

## DISCOURSES WITH THE PAST: TOURISM AND HERITAGE IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

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This special issue is intended to explore in some empirical detail the relationships between culture (including ethnicity) nature, tourism, development, and political action, and in this connection to focus specifically on what is widely called 'heritage' and its conceptualization and representation in South-East Asia. Heritage is both a narrow concept, literally 'what is or may be inherited' (*Little Oxford English Dictionary*, 1996: 294), and a broader one pertaining to notions of ethnicity and nationalism, and even global identity. Heritage has become something which the state and its agents, as well as tourists and local communities appropriate and create as an object worthy of touristic attention, though only certain items are selected for this purpose and others are discarded. It has been remarked upon frequently that the concept of heritage is difficult to define and that, in popular discourse, its meaning is very wide and flexible. A useful starting point is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which designates World Heritage Sites as of either 'cultural' or 'natural' or 'mixed' (both cultural and natural) importance. According to the World Heritage Convention,<sup>1</sup> which was adopted by UNESCO in 1972, 'cultural heritage' embraces a group of buildings or a site of historical, aesthetic, archaeological, scientific, ethnological or anthropological value'. In contrast UNESCO defines 'natural heritage' in terms of outstanding physical, biological, and geological features; habitats of threatened plants or animal species and areas of value on scientific and aesthetic grounds or from the perspective of conservation.

We are using the term heritage here to refer primarily to tangible and concrete elements of the past which are presented and re-presented in the present: archaeological finds, historical sites, monuments and buildings, urban and rural landscapes, and material artefacts (usually housed and displayed in museums). What is more 'the sites selected to represent the country's heritage will also have strong implications for both collective and individual identity and hence the creation of social realities' (Black and Wall, 2001: 123).

We also recognize that the term is used in a wider sense to refer not just to 'traditional' material objects but also to 'traditional' ways of life (often such overt, sensory and 'aesthetic' cultural forms as dance, drama, music, and the visual and plastic arts), which are usually brought into association with the material evidence of the past. The importance of these cultural forms as heritage is enhanced precisely because governments in promoting tourism tend to focus on those which are immediate, accessible, colourful, and visible to the 'tourist gaze', and which can be more easily shaped and constructed (Wood, 1997: 10). The concept of heritage therefore shades into the more general concepts of culture and tradition, and it is bound up with issues of national and local identities. However, as we shall see, even the natural environment can be defined and sanctioned as heritage and moulded in particular ways for the tourist market, although it is usually presented and given meaning, as is cultural heritage, as

pristine, enduring, authentic, and connected to the distant past. Primeval jungles preserved and organized in the form of national parks and nature reserves, provide one of the best examples of the deliberate creation and appropriation of nature, usually in the context of ecotourism.

For our purposes the construction and presentation of heritage, and our understanding of the politics of heritage and identity owe much to Michel Picard's and Robert Wood's edited book on the relationships between tourism, identity, and the state with reference to Asian and Pacific societies, although the collection focuses overwhelmingly on South-East Asia (1997). As the editors suggest the significance of tourism, and specifically ethnic and cultural tourism, within the wider examination of race, ethnicity, and identity has been a relatively neglected field of study during the past two decades ever since the serious introduction of tourism studies within the social sciences with the publication of Dean MacCannell's *The tourist: a new theory of the leisure class* (1976) and the first edition of Valene Smith's *Hosts and guests: the anthropology of tourism* (1977, second edition, 1989).

The crucial issues which Picard and Wood address are the ways in which ethnic identities, and more widely culture (and heritage), are commodified for the purposes of tourism development, and created, rearranged, and packaged for the domestic and the global market. The state, and particularly the state in the developing world, enters into this relationship between tourism and ethnicity because both are seen as subjects requiring political action, separately and in combination. Developing states promote tourism as an increasingly vital component of strategies for economic growth and development; governments, or at least some of them, also act 'to foster new national identities and to reconcile ethnic diversity and modern nationhood' by sifting, manipulating, and endorsing certain elements of identity (Picard and Wood, 1997:viii-ix). It is part of the political process undertaken by those who hold the reins of power to legitimize and authorize their own position (Richter, 1989). This action in turn encourages local populations to think about, discuss, negotiate, and contest their identities in the face of state intervention and control. As Wood says, '[t]he contradictory interests of the states, partly rooted in their desire to promote ethnic tourism, provide room for creative maneuver by local ethnic groups, and produce complex forms of mutual accommodation' (1997: 15).

