

## BOOK REVIEWS

### **MANUALE DI GEOGRAFIA DEL TURISMO. DAL GRAND TOUR AL PIANO STRATEGICO**

LORENZO BAGNOLI

UTET Università, Torino, 2018, 272 pp., ISBN 978-88-6008-544-3

**Reviewed by** ANTONIETTA IVONA,  
University of Bari, Italy

The "Tourism Geography Handbook", now in its fourth edition, helps to build systematic knowledge of the discipline by presenting a review of themes, and the literature that has dealt with it, according to their appearance in Italian scientific production, up to the most recent updates. The approaches followed are many, and each of them has suggested different themes and tools: from the economic to the political, from the human to the environmental and to the perceptive. The Handbook is addressed to university students - but also to all those who for the first time approach the subject - placing itself as an agile instrument of study or work where the treatment of each single theme is carried out through an appropriate but suitable scientific language to the understanding of all readers. In this fourth edition, the exemplification takes place through emblematic cases more or less known, from the European Capitals of Culture to the tourism of video games, to show and demonstrate how they can adapt, modify and transform the places, and especially the ways in which these are presented, depending on the demand of tourists. A useful book to understand how best to value one of the most important resources of our Italy and our Europe. Tourism has become so much a part of human behavior that it represents a habit, a foregone conclusion. But what is tourism? Although this is a current phenomenon and involves and involves a large number of people, there is no common definition, as there is no agreement on its pre-eminent characteristics. Moreover, if until a couple of decades ago tourism was essentially due to a permanent holiday, induced by a desire for escape, today it knows a variety of ways, forms and motivations in continuous increase and change: the cultural journey, the trekking adventure, the food

and wine tour, the travels of the elderly, the study holiday and many more. This manual of geography of tourism presents an organic and systematic mapping of the discipline, reconstructing how it has evolved in Italy since the Fifties. Each aspect is analyzed, also through real and current examples that help the reader to understand, in order to give back a vivid and complete picture. Through numerous case studies, the Author wants to demonstrate how places, and especially ways in which they are presented, can be adapted, modified and transformed according to the demand of tourists. The volume is divided into six chapters and each of them is dedicated to one of the main themes of the geography of tourism presented according to the Italian scientific-disciplinary tradition in the last fifty years. The first three chapters place particular emphasis on tourism as an economic asset and just as other economic assets are characterized by demand, supply and a market. The difference, however, with other economic goods, is its immobile supply and, instead, a great mobility of financial flows and of people that tourism is able to generate.

In particular, first chapter "Tourism and geography" highlights how the Geography of Tourism is a branch of Geography and how much the disciplinary tradition in Italy is consolidated. Toschi, in 1947, was the first geographer to deal tourism phenomenon with a methodological approach; he transferred reflections of economists about the transfer of money from a non-tourist region to a tourist to studies of geography of tourism; furthermore he elaborated some interesting considerations on the human aspects of tourism, above all concerning motivations of the trip and tourist flows deriving from movement of

people from place of habitual residence to other destinations. In his analysis of tourist flows, Toschi considered environmental, social, landscape and other consequences that tourism phenomenon imprints on territory. In addition to examining subsequent methodological approaches, Bagnoli reflects on "place", on new meanings of "landscape" and "territory" and on modern inconsistency of tourist region as, currently, it is the result of visitors' perception «If on one hand, passive tourism region no longer exists or perhaps there are as many as tourist collectives that" perceive "the same place, on the other active tourism region does not even exist anymore or maybe, even in this case, there are as many as there are social groups that from time to time, driven by different motivations, are going to abandon their habitual residence for a short time" (page 15). Thus, the Author, sharing the view of Schimdt di Friedberg (2005), underlines the role of Tourism Geographer not simply as a compiler of tourist guides or lists of tourism resources but his professionalism goes far beyond «mountains, rivers, capitals».

