

BOOK REVIEW

Tourism and Resilience

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1 BOOK REVIEW

In a world castigated by the new virus outbreak COVID19, where global tourism seems to be dying, resilience is a beacon of light in the dark seas of uncertainty and panic. In this new edited book project, Richard Butler, a leading scholar who does not need the previous presentation, proffers an innovating diagnosis about the role played by resiliency in the tourism industry. The book contains six sections and 17 chapters, which share a similar common-thread argumentation. The first introductory section explores the dichotomies of resiliency to be empirically applied to sustainable tourism. The second section deals with the problems of governance and political stability while the third discusses the different community's responses to disaster. The fourth section denotes four interesting chapters which focus on how insular destinations and ecologically protected areas develop more resilient options to the ecological crisis the world faces today. The fifth section focuses mainly on resilience as a new political reality. Lastly, the conclusion -in charge of the editor- formulates some interesting points towards a more sustainable industry. Butler starts from the premise though promising shortly, tourism is impracticable in sustainable terms. The tension between resilience and sustainability seems evident. After all, resilience, a term which corresponds with adaptation, contradicts the essence of the precautionary doctrine, a theory finely-encrypted into the idea of sustainability that reportedly prepares communities to future risks.

As the previous backdrop, the book is conceptually oriented to highlight the methodological inconsistencies of tourism as a sustainable industry while laying the foundations to a new understanding of resilience in the years to come. The second chapter, which is authored by Marta Berbes-Blazquez and Noel Scott, reviews the different families of theories on resilience, as well as their efficacy to alleviate the negative effects of climate change. Researchers distinguish ecological resilience from engineering resilience. The former

signals to the capacity of any system to keep homeostasis (a mixed balance), whereas the latter connotes to the timeframe the system stabilizes itself. In consonance with this, the third chapter (Alan Lew et al) discusses the conceptual discrepancies between adaptation and conservation, a hot-debate which remains open to date. As the authors agree, reactions to emergencies are pretty different depending on the event is underway or has not happened. In view of this, the SCR (scale, change and resilience) model offers a fertile ground to be applicable in post-disaster contexts.

In the fourth chapter, Esteban Ruiz Ballesteros dissects the complexity of sustainability and the resulting hypotheses that have historically led scholars to a puzzling situation (or gridlock point). To wit, community-based tourism facilitates a better organization of resources and adaptability in high uncertainty landscapes. In this vein, Valerie Sheppard -in the fifth chapter- argue convincingly that among factors that enhance resilience range from technological information to strong institutional management (governance) without mentioning the educational capital which creates a pro-active atmosphere of cooperation.

Models above-explained not always bode well for developing economies or nations located geographically the global South. This is the case why it is necessary to discuss study-cases and examples originated in other regions. This point leads Jeremy Buultjens, Iraj Ratnayake & Athula Gnanapala to study the industry of tourism in Sri Lanka, which recently has recovered from a civil war of years, and a devastating Tsunami. Authors evaluate Sri Lanka's tourism experience with disaster-management and the derived strategies in the fields of human rights, climate change and the economic stagnation. The eighth chapter -Sussane Becken & Bijan Khazan- calls the attention on the complex intersection among tourism, disaster and resilience. Over the years, scholars believed that the tourism industry was notably sensitive to disasters, but climate change showed precisely the opposite. Today's policy-makers recommend firm steps to develop resiliency as an alternative adaptation to a crisis which is far from being solved. It is important not to lose sight

of the fact that governments should coordinate efforts and investments in disaster preparedness. Bruno Abegg, Robert Steiger & Lisa Trawoger (in the eighth chapter) provide with a snapshot on the gap between science and tourism sector respecting climate change. Based on the Alpine region, they hold the thesis that the industry shows certain optimism to adapt the negative effects of climate change, which is considered a distant threat, while experts are centered on a precautionary logic.

The tenth chapter, elegantly written by Janet Cochrane, interrogates furtherly the future of national parks in the UK and the government programs to protect the British ecosystems. A similar concern can be found in the chapter authored by Jennifer Strickland Munro (eleventh chapter) who indicates the protected areas represent a synergic and multiple sub-systems which are formed by different stakeholders who protect their particular interests. Having said this, protected areas and visitors have a difficult communion in practice. Still further, the problem of governance, resilience and islands are widely covered in the successive twelfth and thirteenth chapters. While Arjen Alberts & Godfrey Baldachino turn the lens to the Caribbean islands, Maria Amoano delves in the remoteness of Pitcairn Islands. Although from different perspectives, both chapters converge in the same diagnosis. Small islands are not only vulnerable to disasters but the situation aggravates when tourism is the only affordable economic activity. High degrees of economic openness, concentration and dependency are the key factors that condition small islands' resilience.

The fourteenth chapter (Harold Goodwin) delves into the crucial role of ethical responsibility to perform resilient destinations. He toys with the belief that the social contract, adjoined to the communal trust of stakeholders, gives a convincing answer to the ecological crisis the industry is going through today. Glenn McCartney speaks us of the future of Casino tourism in Macao, an ever-growing destination which developed greater accessibility to mainland China. The author offers a competitive-based model to understand the relation between Macao and China. The future of resilience as a new political reality is the main topic analyzed by Professor Jonathan Pugh (from Newcastle University, England). In this respect, Pugh deciphers the dilemmas of resilience which is portrayed as a certain model in a hyper-mobile world where institutions paradoxically fail to give clear answers to lay-people. Per his viewpoint, resilience surfaced as a post-liberal episteme aimed at grasping post-modernist cosmologies. Pugh places the concept under the critical lens of scrutiny because of two main reasons. On one hand, the concept has become buzzword applicable to many incomparable contexts and cultures. On another, resilience-related narratives confer the responsibility to deal the Global south with issues created by the Global North. In the final chapter, Butler concludes with a short review of each chapter, stressing in the main contributions and limitations in the study –and the subsequent understanding- of resilience.

It is safe to say this reviewed book, at least for this reviewer, should be seen a compilation of high-quality chapters, written by well-distinguished scholars who are worried on the future of tourism in the next years. The multicultural approach that

the book introduces is certainly supported by the origin of authors, who comes from the four corners of the globe, each one intellectually dotted with a different perspective or national-character, but what is more important, Butler presents an organized volume with practical study-case which are pertinently accompanied by some critical lens of the problem.

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