



Introduction

Tourism Geopolitics

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In May 2019, a fire ravaged the cathedral of Notre-Dame in Paris, one of Western civilization's most iconic cultural symbols and most visited tourist sites. Within a matter of hours, the blaze turned parts of the historic monument into smoking cinders. Exposing cracks in the French capital's global image as the "City of Lights," the fire also threatened to shake the monument's signification of modernity. Reactions across the globe were immediate and vocal. International headlines accentuated grief and shock over the potential loss of this quintessential Western cultural asset. Commenters described how the fire left "a hole in the heart of Paris" and how "watching Notre Dame burn, the entire world was in pain."¹ Within a few days, private individuals—primarily French citizens and international celebrities—had donated more than \$1 billion to the building's reconstruction.² Many of these donations were made in the name of the "spiritual, cultural, and historical treasure from Paris to the world," in the words of Salma Hayek.³

One year prior to the Notre-Dame fire, the National Museum of Brazil in Rio de Janeiro, the largest natural history museum in Latin America, also was caught in a blaze. International reactions to the losses incurred in the conflagration and investments in reconstruction were fewer and markedly less enthusiastic than those that accompanied the Notre-Dame case. The fire was described as "an announced tragedy."⁴ Although the loss for cultural heritage has been estimated to be more extensive than at Notre-Dame, the Brazilian building has yet to be restored and the search for remnants of historical objects lost to the blaze continues amid governmental cuts to science and education, not to mention broad national and international neglect. Comparing the aftermath of the two fires, Samuel Breslow notes that "the loss of Latin American cultural heritage simply

does not capture the world's attention the way the loss of Western European cultural heritage does.²⁵ The disparate reactions of the international community to these two fires reveal the contested geographies and political nature of what counts as heritage, for whom, and how. It also speaks to how tourism mobilizes or precludes the formation of collective and state responses to disaster.

Narratives and institutional actions like those surrounding the burning of emblematic religious, national, and global tourism infrastructures such as the Notre-Dame cathedral are mediated by historically and geographically informed power relations. An investigation into tourism infrastructures and the discourses, representations, and affects that constitute them reveals the geographically uneven socioeconomic terrain upon which cities, buildings, symbols, and affects are made meaningful and circulate; it also underscores how global tourism reifies differences between the Global North and Global South, rich and poor, and culture and nature. A quick glance at the geography of UNESCO-designated world heritage sites reveals just such distinctions. The formation of tourism's narratives is contingent on myriad power relations that are historically and geographically mediated. Tourism narratives intersect with tourism infrastructures in ways that are subject to symbolic and affective transformation and contestation. In exceptional circumstances, tourism sites such as island archipelagos (see Mimi Sheller, this volume) might become geopolitical experiments of alternative political action. Yet, more often than not, in the aftermath of destruction and crisis, when the window opens for the expression of alternative narratives, hegemonic discourses are reconsolidated in ways that stabilize existing structures of power and geopolitical orders.

GEOPOLITICAL TOURISM ASSEMBLAGES

The chapters in this volume demonstrate a tripartite understanding of *tourism geopolitics*, a concept that accounts for the increasingly central role that tourism plays in formal, practical, and popular geopolitics (Dodds 2007). Tourism geopolitics addresses not only how we talk, do, and exercise geopolitics through tourism practices but also how we wield, bend, or suffer power in and across geographical scales. As such, the chapters contribute to ongoing efforts to highlight the benefits of an interdisciplinary and multiscalar understanding of geopolitics and tourism.

We begin the development of tourism geopolitics with an understanding of tourism both as an industry and as a sociopolitical and spatial practice. Tourism is an economic sector that capitalizes on places, peoples, objects, and experi-

ences, turning them into attractions to be gazed upon and consumed. It does so through a range of means such as marketing, branding and image making, infrastructure network provision, spatial zoning, labor organization, and political decision. Yet, tourism is also a practice that unfolds and organizes material, symbolic, and lived spaces. Tourism orders spatial relations, social and cultural values, imaginations, and narratives about the past, the present, and the future. In the twenty-first century, these tourism orderings happen across international, national, regional, local, and urban scales at a speed and with an intensity that has no historical or geographical precedent (Córdoba Azcárate 2020; Franklin 2004, 2008). Everywhere we look, tourism and traveling have become political and politicized vehicles, vessels for conversations not only about cultural heritage but also about health, housing, transportation, education, race, and gender, among other topics.

The term *geopolitics* has referred traditionally to the impact of geography on political practice and discourse, mostly in the international arena. Today, the term's connotations are broader and include material and affective practices, everyday experiences, and situated encounters (Basham 2016; Dittmer and Bos 2019; Gillen and Mostafanezhad 2019; Pain and Stahaeli 2014). Since the 1990s the critical turn in geopolitics has facilitated the development of new theoretical lenses through which scholars examine how cultural discourse and texts coproduce geopolitical imaginations and their manifest material implications (O'Tuathail and Dalby 1998). Scholarship on critical geopolitics acknowledges both how meaning is discursively produced and the practical and material implications of its production. Still, the emphasis remains largely situated within the realm of semiotics, discourse analysis, and geopolitical reasonings. For O'Tuathail and Agnew, geopolitics "is about actions taken against other powers, about invasions, battles, and the deployment of military force." Yet, discourse, they contend, is central to geopolitical analysis: "It is only through discourse . . . that the building up of a navy or the decision to invade a foreign country is made meaningful and justified. It is through discourse that leaders act, through the mobilization of certain simple geographical understandings that foreign-policy actions are explained and through ready-made geographically infused reasoning that wars are rendered meaningful. How we understand and constitute our social world is through the socially structured use of language" (O'Tuathail and Agnew 1992, 191). However, neither discourse nor practice alone is enough to account for tourism geopolitics in the way we are proposing here.

