

Chapter 6

International Relations and Geo-political Approaches to Tourism

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Introduction

With more people traveling abroad, tourism has become a vital source of international relations. Thus, as Lanfant and Graburn (1992, p. 94) noted, 'tourism is not just a matter of national growth but must be conceptualized as part of international relations'. Likewise, Hall (1994) asserts that tourism's increasingly international nature makes it inextricably linked to the field of international relations. According to the World Tourism Organization (2020), worldwide cross-border tourism reached a record number of 1.5 billion travelers in 2019. Global tourism is expected to reach 1.8 billion by 2030 at a growth rate of 4–5% annually, with pre-COVID-19 growth returning in 2023 to many countries and regions. This large mobility of individuals of different nationalities requires considerable cooperation on political, economic, and cultural levels (Mosedale, 2011). Much of the tourism industry, particularly tour operations and air transport, is dominated by multinational corporations, which have belatedly gained recognition as international actors (Zapata Campos et al., 2018). Such massive movement of individuals is not only shaped by the economic and political relations between different states, but it has affected the course of those relations.

The increasingly growing number of tourists crossing national borders annually, as well as globalization processes and the growing internationalization of tourism businesses and their supply chain, has made tourism as one of the most far-reaching geopolitical practices of the twenty-first century (Hall, 2017; Mostafanezhad, 2018, Gillen & Mostafanezhad, 2019). Thus, it has long been recognized that a stable, peaceful economy is conducive to tourism's flourishing, and political or economic change can have a serious impact on tourism flows and destination perceptions (Richter, 1989; Hall, 1994). Although, democracy is not a prerequisite for tourism. In many cases authoritarian states may even be conducive for the development of tourism, as in the case of Portugal and Spain in the 1960s and 1970s, as it can allow for the rapid development of resort and transport infrastructure (Hall, 1994). International tourism development and regulations are therefore directly and indirectly connected with politics and

international relations. This could be marked by a number of areas (political, economic, and sociocultural), as well as issues (intercultural understanding, travel security, democracy development, and environmental protection), and stakeholder groups (tourists, destinations, hosts, employees, businesses, governments, developing countries, non-governmental organizations, multinational companies).

Research into tourism development has until recently remained largely disconnected from questions of international relations, political economy and critical geopolitics. However, interest in this area continues to grow. The chapter is structured as follows. The key theories in international relations are first reviewed and then discussed in relations to international tourism development. The next sections then discuss tourism within a wider globalisation, political economy, and geopolitical context before conclusions and a future research agenda are noted.

Key Theories in International Relations

As a multidisciplinary subject, international relations refer to the study of the relations of states with each other and with international organizations and certain sub-national entities (e.g., bureaucracies, political parties, and interest groups) (McClelland, 1960, 1971; Tanter & Ullman, 2015). International relations encompass a number of theories that attempt to explain how states operate within the international systems. Table 6.1 summarizes some of the key theories of international relations in the context of international tourism.

In order to better understand the motivations and goals driving policy decisions, it is important to understand key theories in international relations. International relations can be classified into three major strands, namely realism, liberalism, and constructivism (Table 6.2). The theories explain how international systems work as well as how nations view the world and engage with one another. Ranging from straightforward realist concepts to liberal, equality-centric strategies, these theories explain the directions that governments take in regard to an international political issue or concern.

Table 6.1. Key theories in international relations.

<i>Theory</i>	<i>Definition and description</i>
Realism	Focuses on power and state-to-state interaction, viewing international politics as a struggle for power among states. According to this theory, states are motivated by national interests and governments act primarily to maintain their security and influence over other countries.
Liberalism	Focuses on how states can cooperate with each other to create an international society that promotes peace and prosperity for all individuals regardless of their nationality or status. This theory emphasizes the importance of individual rights and freedoms as well as democracy.
Constructivism	International relations are regarded as being constructed through reciprocal interactions between states. This theory purports that international relations were about power, not about collective security or economic development.
Marxism	Marxism is a philosophy of thought that advocates class struggle as the motor force of history. Marxists believe that capitalism creates the conditions for conflict among countries by creating economic inequalities among countries and by forcing some countries to compete for resources with others.
Feminism	Focuses on gender inequality and how it affects nations and their relationship with each other.

Table 6.2. Three main perspectives on international relations.