The state brings tourism and ethnicity together precisely because through tourism policies and promotional activities, identities can be created, changed, and presented to the nation and to the outside world. These tourism policies and plans are usually implemented by national tourism agencies and government ministries which are often charged with responsibility for the development of national cultural, artistic, and sporting activities as well. One vital question Picard and Wood pose and successfully address in their book is 'How are ethnic divisions, symbolized by ethnic markers selected for tourism promotion, reconciled with national integration and the assertion of a national identity?' (ibid.: ix). It is in this arena of national image-making that the subject of heritage, as a tangible and accessible representation of the past and of established tradition, plays an especially important role.

The whole issue of the construction, 'invention', and 'imagination' of tradition (or heritage), culture and identity and their subsequent 'naturalization' is hardly a new one. Social science studies of tourism have been examining the processes of cultural construction and transformation for a considerable period of time, particularly in the context of debates about whether or not tourism undermines, contaminates, or destroys previously 'authentic' or 'real' cultures. In our jointly edited multidisciplinary text on

tourism in South-East Asia published in 1993 we devoted much attention in the editorial introduction and in several of the chapters to the ways in which, for tourism purposes, cultural elements are constructed, moulded and portrayed (Hitchcock, King, and Parnwell, 1993: 8–16). We also recognized the important influence on our understanding of the flexible, changing, contingent, negotiated, contested and symbolic character of culture and identity of the work of Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (1983), Benedict Anderson (1983) and, in the tourism studies field, the earlier publications of Wood (1980, 1984), Erik Cohen (1988), and Picard (1990), among others.

More recently the theme of cultural change and response in the context of tourism development in Asia, particularly South-East Asia, has become something of a growth industry. Shinji Yamashita, Kadir H. Din, and J.S. Eades address directly the relationship between what they term ‘cultural development’ and tourism in their edited volume on Asia and Oceania, in which they consider how ‘local cultures develop during the dynamic process of making use of tourism to re-define their own identities’ (1997: 16). We are also reminded in this volume that the task of examining the interrelationship between tourism, culture, and identity is complicated because there are many ‘tourisms’, many cultures and identities in interaction, and many competing conceptions of what constitutes culture and heritage (Graburn, 1997).

A recent special issue of *Anthropologie et Sociétés* edited by Jean Michaud and Michel Picard (2001) on ‘Oriental Asia’, examines, among other subjects, the representation, constitution, and transformation of ethnic identities in the context of ‘touristic transactions’, as well as locating and authorizing the study of tourism firmly within the domain of anthropology. Much of this volume focuses on South-East Asian case material. There are also recent multidisciplinary volumes on Asia in which issues of cultural change and host-guest interactions frequently surface, among others the important volumes edited by C. Michael Hall and Stephen J. Page (2000) and Peggy Teo, T.C. Chang, and K.C. Ho (2001). In both books the chapters by Trevor H.B. Sofield on tourism and culture are especially noteworthy (2000: 45–57; 2001: 103–20).

In addition to the increasing attention paid recently to the role of the state in shaping, creating, and displaying cultural traditions or heritage and identity, there has been an accompanying growth of interest in processes of globalization. Of course, research on tourism has of necessity focused on its international as well as its domestic dimensions, and most recently on the ‘regionalization’ of tourism activity, ‘inter-country collaborations’, and ‘tourism growth regions’ (Teo, Chang, and Ho, 2001: vii). However, globalization as a phenomenon of increasing importance in cultural construction and identity formation, and in the creation of tourist assets, has also been much more explicitly theorized during the past decade with the increasing importance of post-modern or post-colonial perspectives on developing societies, and the examination of the dialectical relationships between the global and the local and between global forces which both act to homogenize and to differentiate local cultures and identities (Yao Souchou, 2001[a]; Ang, 2001). As Kahn has said, in his work on the politics of cultural representation and identity formation in South-East Asia, ‘globalization is as likely to generate difference, uniqueness, and cultural specificity as it is to produce a genuinely universal or homogeneous world culture’ (1998:9). Within this context of globalization governments play a key role in regulating capital and markets, in sponsoring and shaping tourist assets, in controlling and promoting the movement of tourists, and in presenting certain images of the nation and its constituent populations both to its own citizens and to international tourists (Hall, 2001: 18–22). After all the business of tourism is to create ‘cultural otherness’, distinctive ‘tourism products’ that stand out in the marketplace; to

