



**Raoul Bianchi, Marcus Stephenson (2013).**

***Tourism and Citizenship: Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities in the Global Order.* London and New York: Routledge, 280 pages.**

**ISBN 978-0-415-70738-1**

Reviewed by *Inge Hermann*<sup>1</sup> and *Ruud Welten*<sup>2</sup>

Received: 24/07/2014

<sup>1</sup> Senior lecturer in Tourism Management, Hospitality Business School, Saxion University of Applied Science, Handelskade 75, 7400 AM Deventer, The Netherlands, Tel: +31 6 304 082 12, E-mail: i.hermann@saxion.nl

<sup>2</sup> Associate professor of Ethics & Global Citizenship at Saxion University of Applied Sciences and assistant professor of Philosophy at Tilburg University, both in the Netherlands.

© 2015 International University College. All rights reserved

**Citation** Raoul Bianchi, Marcus Stephenson (2013). *Tourism and Citizenship: Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities in the Global Order.* London and New York: Routledge, 280 pages. ISBN 978-0-415-70738-1 Reviewed by *Inge Hermann* and *Ruud Welten*, *European Journal of Tourism Research* 9, pp. 147-149

At a time when it seems that we “are living in an increasingly mobile world and that international travel has become more ‘democratic’” (p. 2), a book that challenges these assumptions in the light of recent global changes and increasingly complex and unequal cross-border movements seems appropriate. By examining human mobility through the lens of global citizenship, the book illustrates the different flows of international travel and the consequences for the ways in which understanding of citizenship is imagined, reconstructed and institutionalized. The authors contend that “international travel represents a quintessential expression of a more democratic, mobile and inclusive world order of consumer citizens” (p.3). In its place, they consider these changes in citizenship definitions and practices to be caused by a range of factors that go beyond static rights and duties controlled and enforced within a

BOOK REVIEW

geo-political framework and challenge the libertarian stance that participating in international tourism is an indicator of a ‘civilized life’ or (global) citizenship. After a comprehensive introduction the book commences with six chapters to illustrate the manifold relationships between tourism and citizenship, with a particular focus on the alignments between the right to freedom of movement and the right to travel.

Chapter 1 presents a comprehensive overview of the main concepts and theoretical viewpoints that have historically framed our understandings of citizenship. By using Marshall’s modern conception of citizenship as a starting point, the chapter shows how the expansion of leisure and travel was closely tied to state interventions and social programs that underpinned leisure and travel as social rights and citizenship benefits to be enjoyed by all members. However, from the 1980s

onwards the role of the state as benevolent protector has become progressively undermined and transformed by an emergent neoliberal agenda, which “fuelled the commodification of leisure and ‘free time’ and the shift toward more market-oriented tourism provision” (p. 35). Consequently, the chapter illustrates how the ‘marketization of tourism’ nowadays has overshadowed the social dimension of travel to a point at which the provision of subsidized or low-cost leisure and travel is perceived as a market distortion and a potential risk for economic growth and development.

Chapter 2 continues with a thorough analysis of the transformation of citizenship from a modern liberal conception “anchored within the confines of the sovereign territorial nation-state towards a much more fluid and multilayered set of ideas informed and constituted within a variety of post-national discourses of cosmopolitanism, cultural rights and multicultural citizenship” (p. 46). The chapter brings forward ‘mobile citizenship’ as a framework through which to understand the various ways in which tourism has become a major feature of global mobility and transnational notions of citizenship, realigning the balance of rights and duties beyond the traditional confines of the nation state. Drawing on several examples and recent studies, the chapter illustrates that the rapid globalization of capital and markets has major implications for the expansive nature of mobility and freedom, especially noticeably in the emergence of ‘new’ global elite classes. Conversely, the authors give a sharp account of the growing population of so-called ‘non-tourists’, those residing within national boundaries that are immobile and/or stateless. Bearing in mind the effect of international tourism on these opposing groups, they argue that the capacity to be mobile does not instantly translate to notions of global citizenship or cosmopolitanism; instead they advocate the acknowledgement of flexible citizenship or more rooted forms of cosmopolitanism. In practice, however, liberal models of citizenship that claim to incorporate notions of multiculturalism often lack a sense

of cosmopolitan realism, as they have a tendency to reduce minority groups to homogeneous entities within the unitary borders of the state. The role of international tourism is to embrace notions of global citizenship or cosmopolitanism that are neither put in place by the state nor directed by the demand of global capital.