Object of Chapter 2 "Tourism and Economic Geography" are the typically economic effects of tourism movement; analysis therefore includes tourist demand and offer, circulation and distribution of capital, migration, employment and vocational training. Finally, particular attention is given to the issue of territorial integration and international cooperation. Territorial cohesion policies look to tourism in two ways: either as an object of a cohesion policy or as an instrument of that policy.

Geographic-political themes are dealt with in third chapter. Bagnoli still considers useful to highlight the difference between Political Geography, the branch of geographic science that studies how the constituted power administers the territory and, in the case of volume, its tourism policies, from Geopolitics that is the study of all aspects of State territorial organization and their effects on tourist flows. He concludes that in both cases, political action has had and is of considerable importance on tourism. Examination of European and national tourism policies is interesting to understand the development path of a strategic economic sector such as tourism. In particular, the text focuses on Local Tourist Systems and the Strategic Development Plan of Tourism, both Italian strategies to promote new proposals in the tourism offer (in the first case) and new lines in tourism policies, in the second case.

Chapter 4, "Tourism and Human geography", focuses on three key ideas: identity and travel motivation; types of tourism; new tourism approach. If the traditional geography of tourism identified tourists through two characteristics: leisure and visit over twenty-four hours outside their usual residence, contemporary geography of tourism needs to broaden horizons of analysis. With the evolution of geographic thought in postmodern sense, much more attentive to reality as perceived by the subjects, the meaning of tourists is also charged with identifying meanings: rather than objectively studying what a tourist is, today the research investigates who feels like a tourist or who society feels like a tourist. The concept of tourism makes sense only in societies that recognize it as a specific activity, name it and attribute certain traits to it (Volli, 1993). Profiling of the different travel motivations, is also an opportunity to deepen a closely related geographical theme, such as environmental protection, the authenticity of cultures, the self-awareness of the tourist, the deterritorialization, the tourist stereotypes, the *dépaysement* and so on.

After having briefly recalled the evolution of contemporary geographic thought from determinism to sustainable development, Chapter 5 is dedicated to the impact of tourism activities on the territory. The Author prefers an optimistic vision according to which the choices of local communities can combine, in tourism sector, environmental protection and durable economic development, through, for example, creation of naturalist areas, literary parks, ecomuseums and brands of quality.

Finally, the construction of the tourist imitations of a region is outlined in last chapter "Tourism and Image". In order for a locality to become a tourist destination it is necessary to take care of accessibility, receptivity, safety, but, underlines Bagnoli, it is also essential to create a suitable image for the complex current market. After a careful examination of multiple tools useful for the dissemination of an adequate tourist image, the Author introduces several interesting case studies that help readers to understand the transformation process of a tourist destination.

In conclusion, it represents a valuable scientific contribution and a precious book to understand how best to value one of the most important economic resources of a country.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### LEADERSHIP AND THE RISE OF GREAT POWERS

YAN XUETONG

Princeton University Press, 2019, 272 pp., ISBN 978-88-6008-544-3

Reviewed by ANTONIETTA IVONA,  
University of Bari, Italy

Global geopolitical balances will change much more rapidly in the next decade than in previous decades. The current bipolarity between the two world economic powers, China and USA is, perhaps, destined to become a concentration of decision-making power in the Asian area. This and other hypotheses on future international relations are central to the reasoning articulated in Yan Xuetong's book *Leadership and the Rise of Great Powers*. Unlike Western theories, which link the power of a nation to institutions, to the political form of the State, to governance, according to Beijing theories the independent variable that gives shape and speed to changes in the global order is leadership. The author is a leading academic authority in China and dean of Tsinghua University's Institute of Modern International Relations, considered the country's leading university, where many of the other Communist Party leaders including secretary Xi Jinping graduated. The theories that Xuetong presents in the book are the result of the intense debate underway in China, aimed at understanding the characteristics of the current challenge among the great powers. The book is published in Great Britain and the United States as confirmation of the fact that the Chinese political summit intends to inaugurate a new strategy in international relations with the West. The author claims that the strategic interests of a state are defined by its "all-encompassing capabilities", which consist of four elements: politics, military apparatus, economy, culture. It is on the basis of the strength of these capacities that a state can have an interest in maintaining a *status quo* of world domination; to try to get this dominion if it is an emerging power, it can point to a regional hegemony if it is an average power, it can protect its survival if it is a weak state. Of the four state capacities, the last three are "resource elements", while the political one is the "operating element" which applies a multiplicative effect on the other three elements. As a consequence, the improvement or decline of a state's capacity is determined by the political capacity of that country.