present uniqueness and difference; it 'creates or even re-creates difference, aggressively re-imagining, re-constituting and appropriating heritage, culture and place, pursuing localisation in marked contrast to its globalising influence' (Sofield, 2001: 104). Yet it does this in interaction with local communities—who may pursue 'cultural strategies' (Erb, 2000: 710) in an attempt to modify tourism development for their own needs—and within particular international parameters, contexts, and service standards which will enable tourists to gaze on, enjoy, and capture this otherness in relative safety and comfort and to move from difference to familiarity (the latter expressed in some of the recent globalization literature as 'Disneyization' and 'McDonaldization') with relative ease (Urry, 1990; Lee, 2001). It therefore comprises, in Sofield's rather dense words, 'the interpenetration of the universalisation of particularisation and the particularisation of universalisation' (2001: 118).

In thinking about heritage in this special issue we have been concerned with the ways in which the past, which we refer to as heritage, and which others might wish to call tradition, has been selected, constructed, and represented not only by the state and by international organizations but also by local communities in the context of tourism development and nation-building (and see Black and Wall, 2001: 121). Of necessity this focus has also led to an examination of the construction and negotiation of national and ethnic identities, and this process is not confined historically to the post-colonial period but, in several of the contributions, it is traced back to the engagement of local populations with European colonialism when issues of identity formation within wider political, economic, and cultural systems became increasingly significant. Most of our attention is devoted to Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia, with brief but no less important forays into Cambodia in Winter's contribution on Angkor and Hitchcock's paper on Taiwan, and into the wider South-East Asian region in Ian Glover's paper on the political uses of archaeology.

Glover's article serves almost as a keynote address and has emerged from his substantial field experience in undertaking archaeological research in a range of South-East Asian political environments. Increasingly the findings of archaeologists are likely to be presented as heritage and used for political purposes. We have known for some time, as Glover says, that governments 'attempt to create discourses with the past in order to legitimize and strengthen the position of the state and its dominant political communities'. This is especially the case in post-colonial states where the need to create and 'imagine' the nation has a particular resonance and where archaeology can be deployed selectively to present national resilience and innovation, often in the context of the image of an indigenous past 'golden age' eclipsed by colonialism. Yet international organizations with interests in and responsibilities for sites of archaeological and historical importance also 'impose their own mandate on local communities, all in the name of conservation' and they may disregard local cultural meanings and perspectives on heritage and its stewardship (Black and Wall, 2001: 124, 132).

The concept of a 'golden age' has provided excellent material in the case of Malaysia for attempts to construct a national Malay-focused identity and for the purposes of tourism promotion. Nigel Worden demonstrates the ways in which the historic tourism centre of Melaka has been represented as a national symbol of Malaysia, but more particularly as the heritage of Muslim Malays. As Worden says Melaka is the 'historic city' of Malay culture 'where it all began'. It was the object of state-driven cultural policies in the 1970s and 1980s which attempted to construct the primordial politico-religious traditions of a pre-colonial, feudal Muslim sultanate conceived of as emblematic of the modern Malaysian nation and displayed in this fashion as much for the Malaysian

visitor as for the international tourist. In contrast to the historic city of George Town (Penang), another of the former British Straits Settlements, but which was problematical in the Malaysian state's nation-building project because it was emphatically 'colonial', 'Melaka acted as a symbol for the nation' and as 'the creator of the values and norms of a wider notion of Malay-ness' based on an idealized and pure form of Islam stripped of any magical, pre-Islamic elements.

