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Book Review — Published Version

## Tourism, terrorism and security: Tourism security-safety and post conflict destinations

Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing



Persistent identifier (DOI):

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5550929>

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## BOOK REVIEW

# Tourism, terrorism and security: Tourism security-safety and post conflict destinations

Korstanje, M. and Séraphin, H. (eds) (2020). Bingley: Emerald Publishing Limited.

ISBN 978-1-83867-906-4.

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**JEL Classification:** L83, F52, H12

**Biographical note:** Karen Cripps (karen.cripps@winchester.ac.uk) is the University of Winchester Business School's UN Principles of Responsible Management Education (PRME) Champion, and is committed to embedding responsible management education into teaching and research, and to support students' self-discovery and development in the sense-making called for in 21st-century business leadership. Karen holds a BA (Hons) and MSc in Tourism and Environmental Management and later pursued a PhD in Sustainable Supply Chain Management in UK Tour Operations. She is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, and acts as a teaching mentor. Driven by a strong practitioner focus in research activities, she is currently researching teaching pedagogies to equip students with the mindset and competences to effectively balance the requirements of responsible management.

## 1 BOOK REVIEW

This book is of interest to anyone concerned by tourism consumption patterns, global policy, and tourism management/marketing responses at a time of increasing threats and risk to tourism security. These are important issues that need to be examined to ensure better policy and management responses to global threats. As an edited book by Maximiliano Korstanje and Hughes Séraphin, who are renowned authors in tourism safety and security, it brings fresh perspectives to critical issues in the future of tourism. Collectively, the authors convey behavioural and supply-side aspects of tourism security and provide both the novice and specialist reader with an in-depth understanding in the field of tourism security and safety and features of tourism in post-conflict destinations.

A key feature of this book is that the dichotomies of tourism are presented as an industry which in common with terrorism seeks to target (often international) visitors, and its actions are highly influential on economic development. Paradoxically, while the industry can be destroyed by terrorist acts, through post-disaster 'dark tourism', it can be re-built. The combined contribution of each author provides empirical and theoretical insight to psychological issues of tourist behaviour and demand, supply-side actions, policy-making and media perspectives. The discussion is grounded

in culturally and historically influenced contexts and what stands this book apart from other texts, is the clear thread that runs through the book of sociological analysis of the tourist gaze on the 'other' (as victims of terrorism and security related disasters). This is seen to perpetuate Westernised consumption patterns through what might be seen as a form of 'entertainment' which is both morally questionable and can inadvertently feed terrorism and conflict. This argument resonates throughout the chapters and leaves the reader with a clear impression of the role of tourism in perpetuating political instability (which can lead to terrorist and security threat), against its potential to enable peacebuilding and reduce conflict, juxtaposed with the 'ethics' and implications of dark tourism.

The foreword (by Peter Tarlow) and preface by the editing authors set the context for an all-encompassing sense of the complexities of the relationship between tourism and terrorism. International perspectives in a range of post-conflict and post-disaster destinations enable differing ideologies and discussion of cross-cultural comparisons of risk and threat. The limitations of tourism security-safety are presented in a thought-provoking way which highlights the uncertainties in which the industry operates, with implications for researchers to help navigate this urgent field of tourism management. It can also be said to illuminate critical issues of responsible tourism development in both how tourism activities are managed, and the role of tourism



in re-building economies and communities as part of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. Within an overall sociological approach to terrorism and security threat, the layout and content of the book are aimed at analysing different types of security problems as well as finding managerial responses to address them.

The opening chapter (Korstanje) provides a contextual overview of studies into tourism security since 9/11 and implications on tourism discourse with a new era of no global 'safe space'. It highlights the limitations that arose from the application of precautionary principle rational planning concepts to risk prevention and management, such as the tensions for destinations to mitigate and manage risks while not causing undue alarm among tourists. Paradoxes are also drawn out of how the tourist gaze in these destinations, can present a threat through large numbers of tourists as targets, and Korstanje poses the question of how, in such contexts, tourism security can be most effectively approached and measured. It highlights that tourism "never stops" but "diverts towards more secure destinations", and the insights into the potential applications and limitations of differing schools of thought on risk perception offer can be usefully applied to inform current research into post-pandemic tourism recovery.

In chapter 2, Seraphin's discussion of over-tourism and tourism phobia conveys the conflicting views towards tourism as a vehicle for peace versus one of generating local conflict and resentment. Destinations experiencing over-tourism present an issue of risk (through the loss of local stakeholder support and engagement) and security (through anti-tourism movements) which is contended needs to be examined as part of a 'safe' tourism system. Analysing over-tourism through a security perspective represents a fresh perspective on the current literature on over-tourism which focuses on social, environmental and economic dimensions, without consideration of security.

Seraphin also discusses the role of tourism in peacebuilding, which is further discussed concerning Colombian tourism in chapter 3. Oliveros-Ocampo et al present the results of a quantitative analysis of the Colombian tourism market within a context of armed conflict. In the context of risk, it is interesting to note the use of the marketing slogan 'The risk is that you want to stay. Perhaps indicating a national level tolerance of risk, and as the authors note is a pattern found in Thailand, the study found that despite the conflict, Colombians continue to travel domestically, although it did influence the selection of destination. The chapter shows how tourism was directly developed by State policy to reduce conflict in particular regions through enabling security and economic generation. Particular focus is given to Colombian Natural National Parks which were privatized as natural areas for tourism development, yet at the same time were controlled by armed groups and uses from a sustainability perspective were 'inappropriate' leading the authors to conclude that tourism development in these areas will not ever be effective under times of conflict.