Chapter 3 explores “the diverse and contradicting interpretations of freedom that helped to frame and support the right to travel and to be a tourist” (p. 73). In doing so, the authors examine the institutionalization of neoliberal logic that has transformed international tourism from a privileged freedom into a universal right. Hence, although more people on a global scale nowadays have the freedom to travel, the chapter illustrates vividly that international tourism continues to expand in an uneven and exclusive manner. Although the rise of so-called ‘ethical’ and ‘responsible’ tourism would appear to offer alternatives for this neoliberal emphasis on individual freedoms and global market trades, the authors argue that travel has instead become a progressively marketised commodity, the consumption of which is increasingly based on having the ‘right credentials’.

Chapter 4 provides a detailed overview of the debates on the relationship between mobility and rights, such as rights to travel. It also sketches the far-reaching changes concerning freedom to travel in the last century. The chapter develops several ideas of practices that advance or hinder the freedom of movement and travel, and draws special attention to how the rise of modernity in law and politics gave birth to the modern passport.

Chapter 5 elaborates on the relationship between tourism and citizenship by focusing on topics like peace, security and risk. International tourism has long been portrayed as a means of stimulating growth, prosperity and peaceful relations among citizens around the world. The chapter, however, clearly illustrates that although political violence and

terrorist attacks have reinforced the notion of tourism as a form of cosmopolitanism and citizenship, they have also raised serious concerns about the perception of tourism as a universal right. Although tensions exist between the proclaimed unfettered right to travel evinced by the corporate tourism industry and new state-orchestrated discourses of risk and (in) security, they have increasingly become aligned, first and foremost to serve tourists. The authors continue by stating that while tourism can act as a vehicle for peace and social justice, without a thorough understanding of the structural and geo-political entanglements between states and the tourism industries it remains merely a promising concept.

Chapter 6 explores the connections between neoliberal discourses of rights and emerging discourses of cosmopolitanism and global citizenship, particularly those related to transnational civil society activism and tourists' participation in 'ethical' and 'responsible' forms of travel. By doing so, the authors ask if "such forms of travel genuinely imply the exercise of a global civic responsibility and a moral commitment towards the people, places and cultures they visit" (p. 174). However, they also provide examples of justice tourism, which is often organized along the lines of profit making and state regulations, opening up the possibility of transcending material, socio-ethnic and political borders.

*Tourism and Citizenship* is a dense book, well-argued and wide-ranging in its concerns. The book evokes provocative questions, yet it

also left the reviewers with some ambivalence. The discussions in the book are mostly based around contemporary debates on (global) citizenship and tourism, which certainly have their merits, but also their shortcomings with regards to the historical and philosophical conundrum of tourism and notions of global citizenship. Regarding 'global citizenship' as the translation of the Greek word *cosmopolitanism*, and referring to the Stoic argument based on the rejection of Aristotle's emphasis on the 'polis' or city, humanity started with the recognition that we are not all merely born in a certain place, a walled city, but in the world. Bearing this in mind, the authors seem to describe global citizenship mostly as a predominantly contemporary phenomenon rather than a moral commitment. Consequently, one could question whether it is possible to discuss rights, freedoms and responsibilities in the global order without an ethical framework. Especially in the final chapters, ethics are mainly considered as a discourse, which makes all forms of 'ethical' tourism vulnerable indeed. Resultantly, even though the alternative of 'justice' tourism is a promising one, as long as it is not supported by ethical theory, the concepts will remain empty. Nonetheless, we strongly recommend the book to tourism scholars, students and all those interested in knowing more about the unfolding relationship between tourism and notions of citizenship, all the more so for the opportunity of raising a much needed debate.