However, the use made of Melaka as a centre of national aspirations and identity was not without its problems because the concrete evidence of its importance as the early centre of Islam and Malaydom in the shape of built-forms and material culture had long since disappeared to be replaced by European colonial buildings (Portuguese, Dutch, and British) and Chinese shophouses. Melaka's submission for the status of a UNESCO World Heritage Site in the late 1980s was rejected because the waterfront area and historic harbour had been destroyed by reclamation projects and reconstructed in an attempt to present what the state thought Melaka should have been and ought to be. A further submission in the late 1990s met with criticism because non-Malay traditions, expressed in the urban landscape and architecture, notably those of the Chinese and specifically the hybrid Baba Nyonya or Straits-born Chinese, had been neglected in official, state-sponsored representations (and see Cartier, 2001:196–203). In any case, could 'feudal' Melaka, with its reconstructed wooden sultan's palace, the Historic City Memorial Garden in Islamic design, and the Cultural Museum with its emphasis on traditional court ritual and ceremony, and as the repository of a long-established indigenous culture and the political traditions of rajahdom, be used to represent a modernizing multi-ethnic Malaysian nation and specifically the aspirations of a rapidly expanding Malay middle class? Interestingly the Malaysia of the 1990s began to move away from the notion of a Malay identity derived from a feudal past, and instead has focused more decisively on the modernity of Kuala Lumpur as the capital of a country aspiring to fully developed and industrialized status by the year 2020. Recent representations of Melaka also emphasize a more modernized, commercialized leisure and recreation centre.

In Penang, on the other hand, Jenkins and King demonstrate that in tourism promotion and nation-building what has been emphasized there is cultural diversity whilst the specific European elements of colonial George Town have been played down. The city has been refocused on the modern high-rise New Urban Centre as shophouses were cleared and urban redevelopment got under way in earnest from the 1970s under the auspices of the New Economic Policy. George Town provides an excellent laboratory for examining the complex and contradictory effects of globalization on George Town's urban landscapes. These landscapes constitute an arena for the competing images of what a modernizing Malaysia should be like, and the city is currently witnessing a struggle between what Jenkins and King refer to as the 'modernizers' or 'developers' on the one hand and the 'conservationists' on the other who argue for the preservation of historic buildings and streetscapes and their associated ways of life. Although much effort has been devoted by elements of the rapidly increasing and differentiating Malaysian middle class in Penang to promote the conservation of urban heritage in the inner city, the recent repeal of the Rent Control Act from January 2000 and the climate of economic deregulation have removed the important legal protection from buildings erected before 1 February 1948. It is clear that now historic George Town is under threat from commercial developers and ill-planned high rise and other urban redevelopment both within and on the margins of the formerly protected areas. It has been listed by the World Monument Fund as one of the world's 100 most endangered sites, and it remains

to be seen if conservationist movements are able to ensure the survival of the remaining parts of the inner city in the interests of the urban environment and heritage-focused tourism development.

Although we have concentrated on the Indonesian-Malaysian world in this special issue we thought it appropriate to include Tim Winter's paper on what is arguably one of the most important of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Asia, the Buddhist temple complex of Angkor in Cambodia. Angkor is also one of the region's fastest growing tourist destinations, and, in this context, its management authorities (the International Coordinating Committee for the Safeguarding and Development of Angkor [ICC]), under the auspices of UNESCO, and the Cambodian-managed Authority for the Protection and Safeguarding of the Angkor Region ([APSARA]) are attempting strenuously to counter the threats posed to the site by mass tourism and to encourage what is seen to be a more appropriate, 'high quality' cultural tourism. Angkor is a focus for the interplay and conflict between a national and international conservation perspective, which has failed adequately to grasp and conceptualize the significance of heritage sites as generators of tourist revenue in developing nations, as against global media 'imaginings', especially since the filming there from November 2000 of the ultimate post-modern concoction, the Hollywood blockbuster, *Tomb raider*.