Chapter 4 takes another destination-based perspective, this time focusing on tourism security in the Russian Federation. Afansiev et al. open with a discussion on tourists' propensity for risk, motivations for dark tourism, perceptions of security and vulnerability, and the various risks that can influence international tourism. It underlines the limitations of studying

terrorism from the perspectives of policymakers and tourists alone. A main contribution of the chapter is a discussion of how stereotypes of countries, which are often historically and culturally determined, affect tourist perceptions of safety. Through a review of differing countries' governing body advice on safety travel risks, it is also suggested that political and competitive factors shape the safety rating advice. The lack of a universal method to assess risk, and other limitations in the data, is said to result in subjective information on risk levels. Case information from Chechnya is used to demonstrate a new method for the application of criteria and safety indicators to enable a more objective rating.

The fifth chapter by Korstanje and George examines the role of security in reducing risk for worshippers, especially in religious sites that are popular with tourists and can also represent targets for terrorism and violence. They point to many psychological factors with perceptions of risk and safety such as the paradoxical link between increased emotional vulnerability to safety fears, which is difficult to deter through communication and marketing, strengthens the terrorism logic. They posit that a sense of safety is culturally conditioned and perceptions of risk are often dependent on the degree of control that society has over that event. These in turn shape how we cognitively assess risk, based on our experiences and cultural conditioning. In particular, the authors highlight the subjectivity of methodologies and the need to examine terrorism risk from a terrorists' viewpoint in for example understanding which victims have more 'value' as targets. It is suggested that terrorists targeting some sites is for impact on first world states, and in a developing country as a way of undermining the dependency of those economies of the tourism trade.

The sixth chapter aims to make sense of the evolving literature and conceptualisation of dark tourism. It provides a comparison with the sister term 'thanatourism' and shows that this is more focused on 'death' experiences rather than the more encompassing focus on 'tragedy' as part of dark tourism interests.

Mitchel et al note that most of the literature focuses on attitudes and motivations for visiting dark tourism sites, along with studies into the attitudes of residents who live in dark tourism destinations. This chapter offers an insight into how the motivation to experience fear and terror as dark tourists differs from the avoidance of fear as a security concern for most tourists. From a psychological perspective, the authors suggest that such a perspective may enable dark tourists to act more calmly in crises, but the question at which cost such tourism enjoyment should be gained.

Chapter 7 continues with the theme of dark tourism, applying it to the potential for growth of the tourist market to the island of Saint Helena in Africa. Apleni et al. reinforce earlier messages in the book around the impact of terrorism on destination image and the challenges for developing countries to recover. Analysis of the impacts from terrorist crimes in Kenya, in which the industry has been decimated over the past decade through terrorism and security concerns, is used to demonstrate the criticality of policymakers to improve safety and security in tourism destinations. This chapter also picks up on the concept of tourism as a tool for peace and reminds us that this requires the absence of conflict.

In chapter 8, Korstanje explores the controversies and challenges of dark tourism, from a postmodern viewpoint of tourist motivations to gaze upon, and consumer others' pain. This is based upon the Netflix documentary *The Dark Tourist* to discuss the main elements of dark tourism theory. Through the 'edu-tainment' side of dark tourist attractions, the question is raised of to what extent dark tourists are genuinely interested in the other's suffering, or if they are just moved by the pleasure-maximization logic. A compelling argument is made that those dark tourists are unable to create empathy with victims.

In the ninth and final chapter, Cyril examines the duty of care for the tourism and hospitality industry to carry out regular and robust staff safety and security checks. This is developed through a qualitative, interpretive study among hospitality businesses in New Zealand. Aside from the safety benefits which he aligns to guest and employee assurance, Cyril highlights the risks faced by hotels and other hospitality operations as 'soft targets' since they are not fortified, are likely to contain multiple nationalities and can paralyse economies.

It is recommended here that this is an area of business practice that merits further investigation of the role of international tour operators and online providers in supporting suppliers with such security measures. In the wake of high-profile cases such as the attack on a Tunisian beach in 2015, which led to legal action against high profile global tour operators. This aligns with Oliveros-Ocampo et al.'s contention on national travel advice since the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office underwent significant review in communications. With the world poised to re-start travel, through package and independent travel, the issues raised in this book from terrorism through to pandemic, alert us to the pressing need for continued action and research.

All in all, the scale and structure of the book make it appropriate for practitioners, policymakers, academics, undergraduate or postgraduate students undertaking research and applying research to practice in the field of tourism, terrorism and safety. It shows the limitations of tourism security in an ever-changing world, further underlining the need for contributions of knowledge through empirical insight into tourist behaviours and destination responses, alongside the thought-provoking methodological implications of connecting knowledge to the behaviours and mindsets of the perpetrators of safety risks.

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*SUBMITTED: MAY 2021*

*PUBLISHED ONLINE: 18 OCT 2021*