<i>Theories</i>	<i>Realism</i>	<i>Liberalism</i>	<i>Constructivism</i>
Key contributors	Thucydides (460-395 BC) Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679)	John Locke (1632–1704) Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) Adam Smith (1723–1790) Woodrow Wilson (1856–1924)	Alexander Wendt (1958-) Friedrich Kratochwil (1944-) Nicholas Onuf (1941-) John Ruggie (1944–2021)
Main theoretical proposition	Self-interested states compete for power and security, anarchy, self-help and national interest	Concern for power overridden by economic/political considerations (desire for prosperity, commitment to liberal views), collective security, international regimes, complex interdependence and transnational relations	State behavior shaped by elite beliefs, collective norms and values, and social and cultural identities.
Major variations	Neo-realism: Distribution of power decides outcome	Neo-liberal institutionalism: international system anarchic, but centric institutions created by states in their self-interest do constrain anarchy	Critical constructivism: challenges the state-centric constructivism of Wendt
Main actors	States	States, international institutions, global corporations, and commercial interest	Individuals (especially elites), NGOs and transnational networks
Main instruments	Military power and state diplomacy	Varies (international institutions, economic exchange, promotion of democracy)	Ideas and discourse
Core concerns	War and security; how vulnerable, self-interested states survive in an environment where they are uncertain about the intentions and capabilities of other states	Institutionalized peace and prosperity: how self-serving actors learn to see the advantages of coordinating behavior through rules / organizations in order to achieve collective gains	Social groups' shared meanings and images: how ideas, images, and identities develop, change, and shape world politics
Approach to peace	Protect sovereign autonomy and deter rivals through military preparedness and alliances	Institutional reform through democratization, open markets, and international law and organization	Activists who promote progressive ideas and encourage states to adhere to norms for appropriate behavior

(Continued)

Table 6.2. (Continued)

<i>Theories</i>	<i>Realism</i>	<i>Liberalism</i>	<i>Constructivism</i>
Global outlook	Pessimistic; great powers are locked in a relentless security competition	Optimistic: cooperative view of human nature and a belief in progress	Agnostic: global prospect hinges on the content of prevailing ideas and values
Main limitation	Does not account for progress and change in international relations	Tends to ignore the role of power	Does not explain which power structures and social conditions allow for changes in values, better at describing the past than anticipating the future.
Current significance in policymaking	High	High	Low

Source: Adapted from Walt (1988).

These theories offer fundamental arguments such as the description of the international political structure, the key actors of that structure, main instruments adopted by these actors, core concerns, as well as the way in which they approach peace and global outlook. The next sections positions tourism within the international relations theoretical framework.

International Relations and Tourism

Following the theoretical discussion on key theories in international relations, we focus on how international relations and tourism are intertwined. The tourism industry and international relations encompass a wide range of topics, and their relationships develop in relation to globalization, borders, tourism mobilities, and their potential contribution to world peace. As discussed earlier, while tour operators and airline companies are among the tourism actors operating internationally in tourism, tourism mobilities can also be affected by political and economic turmoil in one part of the world, altering tourism flows and affecting the economy in other parts (Hall, 2010). For example, the Russian invasion of Ukraine not only affected the flow of tourists in and out of the two countries, but also access to their airspace, increasing flight costs and times to destinations reached via their airspace and therefore the flow of tourists.

International tourism has always been subject to international politics. The mobility of people across national boundaries has political implications (Baerenholdt, 2013), which sometimes can be manipulated by government for geopolitical purposes as an instrument of political leverage between nations. This reflects the observation of Molz (2010) that views tourism is as much a political terrain as a cultural practice. Azcárate et al. (2021, p. 18) concur, framing this as 'mobility geopolitics', and they argue that tourism is increasingly used by states as a 'geopolitical and political economic weapon of choice that often fuels discriminatory social imaginaries of domestic and international destinations' (p. 18). One notable example of

which included restrictions on travel, notably on overflying and landing rights for South African airlines (Pirie, 1990). This also had an interesting indirect effect on tourism in the region as some international connections, for example from Australia to South Africa, shifted to Zimbabwe as a result of government sanctions and restrictions of trade with South Africa. The longstanding US sanctions and embargo against Cuba is another noteworthy example of mobility restrictions which significantly affects US citizens and residents wishing to visit Cuba as well as sanctions against cruise lines (Gordon, 2016). Furthermore, tourism has always been an effective policy tool for politicians to use due to its international and high-profile nature and its consequent economic and social benefits, e.g. visiting friends and family (VFR). For instance, the relaxations of travel restrictions by the US toward Cuba are one of the examples of using tourism as a political instrument and tool to achieve foreign policy objectives while also responding to domestic pressure groups.