Everyday and mundane tourism experiences, their affective nature, and the materiality and positionality they unfold in are integral to geopolitical thought

and practice (Dittmer and Gray 2010, 1667). Jason Dittmer's posthuman analytic of *geopolitical assemblages* as the combination of situated human and nonhuman, material, and semiotic components of political thought and practice is a useful framework for thinking through tourism geopolitics. It accounts for how geopolitics is situated, material, partial, and coassembled through a range of relations between human and nonhuman component parts as well as through state and nonstate practices (Dittmer 2010, 43). Tourism as geopolitical assemblage involves material infrastructures and immaterial elements, such as affects and anticipation and visual and discursive representations. It involves institutional and extrainstitutional actors, from state leaders to common citizens, from international institutional agreements to household dynamics. Assemblages of infrastructures, imaginaries, and affects in tourism geopolitics are also place-making projects. Photographs, selfie sticks, social media posts, host-guest encounters, official branding and marketing, historical narratives, state territorial ambitions, viral anxieties, affective situated responses, among other elements, all coproduce tourism (Mostafanezhad and Norum 2016; Mostafanezhad 2018). Attention to the assemblages of infrastructures, representations, and affects of tourism geopolitics accounts for how both mundane and extraordinary institutional and extrainstitutional actors coproduce tourism destinations.

Approaching tourism geopolitics as an assemblage requires a recentering of geopolitical scholarship toward the specific, local, and mundane spaces in which life unfolds. It also demands serious consideration of the performative, political, and spatial nature of tourism. From this perspective, tourism becomes a primary lens through which people make geopolitical sense of the world. For instance, both the tourism industry and tourists' own practices secure Paris as "the City of Lights" through, on the one hand, channeling funds for marketing, restoration, or care of iconic monuments, and on the other, the repetitive ritualized practices of visiting, photographing, and distributing images and narratives about those monuments in social media. For instance, the romantic tourist gaze is itself a geopolitical practice that has kept Paris from becoming just another European city strangled by deteriorating housing, unfair labor conditions, terrorism, and international migratory crises.

Globally, states invest in tourism infrastructure such as resorts, bridges, roads, boulevards, museums, memorials, and monuments in the name of a range of goals, such as economic development, cultural preservation, natural conservation, indigenous empowerment, and nationalism. These infrastructures become spaces of imagination and provoke responses at the global, local, urban, and embodied scales. While sun, sea, and sand tourism gravitates around bodily plea-

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asures associated with joy or relaxation, dark tourism centers around sadness, fear, and forgiveness. If ethnic tourism mobilizes indigenous bodies as repositories of the past, novel forms of culinary tourism activate them as makers of a modern cosmopolitan self. Some of these bodily responses are anticipated, conforming to the planners' and officials' original design. Yet, often, societal and bodily reactions to these infrastructures are unforeseen. As biopolitical approaches to tourism have long demonstrated, the habitus of tourism encounters is historically and socially situated and as such is subject to change and contestation (Minca 2009). Tourism demands different modes of labor and body dispositions in different spaces. Depending on how they are articulated, they might contest tourism practices or create synergies with them. Tourism imaginaries, affects, and infrastructures are not only informed by learned dispositions and hegemonic political ideologies (of how to be a tourist or of how to become a service worker). They are also pivotal in the survival or contestation of political ideologies. Hence, there is a need to understand their inner workings as multilayered, as they are geographically and historically informed.

Tourism geopolitics, as a tripartite conceptual tool, integrates the imaginaries, affects, and infrastructures of tourism and politics as they occur *in place* and *across* geographical scales. It builds on academic literature in the anthropology and geographies of tourism and in critical tourism studies that highlight the relationships between tourism, space, and power. However, rather than looking at these relations from an isolated theoretical standpoint—dependency theory, world system theory, or postcolonial approaches—or from a single discipline, this volume embraces an interdisciplinary approach to tackle the approximation and interpretation of how tourism's imaginaries, affects, and infrastructures are mutually implicated in questions of geopolitical significance. The chapters in this volume unpack tourism geopolitics by following the material, symbolic, and emotional threads that weave together their assemblage components. By homing in on existing intersections between museum exhibits, state marketing strategies, tourist practices, and migratory and security crises, as the chapters in this volume do, new understandings of the centrality of tourism in geopolitics emerge. To follow Marilyn Strathern (2005), these kinds of theoretical and methodological wonderings are fruitful because they help account for how people with and from very different geographical and sociocultural backgrounds entertain similar ideas about the world; additionally, they help the researcher account for the formation of shared understandings and processes of world making, or “worldings.”⁶

With this volume, we aim to highlight the fundamental role that tourism plays in the production of contemporary worldings. Through curated case studies from

around the world, the chapters demonstrate tourism's centrality in the organization of the geographies and politics of late capitalism. By geopolitizing tourism in this way, the collection contributes to conversations around the central role of tourism in a range of geopolitical practices, including statecraft, securitization, territorialization, transborder migration, ethnic cleansing, offshore extraction, and the production and circulation of gendered cultural texts. The chapters engage with multiple scales of analysis (e.g., the body, the home, the local, regional, national, and multinational) not as given platforms but as contexts secured materially in and through powerfully constructed geopolitical imaginaries that elicit emotional, physical, and affective responses. These responses become the matter of geopolitical practice, whether through the planning and construction of a road, the strategic use of natural and cultural resources in state-led tourist branding, or the everyday maneuvering of representations of the migrant-tourist continuum to gain access to health care or state subventions for historical preservation (Norum 2013).

