
Foreword

We need only remind ourselves how rapidly our early forebears encircled the globe to realise that, by our very nature, we humans are a travelling species. While other evolving species were snuggling down in their separate ecological niches, our distant relatives were packing up their rudimentary possessions and setting off – fording rivers, braving the elements and risking starvation – just to find out if the grass really was greener on the other side of the hill. Ultimately, of course, we have no way of recovering our ancestors’ reasons for migrating to pastures new, but there’s every chance that – like so many of today’s tourists – they too were driven by curiosity, a search for adventure and a desire to gain a competitive advantage over their rivals. The pressing urge to see other parts of the world, which we all experience to varying degrees, is very deep-seated. That’s because, like our ancestors, we’re essentially travelling apes – *Homo viator*, if you will. And we’re likely to stay that way for as long as there remain new places to visit, and experiences to be had.

Given the vital role that travel plays in people’s lives, it was inevitable that tourism would attract the attention of academics and that ‘the psychology of tourism’ would become a fully fledged subject in its own right. Very few psychologists have made as significant a contribution to this subject as Philip Pearce. Ever since he arrived at Oxford University to begin his doctorate he has made it his mission to understand tourism. Never being content to stick to the same path, he has constantly been introducing new perspectives and insights to this important subject. The multi-faceted nature of tourism has never escaped him – a fact which is elegantly reflected in the rich diversity of approaches and topics covered by this volume. Here he has assembled a team of obviously experienced authors as well as some junior colleagues to build a volume elaborating on these many interests. These extend from the inspirational moment that tourists begin to think about their holiday, decide where to go, and pack their bags to the time when they return home, laden down with memories, tales and the occasional regret. Both the yin and the yang of tourism are comprehensively covered – not only the detrimental side of foreign travel, but also its enriching and uplifting aspects.

We’re often told that travel broadens the mind. If that were ever in doubt, we can be certain that this superb volume will broaden, as well as deepen, our understanding of tourism!

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