Tourism has also been used as a tool by governments in their wider sanction regime. For instance, following the shooting down of a Russian military aircraft over Turkey, Russia immediately reacted and imposed a range of sanctions on travel to Turkey, including the sale ban of charter vacations to Turkey for Russian citizens. The sanctions against Russia following the Russian military intervention in Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea 2014 by many Western countries also include travel bans which affected the overall mobility of Russian citizens wishing to visit EU and other sanctioning countries. As a result, tourist flows from Russia to Europe were significantly reduced and sanctions contributed to the collapse of the Russian ruble, impacted the image of Russia in tourism and investment terms, and contributed to the Russian financial crisis which led to the decline of leading Russian players in the tourist market (Ovcharov et al., 2015). In another case, Popesku and Hall (2004) noted that Serbia became isolated from the international tourism market throughout the 1990s due to economic sanctions that were then in place, along with regional and political change. The resulting currency devaluation in sanctioned countries is also likely to restrict outbound travel, which could lead to the overall reduction of tourists and tourist expenditures even without sanctions on nationals (Seyfi & Hall, 2020a).

In addition, governments have deliberately used tourism to further their purposes, influencing where and how it occurs. In some cases, governments block their citizens from traveling either by outright banning them (as was the case in Taiwan and the two Koreas previously), often for economic reasons; by restricting the countries they allow their citizens to visit (as in the former Soviet bloc); by issuing exit visas at the government's discretion (again, the former Soviet bloc); by imposing prohibitive travel taxes (as in Thailand); or restricting the export of domestic currency and by issuing travel advisories (Toubes & Araújo-Vila, 2021). In addition, the Japanese and Taiwanese governments, for example, have historically actively promoted overseas travel among their citizens in order to redress their enormous trade surplus with the USA (Hall, 1994).

Tourism has increasingly become a significant sector for economic and social development of many developing countries although this role has often been subject to criticism with respect to the outflow of capital and uneven distribution of wealth. The tourism industry is an important contributor to closer international relations, cultural, civilization, and economic relations between countries of the world, particularly between neighboring countries which, it has long been argued potentially leads to greater peace, security, and stability (Ap & Var, 1990), although more recent research questions this view (Becken & Carmignani, 2016). Brown (1998) also viewed tourism as a 'first cover of international relations' and argues that tourism contributes to showing the reality of the countries and societies throughout the world in order to obtain gain and uphold political positions. Table 6.3 summarizes some of the key interna-

Table 6.3. The relationship between international relations and tourism.

<i>International relations concerns</i>	<i>Tourism-related effects</i>
War/conflict	Discourages visitors to within a wide radius; knock-on economic impact; tourism infrastructure damaged
Economic competition	Tourism chosen as 'easy' to implement
Currency movements/ devaluations/ inflation	Tour operators and tourists switch to cheaper countries
Global integration	Tourism draws 'traditional' or isolationist societies into global mainstream
Growth/development/ restructuring	Tourism supplants agriculture in LDCs; replaces manufacturing in DCs
Neocolonialism, core-periphery relationships	Tourism as agent of perpetuation of colonially imposed structural dependency
Secessionist/independence/ radical change movements	Target tourists to hurt government financially or draw attention to cause
Promotion of ideology/way of life	Tourism as image enhancer, notably via mega-events
Discouragement of others' ideology or policies	Travel embargoes; extra-territorial legislation
International co-operation	Regional marketing strategies
Deregulation	Higher/lower fares; better/worse service; travel safety issues
Sovereignty	Country may facilitate tourism to disputed territory to strengthen its claim
Flows of people across borders	Possible regional integration; may foreshadow or predict aid flows
Currency flows across borders	International balance of trade affected
Foreign/outside investment in destinations	New political power arrangements; rise of new interests; capital flows
Imposition or removal of visa requirements	Barometer of countries' relations and alliances

Source: After Hall (1994)

Globalization and International Tourism

With globalization, the world is becoming increasingly interconnected, demonstrated by the expanded flow of information, technology, capital, goods, services, and people (Dwyer, 2015). Globalization is the process of integrating national and regional economies, societies and cultures through the global network of trade, communication, finance, immigration, and transportation (Hall, 2005). In his study, Dwyer (2015) identified five main types of forces that drive globalization: economic, technology, demographic, social and political drivers. However, he concluded that: 'No single driver or trend dominates. Each influences the others to a greater and lesser degree and will have varying impacts on tourism destination different regions, countries, industry sectors and tourist behaviour' (2015, pp. 329–330).