THE SCALAR DYNAMICS OF TOURISM GEOPOLITICS

A tourism geopolitics approach incorporates processual and scalar understandings that situate the relationship between the global, regional, local, urban, and body scales as central to geopolitical *and* tourism analyses. The aftermath of the Notre-Dame fire highlights these scalar dynamics at play. Globalized affective reactions to the blaze occurred in the shadow of three intense and related regional crises affecting many tourism cities in Europe at the end of the decade, Paris being just one of them. First, as of 2016 the so-called European refugee crisis had resulted in 5.2 million refugees and migrants reaching the continent's shores to escape countries torn apart by war and persecution, including but not limited to Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan (UNHCR 2019).⁷ Second, austerity policies, which expanded amid increasingly harsh housing and labor struggles, spiraled out of control in 2018, threatening another European debt crisis. Finally, targeted violent attacks against established cultural sites of leisure, a trend in global terrorism since 9/11, echoed in markets, streets, monuments, and tourist attractions in cities across Europe. Within the regional context of horror, despair, and deficit precipitated by these international events, Paris witnessed a parallel expansion of the tourism industry and tourists in its streets. The expansion of leisure in times of crisis is not unique to Paris. Contributions to this volume show how similar dynamics have materialized in China, Mexico, Guatemala, Tanzania, the Arctic,

and on islands in the Caribbean and the Pacific. These interventions are targeted and selectively constructed by international agencies, states, and governments in the name of national economic development, cultural preservation, public security, and tourists' safety. They are differentially received according to individuals' and collectives' positioning in already existing structures of meaning and practice.

The reconstruction of tourism in Paris in 2019 was viewed as a nationalistic endeavor. For many residents, the immediate attention given to Notre-Dame's reconstruction was evidence of a long-standing overreliance on tourism as a means of uneven economic growth. At the time, contestations surrounding over-tourism proliferated in European cities, including Paris, Barcelona, and Venice. Furthermore, Notre-Dame's fire and the subsequent donations took place among the *gilets jaunes* (yellow vests) grassroots movement for economic justice, which had sparked months of civic unrest in Parisian streets. The scale and speed of donations for the cathedral's reconstruction led many citizens to criticize French president Emmanuel Macron's decision to prioritize rebuilding a façade for tourism rather than attending to ongoing demands for fair working conditions, affordable housing, and living wages. In official explanations and media accounts, reconstruction was legitimized as the way forward not only for the building as a quintessence of French cultural heritage but also for Paris and by extension France's economic well-being. References to universally meaningful heritage preservation and tourism as a national and economic development engine were central to legitimizing the reconstruction narrative. If Notre-Dame were restored, so this argument went, French culture and economy would also be safeguarded. This discourse has been heard time and again across the globe after major disasters, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, or tsunamis. This is the case because of the widespread assumption that tourism brings cultural appreciation and that, because it creates jobs and generates profit, it is good for the economy. Yet, in the streets of Paris, this discourse fell apart at the seams, as inequalities emanating from the abovementioned crises became palpable. After the fire, the surge of international attention, and the massive financial contributions for reconstruction, sentiments of horror, pain, and grief were soon accompanied by intense anger.⁸

The discomfort expressed over the channeling of funds for reconstruction in the name of touristic national history and heritage added to other already contested interventions made in the name of tourism. Angry reactions to the Notre-Dame case had direct antecedents in the response of the French government to the 2015 Paris terrorist attack. In this violent act, a series of targeted assaults on well-known sports stadiums, concert halls, restaurants, and boulevards left over

130 people dead. In their aftermath, the French state proceeded to militarize the Eiffel Tower in the name of public security. Yet, it soon became obvious that it also did so to secure tourist flows and tourism assets for the national economy. Armed soldiers were deployed not only to the Eiffel Tower but also to a wide range of other tourist attractions in the city, including Notre-Dame. Four years after the attacks, soldiers still patrol the grounds of the tower and a ten-foot, bulletproof glass wall encircles its northern and southern edges, together with metal fences on the eastern and western sides. The wall interrupts residents' use of the Champs de Mars gardens, making clear how spaces for everyday socialization can be limited swiftly in the name of tourism.⁹

The uneven benefits of tourism again became controversial in 2016 and 2018, when makeshift camps set up by thousands of stranded refugees fleeing inhospitable conditions elsewhere in Europe were forcibly removed from Paris's central boulevards and canals. State-led relocations were completed once again in the name of securing the city *for* tourism. Narratives highlighting such appellatives as "cleaning," "beautifying," and "sanitizing" made it obscenely evident that Paris would not accommodate bodies with the potential of disrupting the city's global tourist allure as the world's capital of culture and romance.¹⁰ Forced removal of refugee camps was done in the name of tourism, and the welfare of tourists, it seemed to many, was privileged over that of the city's residents. In other words, interventions made for the sake of tourism—masquerading as economic development and urban revitalization—obscured the broader crumbling of geopolitical relations.

For many residents, Notre-Dame stood for a past that no longer served them; a façade meant only for tourist *jouissance*. As with Gaudí's Park Güell in Barcelona or Venice's canals, both overrun by masses of tourists, the cathedral's fire sparked outrage over unbridled tourism development that, in many residents' views, had made Paris inhospitable. Yet, the fire, as any crisis does, cracked open, slightly and hesitantly, the possibility of reimagining and telling alternative stories about the past. At the very least, the need for reconstructing the cathedral signaled an opportunity to make corrections to hegemonic narratives about history; however, the rapid rate of donations for reconstruction and the international, mediated sanction of Paris as the tourist city of culture par excellence short-circuited this possibility. When reconstruction aimed at bouncing back to "normal," many in Paris and beyond felt that the state was silencing them through the legitimization of the global market in order to preserve the status quo. Anger was best expressed in the violence surrounding the *gilets jaunes*' use of Parisian streets and boulevards. How could an old, weathered building, a building that had long been managed for the tourism industry, garner more financial support and sympathy

than citizens after months of civic protests? Why, if Parisians' living conditions were so dramatically deteriorated, would restoration be done under conditions that oppressed and excluded so many? Hadn't history demonstrated the dire consequences associated with the phrase "tout pour le peuple, rien par le peuple" (everything for the people, without the people's consent), the unofficial motto of enlightened absolutism? As Philippe Martinez, the leader of the country's General Confederation of Labor trade union argued, "If they can give tens of millions to rebuild Notre Dame, then they should stop telling us there is no money to help with the social emergency."¹¹

The critics' dissensus was heard well beyond Paris, as it became clear that the reconstruction of Notre-Dame was a monumental political choice in alliance with global markets. It was a decision built upon nostalgic affects and globalized optimistic tourist representations of the French capital as the city of culture, of lights, of romance. It was an internationally sanctioned decision that secured the status quo of the privileged classes, their narratives about the past, and their rights to place and leisure consumption.