Winter argues that the managers of the site have been preoccupied with a discourse of architectural conservation and restoration focused on the physical structures themselves and on the glory of a once-powerful and culturally and technologically sophisticated Khmer civilization, whereas the computer-generated virtual world of *Tomb raider* has given rise to different ways in which this 'practiced tourist space' can be imagined by tourists. Unlike the local managers and the UNESCO Committee, who see Angkor in terms of its national cultural and historical significance and who are concerned to create an 'authentic' tourist experience, the movie-makers—the creators of global media representations—have created something for a mass audience dissolving the boundaries between the physical and virtual, the real and imagined and high and low culture, with no concern for its cultural integrity and the locally perceived reality and meaning of the monuments. Instead Angkor, traversed in the *Tomb raider* film by the '21st-Century Superwoman', Lara Croft, becomes a focus for global, 'post-authentic' tourist spectacle and adventure, 'a culturally and historically disembedded visual spectacle'. But given the Cambodian authorities' view of Angkor, why did they allow the movie-makers in? Winter's contribution reveals another dimension of tourism development which may run counter to conservation programmes and plans for appropriate cultural tourism and that is the need on the part of the Cambodian government both to promote heritage and the national image of the country through the international media and also to increase visitor numbers and tourist revenue.

Other contested images of heritage are to be found in national and local museum collections, and the problem of presenting a national heritage and identity becomes particularly acute when the population is the result of physical migration. The Chinese settler populations of Taiwan and Singapore are a case in point, and Aihwa Ong has done much to advance the study of identity formation in the context of the Chinese diaspora and cultural contact with others (1999). Taiwan is of considerable interest to students of South-East Asia because of its aboriginal connections to the south. Hitchcock examines the ambiguity of national identity in Taiwan through its museum collections and the ways in which the identities of its populations are constituted and represented. The National Palace Museum expresses the mainland Han Chinese heritage of the émigré Nationalists and there is little which is explicitly Taiwanese in the displays. On

the other hand, the network of folk museums such as the Taiwan Aboriginal Culture Park, the Formosan Aboriginal Cultural Village, and the Taiwan Folk Village are devoted to local cultures and history, both Chinese-Taiwanese and indigenous. What is clear is that the museums have constructed and elaborated a limited number of 'primordial clusters'. Yet Taiwan's crucial dilemma lies not so much in its relationship with South-East Asia, but rather in its representation of its Chinese identity and heritage and its relationship to the People's Republic of China, which does not recognize the separate existence of a Taiwanese nation-state.

The major issue of national identity which faces Singapore with its majority Chinese population surrounded by its predominantly Muslim South-East Asian neighbours of Malaysia and Indonesia is rather different. Can-Seng Ooi has analysed the heritage preserved and the historical perspectives presented in the Singapore Art Museum and the Asian Civilisations Museum. He demonstrates how time and space are reconstructed and how the past and the present are brought into interrelationship in the context of Singapore's regional and international ambitions as a 'Global city of the arts', and of its perceptions of its own history and place in South-East Asia and the wider Asian region. South-East Asia and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have been relocated, constructed, and defined in the Singapore Art Museum as an 'aesthetic region', filling in the cultural spaces of what is a relatively recently created political, economic, and strategic community of ten nations. The Museum presents 20th and twenty-first century South-East Asian visual arts, and whilst recognizing that the region is culturally diverse, assumes that it is 'a legitimate art entity', and that Singapore is a constituent part of it, and one which is taking a lead in regional cultural representation. On the other hand the project of the Asian Civilisations Museum celebrates ancestral heritages, especially that of the Chinese, and the division and classification of Asia into several ancient civilizations. The displays are intended to make intelligible Singapore's history and culture, which have emerged from 'a relatively recent migrant past', by extending their range beyond the boundaries of the state and connecting the constituent populations to their primordial identities, which in turn have been constructed and represented in the state's ideology of a multi-ethnic Singapore comprising four main elements—Chinese, Indians, Malays, and Others.

Aside from the presentation of heritage in historical sites, urban landscapes, and museums, there is also the problem of the ways in which tradition and heritage are perceived at the local level, and the related problem of the conceptualization of 'the local' itself. Our collection of papers also comprises several contributions by anthropologists on the manipulation and deployment of heritage as a resource by local populations. Kathleen Adams gives us the intriguing information that in April 2001 the highland Toraja village of Ke'te' Kesu' on the island of Sulawesi was on the verge of being designated a 'mixed' (cultural and natural) UNESCO World Heritage Site, having satisfied four of the Organization's eight criteria. We return to a theme raised by Winter in his discussion of Angkor, but which is even more apposite in the perceptions of cultural heritage at the village level, and that is that to UNESCO what is important is the preservation of what is perceived to be an authentic cultural tradition. However, in the case of Ke'te' Kesu' with its ancestral houses (*tongkonan*), ancestral burial places, and 'communal rice fields', it is perceived by UNESCO as a 'living cultural landscape' which needs to be protected from outside globalizing forces. UNESCO as part of these globalizing forces constructs and presents the village as authentically Torajan on the basis of an imagined unchanging past.

