

Book Review

Donald V.L. Macleod & James G. Carrier *Tourism, Power and Culture: Anthropological Insights*, Channel View Publications, 2010, Bristol (U.K.) ISBN: 978-1-84541-124-4

If one wants to find out how culture shapes tourism one should read 'Tourism, Power and Culture' by Macleod and Carrier. If one wants to find out how culture and tourism can be commodified, and becomes a tool in political and economic strategies and struggles, one should read the book. It is a unique study of tourism and culture by the anthropologists, therefore the book has a refreshing impact on the reader. The anthropologists involved in working on tourism destination are ideal observers of changes in and around these destinations. They act as good interpreters of indigenous views and cultural differences created by the development in the area of tourism.

However, like every book, this too has its own limitations and to point out the few the limitations are the book ignores economic aspects of tourism, it also restricts itself from commenting on managerialistic skills of tourism neither it takes any cognizance of market approach towards the subject. Perhaps, the editors have their own reasons to do so, as they might have felt that there are umpteen numbers of volumes available on such dimensions :

The book has two parts:

(A) Tourism and the Power Struggle of Resources.

(B) Tourism and Culture, Presentation, Promotion and Manipulation of the image.

"Tourism and Power Struggle of Resources" includes case studies such as

- The struggle for the control of water in Queensland, Australia between farmers and recreational environmental groups.
- Struggle for control over construction sites of Dejenne, Mali between locals and UNESCO.
- Bali Indonesia - impact of terrorism on cultural tourism.

Whereas in the second part i.e. "Tourism and Culture, Presentation, Promotion and Manipulation of the Image" has for more interesting case studies such as :

- The effect of cultural tourism on black culture in Salvador da Bahai, Brazil. It even questions the issues of authenticity.
- Problems of environmental degradation in Negril, Jamaica. Exploitations of the labour, Rude tourist behaviour, conflict between conservationists and the local fishermen.

The book discusses several other fascinating cases. Though it discusses 'Power' as major thematic concern of tourism and culture, yet one feels that it demonstrates the power of field work in getting nuanced responses between hosts and guests.

In the concluding chapter the editors point out that :

"...Power is a multilayered concepts, Arguably overt exercise of power, and even non-decision making, are not terribly controversial concepts in the realm of tourism studies..."

(209p)

It is indeed a densely written book and is meant for those who are well grounded into the field of tourism culture and heritage. A reader should have extensive anthropological sociological and sufficient knowledge of political science and policy recommendations. All these prerequisites on the part of the reader will help him/her to derive value from the informative case studies.

Some of the case studies are exemplary and can be taken as role models for the policy makers in tourism industry on any country.

To conclude after reading this kind of useful information tourism student will be greatly benefitted.

- Pradeep Trikha