TRAVEL AS THE GEOPOLITICAL CENTER OF THE WORLD

A reckoning with tourism's world-making capacities and its widespread influence in how politics is done is something we can see not only in Paris. Contemporary tourism has touched nearly every corner of the globe. In 2016, Rafat Ali, a commentator from *Skift*, published a report titled "Travel Is Now the Geopolitical Center of the World. Deal with It." As he put it, "Every major flashpoint in the world has geopolitical implications, and every geopolitical issue has travel (or the lack of it) at the heart of it: Zika, Brexit, Turkey, Bangladesh, Orlando, Syria, the Brazil Olympics, Cuba, Iran (. . .), oil prices, global warming, immigration, and ISIS."¹² And while this might be read as an exaggeration by some, what is indisputable is that traveling for pleasure is a defining constituent of the twenty-first century. Indeed, the notable absence of tourism in geopolitical scholarship is surprising if one considers that since 2012 more than one billion tourists have traveled internationally each year, making the tourism industry the most ubiquitous geopolitical encounter to date. Leaving an unprecedented physical, moral, and ecological footprint on the globe, tourism has reshaped places around the world in often irremediable ways.

The earliest forms of organized travel—the journeys of Herodotus and Marco Polo, the European Grand Tour, Thomas Cook's trips down the Nile—highlighted

articulations of tourism and imperialism. Practices of imperial dominion, colonial sway, and political interest and positioning have long been entangled in place-making practices across the globe. Museums, memorials, and monuments like Notre-Dame stand as stark signifiers of empire. Narratives of place, history, identity, and/or nature compete for hegemony through tourists' and residents' consumption of the geopolitical imaginary. As physical, virtual, and imagined mobility intensifies, some places and people (and not others) are made either desirable or unfit "no-go zones" kept clear of tourist dollars (Hazbun 2008; Mostafanezhad and Promburom 2016; Ojeda 2013; Rowen 2014, 2016; Skwiot 2011).

The chapters in this volume show that tourist representations are historically situated and nurtured through place-based practices that are shaped by and inform the development of international, national, regional, and local relations. In the Pacific and the Caribbean, for example, tourism cannot be dissociated from geopolitical militarized relations with the United States. And China's growing global presence cannot be explained without attention to regional large-scale developments and international diplomatic efforts (Lim, Ferguson, and Bishop 2020). In both cases, the tourism industry's mobilization of bodies, labor, capital, and imaginaries at a global scale and toward particular locations has made the tourism encounter inescapable for locals and their everyday environments. At these places, local ways of life are often forced to reconcile with global tourism imaginaries. This is also evident in the Arctic, where it is entrenched by climate change pressures. The structural processes, everyday practices, and ubiquitous imaginaries of contemporary tourists on their way to *paradisical* islands, *wild* reserves, *indigenous* pueblos, *ethnic* minority villages, or luxury hotels in former prisons increasingly perform geopolitical encounters on the ground, in the everyday. Tourism, as an industry and as an assemblage of sociopolitical and spatial practices, drives geopolitical imaginaries while mediating locals' and tourists' affective experiences of and in place.

The geopolitical role of tourism is often most strikingly revealed in the cracks exposed by conflict, destruction, and crisis. The fires at Notre-Dame and the Brazilian National Museum for example, demonstrate how only selective national infrastructures (e.g., those that matter for international tourism) and particular geographical locations (e.g., those that matter for global markets) are deemed worthy of various levels of state and global attention. Yet, travel is geopolitical in both spectacular and mundane ways. The viral image of mountaineers queuing as they ascended Mt. Everest in 2019 reveals the geopolitical nature of the notorious yet ubiquitous tourist selfie. It is at the iconic peak, and not a few miles away, that trekkers seek out experiences to upload and post on social media. It is physically

there that they want to test their limits against nature, to find their ultimate spiritual goals, to broadcast their selves. These mountaineers, unlike most residents of Paris, are acutely aware of the deadly consequence of a trek gone wrong. But well before news of mountaineers dying for their dreams erupted in global media, Sherpas had been doing so, regularly and in silence, for decades, by preparing for camps and testing mountaineers' grounds in advance. Silencing their stories and their deaths not only elevated the heroic nature of mountaineers in the global arena but also undermined the foundational historical role of local Sherpas in these leisured endeavors.

In a related way, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has also laid bare the uneven geopolitical maps upon which viruses give rise to racialized geopolitical anxieties. We come back to this health crisis in the conclusion to this volume in some more detail, but here it is worth noting that the circulation of geopolitical discourses of containment, states of emergency, and national interest are focused on the immobilization of travel and bodies on the move—a prerequisite for tourism. A Diamond Princess cruise ship that was quarantined off the coast of Japan for two weeks in February 2020 brought to light how travelers themselves become biopolitical subjects. With nearly seven hundred infections and six people who had died from the virus by then, tourists' leisured mobility was met with fear and anxiety in ways that underscore the central role of travel and tourism in contemporary geopolitical relations. The reaction to COVID-19 is unprecedented both in the political and the everyday realms. Quarantines, lockdowns, saturated hospitals, school closures, and widespread fear and xenophobia have pervaded everyday spaces of encounter everywhere. With the hardening of borders around the world, geopolitical relations mediated by tourist desire drive (im)mobilities that threaten to bring the global economy to a halt and to trigger a global recession in record time. The global reaction to COVID-19, the compulsion to take selfies atop Everest, and the donations (or lack of them) to the *patrimoines* of Notre-Dame and Brazil's National Museum all shape and are shaped by geopolitical imaginaries of place and are, to a greater or lesser extent, mediated by tourism.

