

Book review

Tourism's Horizon: Travel for the Millions

Jim Butcher
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Although the narrative surrounding mass tourism has evolved in the past 50 years, it has largely focused on issues and stereotypes associated with tourists contributing to temporary crowding. With the timely book *Tourism's Horizon: Travel for the Millions* (2025), Jim Butcher challenges this narrative and presents a “novel publishing experiment” (p. xiii). The book, published by *Goodfellow Publishers Ltd* (ISBN: 9781917433495), comprises around 250 pages and is divided into two sections: interview dialogues and essays. These will be presented in more detail below. The content of the book extends current debates within the scientific community on mass tourism and overtourism. Specifically within the realm of Critical Tourism Studies, the scientific community has dominantly used approaches such as degrowth, regenerative tourism, and host-guest dynamics to conceptualize the phenomenon. Unlike most previous scientific works which aim to contribute potential solutions to solve issues related to mass tourism, this book has a different purpose: it bridges the critical reflection of tourism scholars with the public discourse in a refreshing and atypical structure, style, and tone.

The first part of the book, titled *Reflection*, comprises a series of in-depth interviews with seven renowned tourism scholars which were conducted between 2023 and 2024. The interviewees discuss, among others, topics such as platforms, societal turns, inspiring literature, and the term

overtourism. Although the interviewees exclusively represent the Western, primarily European, scientific community of senior tourism scholars, their statements and answers are not only diverse but also quite opposing and thought-provoking. While the editor acknowledges the Eurocentric focus and reflects on it, he hopes that “*similar projects in the future will feature experts emanating from the continents Africa and Asia*” (p. 2). In order to expand prevailing theoretical traditions and European paradigms, it is essential to incorporate the insights of early-career and underrepresented scholars as well as those of younger generations. These reflections, which aim to rewrite the narrative, would benefit from a more forward-looking approach, one that is grounded in diverse place-based knowledge and epistemic pluralism. It is time to speak *with* the future generations rather than *about* them.

The second part, the *Viewpoints*, is a collection of essays from the *Tourism's Horizon: Travel for the Millions* (TH:TM) blog and the *Good Tourism Blog*, both of which were founded by the editor of this book, Jim Butcher. The viewpoints are categorized under the headings of “*Freedom*”, “*People*”, “*Development*”, and “*Academic Affairs*”, indicating the focus on the humanity of tourists themselves. The essays, which are partly adapted blog entries, cover topics ranging from the experiences of a young female traveler in 1934 to voluntourism in Ghana and Israel, as well as short interventions about academic identity and tourism education. This broad selection of contributions touches upon multiple cultural and social phenomena and will be relatable to a broad audience. The essays not only encourage deeper reflection on where

we are heading in the age of mass travel, but also provide novel reading material for educational purposes and literary discussions.

In summary, the experimental and novel style of the book may take readers on an emotional rollercoaster, which is rather unusual for scholarly literature. For my part, I enjoyed the ride. The bouquet of perspectives, opinions, writing styles and text formats has the potential to attract a diverse readership and to broaden the view on *Tourism's Horizon* and the potential of *Travel for the Millions*. To conclude, I am hoping for a second volume in which the editor's reflection is realized and more voices, generations, narratives and epistemologies are invited to contribute to the narrative of our future.

About the author

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