Adams reveals, however, that far from the village carrying an unchanged culture, it

has been shaped and transformed through the interaction of the Toraja with the outside world, and initially with the Dutch colonial authorities. The site of Ke'te' Kesu' was only established by the local villagers following the arrival of the Dutch in 1906, 'strategically selected, for it was not only physically lovely, but it was also a mere four kilometres from Dutch colonial headquarters'. The representation of Torajan culture was, in part, a product of the political manoeuvring of members of the Torajan élite for cultural, social, and political advantage. This has taken place in response to Dutch administrative priorities, and then post-war Indonesian nation-building and the growth of tourism in highland Sulawesi. One of the outcomes of these processes has been the designation of Ke'te' Kesu' as a 'tourist object' by the local government authorities. Ke'te' Kesu''s culture was subsequently 'authenticated' further through the writings of foreign and domestic researchers, including Western anthropologists, and the founding of a local museum and library in one of the ancestral *tongkonan*. Perceptions of authenticity are influenced crucially by what museums and scholars choose to select, interpret, and display.

The construction and presentation of heritage in the village can be explained not only as a desire on the part of prominent villagers for celebrity status and social prestige among fellow Toraja, and within the Indonesian nation and on the international stage, but also as a desire for the 'infusion of financial capital into the village'. An important point is that heritage gains value not only because it is gazed upon by tourists, but also because they are willing to pay for the privilege. Adams concludes that 'the emergence of heritage sites is not a "natural" process, but rather one born out of complex exchanges, competitions, and collaborations between local groups, as well as national and international entities'.

Adams's observations are nowhere better illustrated than in the example of the 'touristification' of Balinese culture which has been explored in the minutest of detail by Michel Picard for more than two decades since the 1970s (see especially Picard, 1996). One among many of Picard's contributions has been to demonstrate that the distinction between the local and the global and therefore the constitution and definition of the local—or more specifically the distinction between Balinese culture and externally generated tourism—is highly problematical. Picard says 'I contend that far from being an external force striking a society from without tourism—or, rather, what I am inclined to call the touristification of a society—proceeds from within, by blurring the boundaries between the inside and the outside, between what is "ours" and what is "theirs", between that which belongs to culture and that which pertains to tourism. [T]ourism in Bali cannot be conceived of outside Balinese culture: it is inevitably bound up in an ongoing process of cultural construction'. In this process Balinese culture has been 'folklorized', with an emphasis on 'culture-as-art' and on the visual and performative dimensions of culture. However, in this interaction with others, the Balinese, like the Toraja, are not passive playthings of powerful global forces; they actively turn these forces to their own advantage and engage in the construction, transformation, and re-presentation of their own culture.

In his latest piece, Picard examines the recent engagement of the Balinese with the Indonesian state since the collapse of Suharto's New Order in 1998 in the context of a shift in emphasis towards 'people-based' or 'community-based' tourism and sustainable development (environmental, economic, social, and cultural). The new Law on Regional Autonomy, which was introduced by the Indonesian government and implemented from 1 January 2001 with the objective of decentralizing planning and financial control, has presented the Balinese with new opportunities in the tourism field but has also sown

some confusion. Here Picard draws attention to another dimension of the problematical notion of 'the local'. In the context of the creation of a national Indonesian identity, Balinese culture has been constructed, shaped, and presented in regional terms, in other words as a Balinese-wide homogeneous entity, equivalent to other regional cultures. Or to put it another way it is presented as a primordial cultural heritage identified distinctively with the Balinese and the province of Bali. However, most of the authority for the development and control of tourism under the new law has been devolved not to the provincial level but to the eight local districts and one municipality in Bali. Picard proposes that this will in all likelihood result in the different sub-provincial administrative units competing among themselves for tourist revenue and for promoting their own tourism development. He argues that this process of devolution 'will only increase regional imbalances, heighten interregional conflicts, and result in ruining the environment, depleting the natural resources, as well as creating social and cultural problems'. Control over plans for inappropriate tourism and other development projects has been weakened and there is now growing dispute among Balinese intellectuals about the desirable future direction of tourism development, the distribution of tourist revenues, and about the 'definition of [Balinese] identity and the place of their island within Indonesia'.