RETHINKING TOURISM THROUGH GEOPOLITICS

Tourism Geopolitics adds to existing literature and research on both tourism and geopolitics and contributes to current efforts to bridge these two often divorced fields of study. In what follows, we outline five areas of research where these

efforts offer promising frameworks from which to rethink tourism through geopolitics. By no means exhaustive, these areas serve to contextualize tourism geopolitics within the existing geopolitics and tourism literature. Rather than provide a comprehensive account of this literature, we seek to make visible potential paths forward in accounting for geopolitical schools of thought through research on tourism—and vice versa.

Feminist and Everyday Geopolitics

Everyday geopolitics is a subfield of scholarship in the sphere of geopolitical thought and practice that considers quotidian actors such as tourists, teachers, and homemakers as political subjects. This understanding of geopolitics, far from the domain of grand institutional actors, facilitates the inclusion of the study of tourism and its microgeographies of encounter. It is in this vein that Hyndman (2012, 253) calls for a “geopolitics from below” that accounts for the new grounds from which people are “doing geopolitics.”

Following up the classical feminist mantra “the personal is political,” *feminist geopolitics* question the historically masculinist reasoning that surrounds geopolitical thought (Dowler and Sharp 2001). Scholarship in this vein is an interesting area for tourism geopolitics. It challenges binaries such as public/private and public/political from below and shows that the private and everyday are geopolitically meaningful too (Grosz 1994; Massaro and Williams 2013). As part of this body of research, there is an emergent interest in the geopolitics of the everyday sphere of human experience that connects a range of scales of power, including the body, local, regional, national, transnational, and global. Beginning with the body, cultural categories such as race, class, gender, and ethnicity mediate the everyday experience of the individual while also reshaping geopolitical discourse and practice. In this way, “rather than conceiving of these as scales, with the sense of analytical division that comes with that concept, scholars in feminist geopolitics tend to conceive of politics as ‘grounded but translocal’” in ways that bring the everyday and embodied aspects of tourism into the geopolitical realm (Miller and Del Casino 2018).

Of particular interest to the way in which this volume engages with the body and affects is Juliet J. Fall’s (2006) analysis of the popular comic book series *La Frontière Invisible*. In this essay, Fall invites us to question the naturalization of women’s bodies as closer to nature that occurs in cartographic knowledge and practice, hand in hand with the equally problematic and extended naturalization of geopolitical space as a woman’s body. Geographies, Fall reveals, are embodied

through and by the creation of maps, mapmaking, and the delineation of cartographic political boundaries. In multiple forms of mapping, preconceptions of what women's bodies are and where they belong to are pervasive. Almost invariably, women's bodies appear as recipients, as accessible lands open to scrutiny when not under control. Popular tourism discourse perpetuates this hegemonic vision and reproduces the geopolitical gaze of control over land and bodies. The tourist gaze often projects onto the female body as a metonymic signifier of a destination, culture, or ethnic group. Yet, as Fall suggests, women's bodies can also be "sites of resistance to (political) imposition." In a deeply geographical and social practice such as tourism, built around the imagination and encounter with spaces and bodies that are preconceived in overtly Western fashion, stressing the body not only as a recipient of imaginations but as a site for counterpolitics matters deeply.

Bananas, Beaches, and Bases by Cynthia Enloe (2000) and *Staging Tourism* by Jane Desmond (1999) work in and through tourism research and feminist international relations to account for how women's bodies in—and affected by—the tourism and the military industries translate what is said about them into political action. Tracing the gendered history of the banana industry and tourism's reliance on representations of women as closer to nature, the work of Enloe and Desmond challenges top-down approaches to international politics and geopolitics to show how actual embodied practices on the ground matter for making and contesting international and national political decisions. Relying on the visual and discursive analysis of a myriad of cultural and political forms, such as postcards, films, advertisements, archival documents, official policies, oral histories, and participant observation of tourism practices, their research demystifies the realm of international politics as disembodied. They vindicate the need to pay close attention to how geopolitics is enacted from below by investigating embodied discourses and representations of power in tourism and beyond. As will be demonstrated in the chapters that follow, several contributors' thinking has been deeply informed by this area of research.

Popular Geopolitics

Popular geopolitics focuses on the role of popular culture in geopolitical discourse and practice. Scholars in this field interrogate how popular culture discourses mediate geopolitical assemblages of place, landscape, and imaginaries and link everyday and state-level discourses and practices to make sense of the co-construction of hegemonic power relations across time (Dittmer 2010; Dodds

2008; Mostafanezhad and Promburom 2016; Sharp 1996). As a subfield of study, popular geopolitics is useful to tourism research not only because it helps to better grasp the systematically organized nature of tourism as a social practice through cultural texts and representations but also because it calls on us to historicize such creations in the first place (Harby 2008).