The question, therefore, that Xuetong asks itself is: what is it that determines the political capacity of a State? The national leadership that can be inactive, conservative, proactive, or aggressive and which, in all cases, is strengthened when it makes reforms and when it changes the international reality. Yan defines political leadership through the lens of morality, specifically the ability of a government to fulfill its domestic responsibility and maintain international strategic credibility. Examining leadership at the personal, national, and international levels, Yan shows how rising states like China transform the international order by reshaping power distribution and norms. Yan also considers the reasons for America's diminishing international stature even as its economy, education system, military, political institutions, and technology hold steady. The polarization of China and the United States will not result in another Cold War scenario, but their mutual distrust will ultimately drive the world center from Europe to East Asia. The book consists of eight chapters. The first chapter "Morality, Power, and Authority" investigates the shift of the center of world power over the centuries. Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States were successively the world's dominant states after the formation of a global system of states in the sixteenth century. Along with the changes of dominant state came occasional shifts of the world power center from one region to another. Scholars of IR have long sought to trace and explain how various great powers have risen and fallen relative to one another over the past five centuries. The second chapter is dedicated to the leadership and strategic preferences as mentioned above. Based on the definitions in chapter 1 of morality, capability, power, and authority, and the roles of leadership types as discussed in previous chapter 2, chapter 3 "Corollaries of International Change" will expound a new theory about changes in international configurations, norms, orders, and systems. As a branch of international

relations realism, this theory follows fundamental realist assumptions, paramount among which is that the nature of interstate relations has not changed fundamentally throughout human history. The chapter 3 attributes the international redistribution of power to the different capacities between the national leaderships of the nascent states and the dominant state. The bipolarity that occurred in the second decade of the 21st century is a case that illustrates this argument. Nevertheless, the current bipolarization has coincided with the displacement of the global geopolitical center. Although both cases result from the redistribution of power, they occurred in different conditions. The chapter 4 "Power Redistribution and World Center" reflects on three aspects of the problem. They are the key factor driving the current bipolarization between China and the United States; the conditions that could trigger a global cold war; and the reasons for the displacement of global decision-making power. The theme of the fifth chapter is the fact that international norms change according to the conduct of the foreign affairs of the Member States in an international system. In distinguishing the international order from the international system in chapter 3, we have noticed that both the main international values and the international norms are components of the international order. Since international standards are formed under the guidance of traditional international values, the character of the first will change along with changes in the second. Therefore, the normative character of the international

order changes according to changes in traditional values and norms. When emerging states espouse values different from those of previous dominant states, value conflicts become part of strategic competition between nascent and dominant states. This is discussed in the sixth chapter "International mainstream values". Chapter 7 reflects on the use of the expression "transformation of the international system", often used casually to refer to changes in international orders, or configurations, or norms, or actors, rather than to the system as a whole. We therefore need to rethink this expression, especially when it refers to emerging countries. An international system transformation is a complete and complex change that includes changes in the type of actors, configurations, rules, orders and leadership. Based on the analyzes in the previous chapters of the relationship between leadership and changes in configuration, norms, political values and systems, this chapter will illustrate through historical cases how leadership types influence the transformations of the international system. The final chapter selects both ancient Chinese and global modern cases to illustrate the theoretical arguments made in this book. These cases vary according to their geographical location and size, their historical and cultural background and their political systems. In conclusion, using the point of view of classical Chinese political theory, the book *Leadership and the Rise of Great Powers* offers a provocative and alternative perspective on the change of the domination of nations on the global stage.