There are three contributions in this issue on the eastern Indonesian island of Flores, which, in their different ways, reinforce, complement, and extend the themes introduced in Adams's and Picard's papers. Catherine Allerton, like Adams in *Ke'te' Kesu'*, writes about the Manggarai village of Waé Rebo in western Flores, which was 'discovered' by the local authorities as representing the 'authentic' culture of Manggarai. The local district officer then set about improving, re-presenting, and preserving this perceived 'untouched' or 'relic' culture for tourist purposes by sponsoring and funding the rebuilding of the clan 'drum house' (*mbaru gendang*) and replacing an existing 'modern' house with a 'traditional' one. The 'drum house' was inaugurated in July 1999. The focus of attention then was the round, windowless, conical-roofed traditional multi-family house (*mbaru niang*), four of which survived in Manggarai. The assumption of the local authorities was that traditional houses were material evidence of the survival of traditional values. However, the main emphasis was not on local interpretations of the social and religious significance of the house but on its overt, 'marketable' qualities.

Again as in the Toraja case, we see in Allerton's paper how, far from being unchanged, Waé Rebo had been subject to transformations from the colonial period onwards, and how the village population then used the opportunities provided by external authorities to enhance their position within and outside their own society as a 'legitimate ethnic group' in the Indonesian nation. They were able to press their claims for the political and historical importance of their village on the basis of their being repositories of authentic Manggarai culture. Again Waé Rebo's designation by the local government as a 'tourist site' and a 'cultural village' led the villagers to interpret this 'as a sign of cultural authenticity', though given the small numbers of tourists who have so far visited the site, Allerton suggests that its recent importance for the local population is as 'a further tool in individual and collective status-building' rather than as a means to generate tourist revenue.

A similar process of cultural construction can be seen in relation to stone structures or megaliths among the Ngadha of Flores. Stroma Cole argues that megaliths 'have become a potent symbol of Ngadha society used in tourism marketing'. But there are differences between the symbolic meanings and significance assigned to them by the local population on the one hand who see them as 'clan' or 'ancestral stones' and as a

continuing effective means to connect the living with the dead, and tourists and the representatives of the state on the other who see them as ‘an outward sign of a culture’, as ‘totemic structures’ and as the ‘sacred relics’ of a ‘primitive and unchanged society’ which should be preserved as ‘national assets’. In tourist guidebooks there is no detailed gloss on the purpose and meaning of the megaliths in a local cultural context. As we have already seen in other cases in Indonesia the state acts to undermine and transform certain elements of minority cultures, especially those perceived as being in conflict with modernization, development, and nation-building, whilst at the same time defining other elements, particularly the visual and artistic, as cultural heritage or tradition to be preserved. Cole illustrates this divergence in meanings by describing and analysing a ‘clan-stone moving ritual’ (*robo ker*) which she observed in 1998 and which served ‘to bring the ancestors, represented by the clan stones, to the centre of the hamlet ... and to reinforce and publicly display the unity of the clan’. Yet the perception of megaliths as physical markers of heritage acts to undermine this very relationship between the Ngadha and their ancestors and endanger their contemporary significance for local people.

Maribeth Erb, in her paper on Manggarai, poses the questions ‘What is culture?’ and ‘Where is the local?’ in the context of first, a post-colonial nationalism, and secondly and most recently a globalizing world, in which there is ‘the possibility of selling culture and place within tourism’. Like Picard, Erb draws attention to the particularly crucial issue of local definitions of identity and culture with the introduction of the Law on Regional Autonomy, and the increasing opportunities for contesting and negotiating what it is and what it means to be a member of an ethnic group in Indonesia. The issue is rendered more complicated because some of those who consider themselves to be members of a given ethnic group are mobile and live elsewhere. Yet they also enter into the debates about ‘the local’ and they become ‘a kind of tourist to their homeland’ experiencing their own culture as ‘heritage’ or ‘tradition’ and searching and arguing for ‘authenticity’ and ‘credibility’. Therefore, local cultures and the identities which flow from them are becoming increasingly ‘deterritorialized’. In this context Erb proposes that the carriers of culture become ‘disembedded’ and culture becomes ‘a floating sign, displaced from the roots of statuses, roles, and places that initially formed the Manggaraian person’. Culture becomes ‘a recipe’ and what is enacted and displayed is what is thought should be presented by those Manggaraians who live beyond Manggarai in Jakarta; above all culture is seen as a product which has touristic appeal and which can be marketed.