Perhaps one of the most visible examples of the geopolitical significance of popular culture in tourism was the birth of reality tourism following Michael Jackson's release of the music video clip for "They Don't Care About Us" in the mid-1990s. The video virtually institutionalized favela tourism in Rio de Janeiro (Freire Medeiros 2009). One could just as easily take Angelina Jolie's visit to refugee camps as the leitmotif for voluntourism across large parts of the world (Mostafanezhad 2017). More recently, Justin Bieber's 2015 music video, *I'll Show You*, filmed at the southeastern Fjaðrárgljúfur canyon in Iceland, put the country on the map for millions of people around the world—at least for those who missed the eruption of Eyjafjallajökull, which disrupted airspace traffic and the tourism industry for weeks. Triggering an unprecedented spike in tourists between 2016 and 2018, with an estimated 50 to 80 percent increase each year hence, Bieber's music video brought crowds to a place that long hid under the radar. In a similar vein, the Hollywood blockbuster hit *The Beach*, released in 2000 and starring Leonardo DiCaprio, drew exponential numbers of newcomers to the Thai island of Koh Phi Phi. In 2018, in a desperate attempt to stop the widespread ecological degradation of the marine ecosystem that came from nearly two decades of tourist overcrowding, the government decided to close it off to tourists and residents alike.¹³

More recently, social media platforms such as Instagram have come to allow tourists to geotag their images and in doing so, to potentially transform mundane locations into beneficiaries and/or victims of overtourism (Dodds 2019). This is just what happened in Lake Elsinore, California, in spring 2019, when numerous social media influencers geotagged the site on Instagram, generating an onslaught of tourists to this small community, which saw daily visitor numbers triple over the course of several weeks.¹⁴ It also happened in Laos, where a media headline from Luang Prabang, long heralded as the best-preserved city in Southeast Asia,¹⁵ described how the "Magical Laotian Town Preserved by UNESCO Loses Its Soul" due to too much tourism.¹⁶ In this case, corollary claims of "UNESCOcide" and Luang's transformation into "Muang Falang" (city of Westerners) reflect growing concerns over the impacts of UNESCO world-heritage designations on socioenvironmental change in Southeast Asia. Here, land that sold for \$8,000 in 2012 now goes for upwards of \$120,000, which has forced residents to

relocate to the surrounding suburbs while the town is redeveloped by Laotian elites and international tourism entrepreneurs.¹⁷ As these examples demonstrate, geopolitical imaginaries are driven and susceptible to change through popular media, the circulation of which has reached unprecedented heights and whose implications have been decidedly mixed.

Mobility Geopolitics

Mobility geopolitics describes the geopolitical drivers and consequences of travel and movement. Hyndman (2012, 243) notes that while the relationship between geopolitics and mobility is an underdeveloped area of scholarship, it is “a rich field of embodied politics, processes, and patterns to be critically analyzed.” The geopolitics of mobility is perhaps most explicitly reflected at borders and through the practices of border crossing (Fluri 2009; Gelbman and Timothy 2010; Jansen 2009). Within contemporary Europe, migration is at the center of domestic and regional geopolitics, making migration itself a fulcrum for geopolitical discourse. Spaces apportioned for tourism and leisure, such as beaches, are now increasingly inhabited by bodies that seek to escape poverty, violence, and lack of opportunities in makeshift boats that often do not make it safely ashore. Henry and Mostafanezhad (2019) describe volunteer tourism as a geopolitical encounter between “hosts” and “guests” that is mediated by geopolitical discourses of development, inequality, and place. In a similar vein, Lisle in this volume examines how tourists’, volunteers’, and refugees’ lives intersect on the beaches and hotels of Greece, where former tourist spaces have become impromptu shelters and where volunteers and refugees interact under strikingly similar logics of hosts and guests that once informed the tourist encounter.

Thus, while tourism is one mode of physical movement, mobile actors—whether refugees or lifestyle migrants—are also caught up in the ebbs and flows of mobility that challenge hegemonic separations between who can and cannot be deemed as a tourist. Refugees, like tourists, also imagine their destinations (e.g., Paris, Berlin, Kuala Lumpur) as sites of hope, sites of escape. Their imaginations are entangled in widespread tourism discourses and popular visual representations of place as well as infrastructures devised to secure tourism flows while keeping workers moored in place (Hannam, Sheller, and Urry 2006).

The Caribbean, a region constituted by slavery and forced migration, exemplifies the politics of this uneven geographical mobility, one that is largely reproduced through and by tourism today (Sheller 2013). Also, in China, for example, the geopolitics of uneven mobility are reflected in the politics of movement

between China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, through which the tourist and nation-state are mutually constituted (Rowen 2014, 2016). If tourism is increasingly enrolled in new forms of protest and resistance (Rowen 2014), it is also increasingly used by states as a geopolitical and political economic weapon of choice that often fuels discriminatory social imaginaries of domestic and international destinations. For instance, the U.S. “Muslim travel ban” has fueled ongoing domestic racism, while the United States is increasingly imagined as an inhospitable destination for nearly one quarter of the global population (Corbin 2017; Gökarıksel 2017). Similarly, China has instituted a series of “unofficial travel bans,” in which the state strongly discourages its citizens from traveling to countries with which it has diplomatic tensions by framing travel itself as antinationalist and banning tour agencies from selling packages to those destinations. For instance, travel bans were instituted for Palau in 2018 following the island’s efforts to strengthen ties with Taiwan, for South Korea following its deployment of a U.S. missile defense system, and for Japan as a result of tensions over the Senkaku Islands in the South China Sea.¹⁸ This practice has been successful to the extent that some countries now consider the impact that such diplomatic efforts may have on their tourism industry. As the world’s largest outbound tourism market, with 145 million tourists traveling abroad annually (a market that outspends U.S. tourists by more than \$300bn per year), China wields tourism as a preeminent powerful geopolitical bargaining chip.¹⁹

Environmental Geopolitics

Environmental geopolitics is a growing subfield of political geography, amalgamating political ecology with geopolitical thought. Here, topics such as risk, security, and land enclosure are theorized in ways that demonstrate how they shape and are shaped by the natural world. In O’Lear’s (2018, 2) words, environmental geopolitics “examines how environmental themes are used to support geopolitical arguments and realities. It asks how the environment is brought into narratives, practices, and physical realities of power and place.” Scholars of environmental geopolitics argue against taking “arguments about food shortages, resources conflicts, or climate security at face value.” Rather, they contend that we should “investigate how food, resources, and climate are identified, made distinct, measured, and portrayed as something, somewhere, to be secured or that pose a particular threat requiring a response” (O’Lear 2018, 2). Climate change, air and water pollution, or deforestation are some of the themes that have forced

themselves into geopolitical discourse and practice by showing that they do not kowtow to transborder policies (Mostafanezhad and Evrard, 2018).