Tourism development is shaped by many contemporary factors due to globalization's complex and multifaceted structure. By expanding markets and integrating societies, globalization affects tourism development (Song et al., 2018). As Brown (1998) noted:

... tourism exemplifies many aspects of globalization. The spread of tourism to the farthest reaches of the planet, and people's willingness to travel to places their parents had never even heard of ... demonstrate the extent to which tourists themselves conceptualize the world as a single place (Brown, 1998, p. 12).

Tourism and globalization contribute to economic growth and connectedness (Fahimi et al., 2018). Tourism, for instance, stimulates economic growth by increasing revenue, employment opportunities, infrastructure development, and currency balance (Ehigiamusoe, 2021). As a result of globalization, increased trade openness can increase market access, service access, and commerce, accelerating tourism growth and improving infrastructure. Despite many crisis events affecting globalization (Witt, 2019a; Witt 2019b), such as economic and financial crises, no force had effectively resisted or stopped it before COVID-19 (Niewiadomski, 2020). According to Dwyer (2015) globalization and tourism are inextricably linked; that is, while tourist development contributes to the economic, social, and political dimensions of globalization, it has also become a major beneficiary of this phenomenon. In addition, the globalization of the tourism industry has contributed to the fragmentation of tourism manufacturing systems and the transnationalization of ownership structures, marketing arrangements, the outsourcing of services, and the transfer of expertise (McGrew, 2011).

Cohen (2012) contends that the growing number of political, economic, and environmental crises poses a threat to both globalization and the international travel and tourism industry. Furthermore, economic integration because of globalization potentially limits national policy capability in some areas and has served to reinforce the privatization and market liberalization of national political-economic frameworks by facilitating the transfer of international capital (Hall, 2022). Sabir and Gorus (2019) criticize globalisation and argue that it has weakened environmental protection while promoting economic expansion. Bridge (2002) also argued that environmental challenges such as climate change, cross-boundary water, air pollution and over-fishing of the ocean are linked to globalization. A point also picked up in some of the tourism and global environmental change literature (Hall, 2022). Moore (2017, p. 3) argued, ‘While there is no question that environmental change accelerated sharply after 1850, and especially after 1945, it seems equally fruitless to explain these transformations without identifying how they fit into patterns of power, capital and nature’. As a result, Hall (2022) asked whether the question should be that is it a case that tourism is not just part of the Anthropocene (the age of humans) geological epoch, but is instead a part of the age of capital—the capitalocene—‘an ugly word for an ugly system’ (Moore, 2017, p. 15), which is shaped by the seemingly endless accumulation of capital and its corresponding effects on nature and society. As Harvey (2018b, p. 424) describes it: ‘compound growth (endless accumulation of capital) at three percent forever, which becomes more and more stressful as the exponential growth curve leaps upwards.’ For example, Cohen (2012) views the threat of a profound structural crisis in the global economic system as the most significant emerging counter trend to globalization which would have significant implications for tourism. Nevertheless, Hall (2022) suggested that tourism is often regarded as a way to respond to or fix overaccumulation but, that the nature of capitalism is such that the ‘fix’ only serves to reinforce the system that created the problem in the first place because it remains predicated on expansion and growth.

Political Economy of International Tourism

The term political economy refers to the study of the relationship between what is called the economy and its non-economic (political, social, psychological and geographical) contexts (Mosedale, 2011). Bianchi (2018, p. 88) defines political economy as a term that ‘comprises the study of the socio-economic forces and power relations that are constituted in the process of the production of commodities for the market and the divisions, conflicts and inequalities

which are widely used in social sciences. These are *Marxian political economics* which rely on a close interpretation of Marx's writings and historical materialism (e.g., Harvey, 2006, 2010, 2018a, b); *regulationists* who are interested in the regulatory framework (structure) of capitalism (e.g., Boyer, 1990); *comparative and international political economists* who examine the regulatory structures and the trade relations between nations-states, and finally, and more recently, *poststructural political economists* or *post-Marxists* who are influenced by poststructural concepts and focus on alternatives to capitalism (e.g., Gibson-Graham, 2006; Brouder, 2018).

