloped. However, recent developments indicate that the field of tourism studies is beginning to develop in a more theoretically informed manner, but this has not yet been matched by current publications.

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Contemporary Issues, Policies and International Research

Edited by

HELMUT WACHOWIAK

*International University of Applied Sciences Bad Honnef • Bonn,
Germany*

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List of Authors

Maha Doppelfeld, B.A., Dipl.-Betriebswirtin (FH)
Friends of Hwange National Park Trust
Zimbabwe
Email: maha@yoafrica.com

Daniel Engels, B.A.
International University of Applied Sciences Bad Honnef • Bonn
Email: daniel.engels@fh-bad-honnef.de

Holger Faby, Dr.
European Institute of Tourism (ETI)
Germany
Email: faby@eti.de

Karin Hartmann, M.A.
Mobility Consulting - Swisenergy
Switzerland
Email: karin.ht@gmx.de

Dimitri Ioannides, Ph.D., Professor
Missouri State University
USA
Email: dii608f@missouristate.edu

Stephan Kroll, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
California State University
USA
Email: skroll@csus.edu

Heinz-Dieter Quack, Dr., Professor
European Institute of Tourism (ETI)
Germany
Email: hdquack@eti.de

Christian Rast, Dipl.-Geograph
ift Freizeit- und Tourismusberatung GmbH
Germany
Email: rast@ift-consulting.de

Dallen J. Timothy, Ph.D., Professor
Arizona State University
USA
Email: dtimothy@asu.edu

Helmut Wachowiak, Dr., Professor
International University of Applied Sciences Bad Honnef • Bonn
Germany
Email: h.wachowiak@fh-bad-honnef.de

Preface

Based on the forecasts of the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), a continuous growth of international tourist arrivals is expected over the next decades. Consequently, in addition to an understanding of 'international tourism', an understanding of 'border issues' is necessary. Whenever persons cross a political boundary, phenomena of the environmental, socio-cultural, and economical world arise. Consequently, research from scholars of different disciplines has included the relationships between tourism and borders since as early as the 1930s. But, as so often in academia and, in particular, in the geography of leisure and tourism, as well as the economic disciplines focused on tourism, it is a fact, that many scholars contribute to important issues but only little knowledge exchange between international research groups exists.

Who really knows the innumerable contributions besides the many valuable books and articles of Northern-American and Central-European scholars? Who is able to evaluate the academic value of new experience and knowledge that has been created from several thousands of projects to support cross-border development worldwide? Who has the interdisciplinary expertise to understand the many facets of tourism development in cross-border areas, in so far as they involve technical planning issues on different administrative levels, international and national law issues, financial issues, natural and man-made environments, the management of public and private stakeholder interests, destination marketing, and other issues?

Furthermore, the subject *tourism and borders* still seems to be a niche within the academic disciplines that deal with leisure, recreation, and tourism as social, ecological, and economical phenomena. It is definitely observed by many but maintained by few. This fact is contradictory in a world of changing borders, the growth of regional importance, and growing self-administration on the regional level that sometimes even lead to autonomy developments. Furthermore, changing tourists' attitudes and a new sensibility towards borders as attractions, as well as non-acceptance of them as barriers in a world of mobility, should foster more intensive research in this field.

Given the importance of the relationships between tourism and boundaries, it is astonishing that this subject only met with intensive academic interest in the 1970s (with the IGU Tourism and Recreation working group meeting in Ljubljana/Trieste in September 1978 as one highlight). It only rejuvenated significantly in the early 1990s (especially in Europe, due to the greater harmonisation between the member countries of the European Union).

For these reasons, this compilation of works from several scholars and practitioners in the field of the geography of tourism and recreation, and tourism management aims to jointly motivate the academic community to continue the important discussion on tourism and boundaries. In contrast to many given and still beneficial

contributions, this book does not aim to reflect on the subject with new theoretical discussions nor does it provide best-case reports from around the world. It follows the idea of reflecting on the relationship between tourism and boundaries from the major contemporary facets concerned. First, a conceptual discussion of tourism and international boundaries creates a framework of the key subject. This is followed by discussions about new policies and planning debates, destination management and stakeholder collaboration issues in border regions, as well as contemporary concepts of communication strategies to achieve trans-boundary development. This also includes recent developments in computer based information- and reservation systems in border regions.

However, apart from discussing selected contemporary discussions, this book follows a second approach. In the form of an individual chapter, the reader will find a commentary literature overview that provides information about most contributions in this field since the 1930s. Structured and analysed by geographical realms as well as by sub-topics, this bibliography aims to support research activities of (under-) graduates and scholars in the fields of geography, management, sociology, and policy and planning.

Certainly, the literature overview cannot include all published material that exists and, indeed, many are not listed. This is true also for the selected facets discussed by each chapter. If more time, and pages, were available, more chapters with additional facets of the phenomena arising out of tourism as a cross-border activity would have been included. Like every book, this one has also had to cope with the gap between academic desires and feasibility. However, all gaps and missing contents will be justified, if this book succeeds in motivating more persons to contribute to the subject, which will increase in importance again in a world of new regions and trans-boundary regionalism.

Helmut Wachowiak

*International University of Applied Sciences
Bad Honnef • Bonn, Germany*

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