Nature tourism and ecotourism play a leading role in the regularly recurring drama of environmental geopolitics. Ecotourism is frequently promoted as a “win-win” strategy. Through ecotourism, conservation and development agendas are brought together with the financial benefits of tourism in ways that promote what James Igoe (2017) describes as “spectacular nature.” Yet, like other forms of tourism, ecotourism is also intimately linked with power relations, and local communities may have competing agendas that are played out in ecotourism policy. In this way, the discursive and material production of global natures is both political and economically shaped (Bigger and Neimark 2017). Work that has linked ecotourism with extraction demonstrates how these two spheres are mutually implicated in neoliberal conceptions of nature as resources in ways that coproduce uneven access to land, rights, and environmental resources and are entangled with mobilizations of multinational corporations, NGOs, and state agencies (Büscher and Davidov 2013; Davidov 2012). Through such a lens, practices of ecotourism or nature tourism, while often framed as sustainable (in various guises), are in fact wielded to increase the market value of a tourist destination in what some describe as “greenwashing.” In the Yucatán Peninsula in southern Mexico, state-run tourism development models—from mass tourism to nature and cultural tourisms—have entrapped local residents, their land, resources, and futures to tourism’s predatory ways (Córdoba Azcárate 2020). In this post-agroindustrial landscape, participation in tourism’s extraction of natural and cultural resources and indigenous labor becomes a recognized necessity for making a living without migrating internationally.

In many other instances, as has recently been seen in the deaths of travelers within Mt. Everest’s “death zone,” particular representations of nature can easily become too successful and lead to overtourism, in which residents and tourists experience a deterioration in their quality of life or their experience, respectively (Dodds 2019). There are many phenomena resultant from tourism that have led to wide-ranging environmental impacts. For instance, in the Riviera Maya in southern Mexico, a space dependent on tourism but one that is far from overtouristed, the elevation of ocean-water temperature and unfettered tourism urbanization have caused red algae (*sargassum*) to unpredictably appear on shore, making the once paradisiacal beaches untenable for bathing. These sites demonstrate some of the contradictions of a largely uneven world, in which particular representations of what counts as nature, foregrounded in historical and

economic inequalities, rise to the fore in a marked way due to tourism, or more often, because of potential threats to the tourism industry.

Security Geopolitics

Security geopolitics is an approach that addresses how geopolitically ingrained discourses and practices mediate the international security apparatus. It considers how practices of militarization, territorialization, international migration, and securitization, for instance, are used to support the accumulation of diplomatic and geopolitical power of certain countries over others. Post 9/11, the interface of tourism and security geopolitics has become increasingly visible across global, national, and local scales—as the initial vignette in Paris demonstrated. In tourism, security geopolitics occurs at both the everyday and state levels, and practices are often bolstered by events that threaten the hegemony of destinations. As has been seen in other global cities—from Brussels to Barcelona, Bangkok to Beijing—the militarization of the Eiffel Tower is a process that is couched in blurry language that seeks to balance tourism’s economic benefits and symbolic appeal with civic safety. Selfies in front of the tower may now be inadvertently photobombed by soldiers brandishing assault rifles. The military-like presence deeply mediates tourist experience of place in manifold ways, such as via surveillance technologies that scan the bags, gestures, and bodily attitudes of those queuing to ascend in the elevators.

More broadly, security geopolitics draws attention to connections that animate the production and experience of tourism with or amid war and conflict. Dark tourism, for example, as a form of tourism focused on death, disaster, and atrocity, is accounted for here. As Debbie Lisle demonstrates, “dark tourists tell us a great deal about the relationship between tourism and conflict. They illustrate that places of conflict are not excised by the tourist gaze, but are instead integral to it” (Lisle 2007, 342). In Lisle’s research, rather than being seen as reflecting binary opposites (e.g., denoting pleasure and pain), the contingent nature of the relationship between tourism and war is revealed through a range of historical examples such as R and R resorts for soldiers during wartime; shared tourism and military infrastructures; and sanctioned prostitution near bases throughout East and Southeast Asia (e.g., Thailand, Korea, and Japan). This framing is echoed in Myanmar, in which former battlefields are turned into ethnic and cultural tourism destinations and tourists can be seen to be “taking selfies with armed guerillas,”²⁰ and in which coastal tourism development is viewed by some to be an antidote to the Rohingya crisis (Mostafanezhad 2020). In a similar vein, Mimi

Sheller and Vernadette Vicuña Gonzalez demonstrate in this volume how the tourist and military gazes are mutually implicated in territorial and sovereignty claims over land and indigenous peoples in the Caribbean and the Pacific. Former U.S. military bases, places such as Hawai'i and Vieques, become desirable paradisiacal spaces for tourism consumption.

These arenas of geopolitical research are reflected in the contributions to this volume in synergetic ways. Collectively, they help to better address the importance of thinking through imaginaries, affects, and representations in tourism geopolitics, no matter what theoretical standpoint one takes.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

This collection is organized into three sections: imaginaries, affects, and infrastructures. Each section includes an introduction in which we elaborate its key concepts and themes, as well as how they sit within existing literature in tourism and geopolitics research, and where we discuss at length the particular chapters that constitute the section.