Bianchi (2002, p. 265) applies a historic-geographical political economic approach to analyse the structures governing tourism development. He posits that capital restructuring and economic globalization have resulted in a changing configuration within the tourism production system, thus requiring a detailed examination of relationships between all actors in the system in order to unveil the impacts of the 'transnationalization' of the tourism system (cited in Mosedale, 2011, p. 4). Drawing on a Marxian approach to the political economy of tourism, Bianchi (2018) analyzed the global tourism political economy by discussing labour relations in tourism, access to travel, and equitable distribution in the destination. Guided by a comparative political economy approach, Webster and Ivanov (2015) explored and compared the institutional organization of tourism in different political systems and conclude that tourism and its institutional organization are influenced by the paradigms of political systems. Nevertheless, Marxian perspectives are still significant. Hall (2011) argues that tourism studies should continue to engage with the concept of class. He argues that stratification (e.g., people, capital, knowledge) is caused by unequal access to time and money and class is a representation of the stratification of capitalist, socio-economic organizations.

According to Bevir (2009), political economy holds that governments, particularly the state, frequently intervene in social production in order to facilitate capital accumulation and economic growth. In tourism, political economy is an important approach for understanding government involvement in tourism development and political trust (Bramwell & Lane, 2011; Nunkoo & Smith, 2013; Nunkoo, 2015). Political economic theory allows us to understand how economic and political variables shape power dynamics (Wan & Bramwell, 2015). According to a political economic perspective, tourism institutions, particularly the central government, play a crucial role in the development and planning of tourism (Nunkoo, 2015; Wang & Bramwell, 2012). Hence, residents tend to view local government as responsible for tourism policy and for enhancing coordination over tourism issues (Bramwell & Lane, 2011). In fact, tourism sectors are characterized by 'various labor market conflicts, multiple subsistence tactics, and complicated power interactions' (Madsen Camacho, 1996, p. 33). Thus, national political economies and the economic structures of tourism capitalism play a role in the determination of these parameters (Gibson, 2009). Tourism and political economy have been the subject of research since the early 1980s, although there is substantial need for additional study in this field (Bianchi, 2018).

Despite tourism's unquestionable importance in many nations' national accounts and international trade, tourism development research has, until recently, been mostly detached from political economy issues (Steiner, 2006). This stands in stark contrast to the industry of tourism in terms of economics (Bianchi, 2018). In fact, this may be partly due to the fact that anthropology, sociology, and tourism tourist policy, planning, and sustainability have been the subjects of a lot of political economy-related topics (Bianchi, 2018). Consequently, this has led to a significant deal of conceptual inconsistencies and theoretical fuzziness (Steiner, 2006). The notion of political economy is fundamental to tourism development and trust in tourism institutions (see Mosedale,

suggests that a political economic approach could be useful for analysing tourism's complex challenges, such as power relations and network structures. Nonetheless, tourism literature is yet lacking with the dynamics of political economy and power.

Geopolitics and International Tourism

Although tourism is considered subject to the outcome of geopolitical activity, the link between geopolitics and tourism is an emerging theme in tourism-related studies (Hall, 2017). Tourism and geopolitics are open to numerous interpretations, methodologies, and theories, some of which are in direct antagonism to one another. Based on geopolitical perspectives, it is possible to analyze how tourism builds and represents particular political discourses, and, in turn, spatializes international politics (Mostafanezhad & Norum, 2016). Indeed, tourism can help to reimagine geopolitics as a mode of discourse that depicts international politics as a social landscape populated by a diverse range of people and places (Ó Tuathail & Agnew, 1992).

Geopolitics is a multiple layered concept (Hepple, 1986). According to Seyfi et al. (2023) geopolitics refers to the impact of issues such as geography, economics, demographics, and culture on the governance of a state, which ultimately frames and influences how enterprises and destinations act and the capacity of tourists to visit a destination. In a comprehensive approach to the geopolitical dimensions of tourism, Mostafanezhad and Norum (2016) suggest it can be defined as the competition of powers between attracting tourists at the regional and global levels in line with economic policies for the development of the territorial space and obtaining national interests. Hence, such research (e.g., Seyfi & Hall, 2020b) has shown how international tourism is essentially geopolitical, as it is dependent on cooperative linkages and competition between administrations of various blocs, countries, and regions.

