Music and Tourism: On the Road Again

We all experience those moments when we find that someone else has done what we really wanted to do, but hadn't even thought of... Well, this book is like that for me. The majority of my travel experiences revolve around music, from Melbourne to Cuba via Memphis and everywhere in between. Consequently, this review has a deeply personal element. It is also clear that this was a very personal experience for the authors.

One of the greatest joys of researching in the field of tourism exists hand in hand with its greatest risk—by studying what we love, we run the risk of our work becoming far too anecdotal and academically unfocused. To their credit, the authors have avoided this, presenting the reader with a broad-ranging discourse on the many elements in which music and tourism are linked.

Yet another publication in Channel View's diverse "Aspects of Tourism" series, Music and Tourism: On the Road Again takes a primarily Western perspective of travel defined by musical experiences, from cultural interaction and musical landscapes to festivals and the obligatory discussion on authenticity.

However, this publication is more than a list of musical meanderings around the world. The authors come from a geography background, which has provided them with a strong theoretical framework on which to build. Consequently, they have included a detailed discussion of musical landscapes as tourist sites that includes the places that inspired songs as well as where they were produced and performed (Chapter 3). They also include the tourism business aspect, such as commercially guided tours.

In the following chapter, they acknowledge and discuss economic issues such as investment, development, and employment (especially of musicians). They also devote an entire chapter to a discussion on music festivals in terms of economic development, politics, and the environment. This particular chapter also encompasses a postmodern
In a personally significant chapter (for myself), they look at music in terms of nostalgia and pleasure, and include a most interesting discussion of those fans who follow bands around the world, forming their own community. The example of Grateful Dead fans, the Deadheads, is typical of this most fascinating phenomenon.

If I have a criticism to make, it is that the authors do not present the book (and their extensive research) as part of a greater picture—they infer this, but do not end in the classic manner of suggesting areas for further research. I suspect this was a conscious decision; however, some summation of their work and the gaps and emerging areas as they see them would give the work greater influence.

I for one look forward to further work in this field from the authors and hope that others will find aspects that require more study. I may even get to write something on this myself one day!

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