To help us understand this ‘deterritorialization’ of culture and identity Erb also introduces Marc Augé’s concept of ‘non-places’—places of highly readable, standardized, globalized understanding, detached from a specific location (1995). However, what is clear, as other contributors argue in this special issue, is that local people still infuse these ‘globalized’ places, events, and experiences with their own meanings and purposes, and in Indonesia this has become especially focused with the recent emphasis on local autonomy. Erb, like Allerton and Cole, examines a cultural event, in this case the ‘Penti Manggarai 2001’ (a large-scale festival comprising ritual, songs, and games) held in the capital city of Ruteng at the site of tourist encounters, to illuminate the contested nature of Manggarai culture and identity. Specifically she identifies the clash of perspectives of local residents who ‘felt that a violence had been done to [the logic of Manggaraian village life] in the representation of this celebration as “Penti”’; whilst ‘the Jakartan Manggaraians were redoing Manggaraian culture in an image that they were comfortable with’.

As we have said nature as well as culture provides potential tourist assets which, on occasion, can be transformed into heritage. Norman Backhaus, like Erb, also uses Augé's concept of 'non-place', and applies it to the 'jungle', or rather a constructed jungle in the Malaysian national parks of Gunung Mulu in Sarawak and Kinabalu in Sabah, both of which are designated World Heritage Sites. What, he asks, constitutes authenticity in the case of a protected national park? The question is also bound up with the rapidly increasing popularity of ecotourism and the principles of nature conservation. Just as historic sites, monuments, and cultural villages are designated as heritage and therefore objects of protection and conservation so too are natural environments. Backhaus points out that the very fact that a place is demarcated as protected or reserved, or that it carries the designation 'heritage site', lends it authenticity in the eyes of visitors. But it also raises their expectations about the particular qualities of 'authentic nature'; for ecotourists, for example, a park should be unspoiled, unpolluted, unique, in ecological balance, off the beaten track, and in harmony with local communities and traditional cultures. However, it should also serve as a site for adventure and excitement, though in a controlled, secure, and managed way. In other words authenticity is a socially relative construction, and Backhaus shows that it is of particular significance for foreign visitors to parks rather than domestic tourists who are usually seeking leisure activities rather than communion with nature. There are also still other perceptions of parks carried by local people who live in and around them and use the local resources, and by the park managers and wardens who are charged with protecting and sustaining the environment but also managing tourism and visitors. As a non-place parks also require 'signing'; visitors expect to be guided and informed by signposts, pictograms, posters, and nameplates. But Backhaus suggests that visitors who are 'reading' a destination may well be looking for different things, and therefore the kinds of information and facilities provided and the creation of an overall image of a site are highly complex and contested processes.

At this point it is appropriate to return to our opening theme which is that 'heritage' is appropriated, created, and presented in different ways by different actors. In our view the importance of this collection on tourism and heritage is that the contributors from different disciplinary backgrounds and with a variety of case material from South-East Asia (on urban sites, temple complexes, archaeology, museum exhibitions, cultural villages, ritual events, cultural performances, and national parks) together demonstrate how local communities with varied interests and perspectives interact dynamically with national and global actors who themselves carry and promote different expectations and images of heritage and the past. This interaction and contestation, in the context of tourism development, also takes place as part of more general processes of local and national identity formation, and the politics of representation (Yao Souchou, 2001[b]). What the several contributors explore are the ways in which cultural and natural heritage is subject to selection, construction, transformation, and re-presentation and how it is used explicitly in pursuing particular political, economic, social, and cultural objectives.

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### Note

1. The Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

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