The literature on tourist geopolitics has often focused on investigating the relationship between tourism, space, and power, as well as the geopolitical significance of tourism (Pfoser & Yusupova, 2022). Indeed, tourism geopolitics is a component of critical geopolitics (Ó Tuathail & Dalby, 1998; Dodds, 2007). The focus of this body of literature is the presuppositions about space that underpin many geopolitical discourses and practices. A recent trend in popular and feminist geopolitics play an important role in shaping the spaces of international politics, demonstrating the importance of popular representations (Dittmer & Gray, 2010) and highlighting the link between international politics and interpersonal relations (Hyndman & Amarasingam, 2014). Thus, the literature on tourism geopolitics has been influenced by these techniques, studying a variety of players and media to shed light on the geopolitical significance of tourism (Pfoser & Yusupova, 2022). Recently, the post-structural critical turn in geopolitics has spurred the development of new methods for analyzing the role of speech, literature, and meaning in the production of geopolitical conceptions and their tangible consequences (Agnew, 2001, 2004, 2016; Dalby, 2008; Ó Tuathail & Agnew, 1992). Hall (2017), Gillen and Mostafanezhad, (2019) and Mostafanezhad et al. (2020), have also highlighted the geopolitical significance of personal, every-day, micro-political contacts. Indeed, the realization of geopolitics as a daily experience and tourist views that occurs outside of policymaking and academic discourse was a significant component of the development of critical geopolitics (Dittmer & Gray, 2010, p. 1667). Therefore, as long recognized, tourist encounters perpetuate or challenge conceptions of other people and places and play an important part in larger geopolitical discourses, which in turn mediate geopolitical actions.

As an arena in which people and businesses from different countries come into contact, tourism also impacts on and is impacted by international relations, and can be a significant

instrument of geopolitics. Although there is often a tendency to marginalize tourist activities within mainstream geopolitical research, there is an emerging geopolitics of tourism. In the past decade, tourism scholars have started to address the role of geopolitical discourse and practice in tourism, ushering in what could be described as a geopolitical turn in tourism geographies (Mostafanezhad, 2018; Devine & Ojeda, 2017; Rowen, 2016; Hall, D., 2017, Hall, C. M., 2017). Nevertheless, the powerful connections between tourism and geopolitics as well as various geopolitical approaches have yet to be fully conceptualized in tourism studies and empirically grounded. Furthermore, new approaches of geopolitics such as the geopolitics of the platform economy and digital governance (including topics such as economic globalization and the liberalization of telecoms/internet policy, the role of US hegemony on the global platform economy, and the emerging role of BRICS countries in challenging US hegemony on the digitalized world) have not yet been substantially studied in relation to tourism even though the field is incredibly important for so-called disruptive companies such as Uber and Airbnb. The geopolitics of the environment including in relation to biodiversity and climate change is also under-researched in tourism studies. Similarly, the geopolitics of tourism mobilities and diaspora and associated geographies of identity are also areas of increasing interest to students of tourism.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has provided an overview of a significant subfield of the politics of tourism, international relations and geopolitics. By its nature international tourism is inherently bound up with issues of crossing national borders as well as, because of the mobility of tourists, the transport and other infrastructure that support such mobility, as well as the businesses and governments that supply such services. Clearly, this means that tourism is inherently political as the granting of a passport or visa is bound up within a range of concerns over citizenship, rights, and the relationships between state actors. Indeed, tourist mobility is often caught up in international diplomacy and policy because it is a relatively easy target in which states can show their largesse in enabling or disabling the capacity of individuals to move, and in some cases prevent mobility and access altogether.

The chapter has indicated something of the interplay of different theories of international relations with tourism although, as noted, there is a real need for further examination of the extent to which such theoretical linkages are recognized in a research context as well as in the assumptions made by state and non-state actors. Such theoretical approaches are also connected to the three main perspectives on international relations: realism, liberalism, and constructivism that, in turn, frame instruments, actors and how policy making is treated, including with respect to tourism. The latter part of the chapter deal with the emergence of geopolitics as a concern in tourism studies, and therefore as a specific branch of international relations research. However, significantly, in tourism geopolitics is recognized as being significant not just in terms of state and sub-state actors and territories, but also with respect to the activities of transnational business interests and the micro-geopolitics of everyday tourist encounters.

The limitations on mobility implemented because of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the implications for tourism of Russia's invasion of Ukraine highlights how tourism is bound up in the actions of state and other actors within the international system of nations. Surprisingly, the international relations aspects of these events have been little understudied in a tourism context, although the broader role of political consumption by tourists and state

sanctions has become a significant research theme. Nevertheless, more than 40 years on from Richter's (1983, 1989) path breaking research on tourism, politics, and the actions of state governments with respect to tourism, the subject of tourism in an international relations context remains extremely limited within the broader political dimensions of tourism. Global events may change this situation, given the importance of the international institutional structure for tourism and tourist mobility. However, what is more likely is that the field will continue to be the domain of a small number of interested researchers, particularly those with connections to political geography and political science, and with only a small but possibly significant impact on tourism studies as a whole.

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