The chapters in this volume reveal how the imaginaries created by the tourism industry are powerful organizing mechanisms through which contemporary world making is enacted. With more than a billion people traveling abroad annually, tourism is integral to geopolitical imaginaries of place and identity. The collection thus commences with a focus on "Geopolitical Imaginaries of Tourism" and contributes to the subfield of popular geopolitics, which focuses on the role of popular culture in geopolitical phenomena. Addressing popular culture as a driver of geopolitics presents numerous opportunities as well as challenges, perhaps most notably because tourism continues to appear to be largely depoliticized, which is to say that it is commonly seen to be an industry and set of cultural practices that is outside the realm of politics. Yet, what each of the chapters in this section unequivocally demonstrates is that tourism is in fact a deeply political tool that strongly shapes contemporary geopolitical understanding by engaging with cultural texts, images, stories, and physical practices created by both the state and ordinary people. These debates are particularly evident in the subfield of environmental geopolitics, which calls attention to the ways in which nature and the environment are differently imagined and represented by various stakeholders in the areas of nature tourism, conservation, environmentalism, and climate activism. The section is composed of James Igoe's reflection on Tanzania's Massai Steppe tourist representations as drivers of geopolitical action;

Ian Rowen's research on popular imaginary and state territoriality in China and Taiwan; Roger Norum's and Dieter Müller's respective contribution on Arctic imaginaries, nature extraction, and climate change; and Robert Saunders and Simon Halink's research on Iceland's tourism reconfiguration in the wake of the popular *Game of Thrones* series.

As a political practice, tourism revolves not only around reason but also around affective experience. The second section of the book addresses "Geopolitical Affects of Tourism." It contributes to existing literature in the subfields of everyday geopolitics, feminist geopolitics, and popular geopolitics, which urge us to consider the body and the microgeographies of encounter and policy making. Chapters highlight the role of tourism in the reproduction of space and territoriality by examining how the state regulates embodiment and affect through tourism. While tourism itself may not itself trigger war and/or be a prescription for peace, it might be able to cultivate popular support and sentiment for and against both. Referencing the role (or lack thereof) of tourism in the Rwandan genocide, Lisle (2016) observes for example that "tourists never went to Rwanda." If Rwanda had figured into people's geopolitical imaginaries, guiding their affective responses in the same way that, say Paris, Kathmandu, or Cape Town have done, the blind eye the world turned to that country's genocide in 1994 might never have taken place. The chapters in this section explore tourist securitization strategies from a gendered perspective (Becklake's contribution); the flattening of indigenous spaces and the role of indigenous peoples in state tourism representations of women's bodies and rural-urban landscapes (Castellanos and Córdoba Azcárate's contribution); the afterlives of prisons and battleships, and tourists' affective engagements with the relics (Gillen's and Dittmer and Waterston's contributions); and the affective responses that inform migrants' and tourists' reconfiguration of geopolitically informed stereotypes (Sebro and Hallbauer's contribution).

The burning of the Notre-Dame cathedral and Brazil's National Museum, the death of hikers on Mt. Everest, the COVID-19 pandemic—such events all reveal the geopoliticized social and material infrastructures through which states and individuals tell stories about the past and position themselves toward the future. The third section of the book engages in-depth with the "Geopolitical Infrastructures of Tourism," contributing to the subfields of mobility geopolitics and security geopolitics. Investigating tourist infrastructures such as scenic roads, megaprojects, or offshore architectures as generative political tools helps to re-politicize the tourism industry. Just as a building is not merely a building, a museum or memorial, a scenic drive, or an offshore platform built for tourism have many lives beyond what is officially told about them. The chapters in this section explore

the relationship between tourism and some of the most pressing issues of our time, including the European migration crisis (Lisle's contribution); forced ethnic assimilation and the weaponizing of China's Belt Road initiative (Rippa and Norum's and Szadziewski and Mostafanezhad's contributions); Caribbean tourism, offshore extraction, and island futures (Sheller's contribution); and new infrastructural developments in Antarctica (Dodds and Salazar's contribution). Looking at these geopolitically meaningful events and addressing the ways in which they are utterly informed by tourism infrastructure development brings to light the contemporary centrality of the travel and tourism industries.

Considered together, the chapters in this volume show how tourism landscapes and sites are becoming increasingly politically charged spaces in which people maneuver with, produce, and/or challenge modes of geopolitical thought and action from below. Long sidelined in geography, anthropology, and political science, scholarly research on tourism is garnering increased attention, as scholars from across disciplines make concerted efforts to explore how tourism planning, territorial projections, and everyday practices inform local, regional, national and global politics. The book, with an emphasis on empirically driven research, calls attention to the centrality of everyday practices, the in-between spaces and interstices between institutional and extrainstitutional actors in the study of tourism geopolitics. It concludes with an afterword by Vernadatte Vicuña González, meant as an invitation to take the affects and effects generated by uneven and politicized contemporary tourism representations and infrastructural interventions as a generative motor for more tolerant and inclusive futures.

NOTES

1. Ghitis (2019) and Chrisafis (2019).
2. Sigal (2019).
3. McAuley (2019).
4. Yong (2018).
5. Bresow (2019).
6. *Worlding* is a term used by post-representational theories to highlight the mixture between semiotic and material dimensions of social life.
7. According to the UNHCR, during 2018, "138,000 people risked their lives trying to reach Europe by sea; more than 2,000 of them drowned." In 2019, "there have already been 27,301 sea arrivals in Italy, Greece, Spain, Cyprus and Malta." See <https://www.unrefugees.org/emergencies/refugee-crisis-in-europe/>.
8. Petrequin (2019).
9. Pradier (2018).

10. Local (2018).
11. Sigal (2019).
12. Ali (2016).
13. Peterson (2018).
14. Cosgrove (2019).
15. Waters (2015).
16. Gray (2016).
17. <http://www.pressreader.com/usa/honolulu-star-advertiser/20160131/281732678514039/TextView>, accessed October 27, 2020.
18. Dickenson (2018).
19. Dickenson (2018).
20. Fernandez (2018).

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