

The glocalisation of heritage through tourism

Balancing standardisation and differentiation

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Heritage meets global tourism

Year after year, the tourism and travel industries proudly present global statistics showing steady increases in international tourist arrivals and receipts (UNWTO 2008), and a growing contribution to the world total GNP (WTTC 2008). Even if the collection of these figures is fraught with methodological problems, the numbers are illustrative of the trend: tourism, or travel-for-leisure, is on the rise across the globe (albeit unevenly). Given the pervasiveness and local particularity of heritage, it is not surprising that heritage tourism is among those niches growing most rapidly (Timothy and Boyd 2006). Such special interest tourism is being developed, both as a primary objective and as a by-product of other leisure activities, by a wide variety of stakeholders on local-to-global levels. While people have journeyed to witness historic places of cultural importance since ancient times, what is new is the ever-increasing speed, intensity and extent of travel and tourism. Private and public sectors worldwide, whether or not in collaboration, are converting cultural heritage resources into destinations and attractions, in a bid to obtain a piece of the lucrative global tourism pie.¹ The money visitors spend on admission fees, souvenirs, transport, and food and accommodation contributes billions every year to the global economy and employs millions of people directly and indirectly (Timothy and Boyd 2003).

Apart from economic incentives, heritage tourism serves important political purposes. On the domestic level, cultural heritage is commonly used to stimulate pride in the (imagined) national history or to highlight the virtues of particular ideologies. In the supranational sphere, heritage sites are marketed and sold as iconic markers of a local area, country, region or even continent, and the journey abroad as an opportunity to learn about the 'Other' – some go as far as promising a contribution to worldwide peace and understanding. At the same time, tourism is increasingly recognised and used as an agent of socio-cultural change. The mounting struggles over who controls heritage tourism reflect its growth and success (Salazar and Porter 2004; Porter and Salazar 2005). Cultural heritage tourism in particular has been advocated as an attractive alternative to mass tourism, providing sustainable livelihoods to small local operators, protecting and sustaining the cultural resources, and

educating tourists and locals alike (NWHO 1999). Cultural heritage management is now commonly seen as a strategic tool to maximise the use of heritage within the global tourism market (Nuryanti 1997). This goes hand in hand with the overall trend to privatise goods and services, making heritage tourism more entrepreneurial and entertainment-oriented, and leading to new types of conflict over ownership and appropriation.

Some argue that the globalisation of heritage through tourism has led to a greater respect for (both material and living) culture than previously existed. However, the transformation of sites into destinations and cultural expressions into performances is seldom straightforward. Conservation and preservation along with developing and managing visitation are major issues facing the cultural heritage tourism sector (see Figure 7.1). The interface and relationship between heritage and global tourism is extremely complex. In a tourism setting, heritage can be (mis)used in a variety of ways for a variety of purposes by a variety of stakeholders. This chapter discusses some of the most pressing challenges that lie ahead in cultural heritage tourism and stresses the importance of heritage interpretation for its sustainable development. The case study of central Java, Indonesia, illustrates the general trends and shows the urgent need for more dialogue and collaboration between the fields of heritage management and tourism.

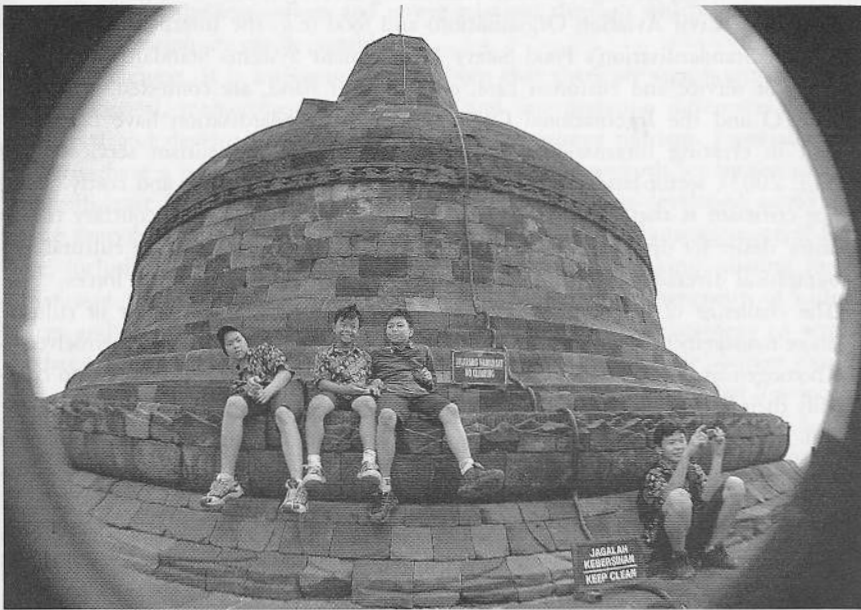


Figure 7.1 Learning to respect heritage through tourism? Locals at Borobudur, Indonesia (Photo by the author)

Global standards versus local distinctiveness

That tourism is a global phenomenon is not debated. Both constituted by and constitutive of globalisation processes, tourism includes huge movements of people (tourists as well as tourism workers), capital (investments and tourist dollars), technologies of travel and the circulation of closely related tourism media and imaginaries (Salazar in press). There is a striking complicity and circularity in the relationship between transnational tourism and (neoliberal) globalisation. They are inseparable from one another, as hybrid parts of the same set of processes. The set is 'hybrid because it is made up of an assemblage of technologies, texts, images, social practices and so on that *together* enable it to expand and to reproduce itself across the globe' (Urry 2002: 144). Cultural heritage management, too, is caught up in a complex web of global interconnections and dependencies between stakeholders at various levels. Tourism development in particular has been instrumental in globalising heritage, its management, interpretation and appropriation.

Engaging with global tourism inevitably necessitates a certain degree of worldwide integration and homogenisation, which are given tangible form via the standardisation of training, service and hospitality benchmarks. Indeed, for the global system of travel and tourism to work efficiently, internationally agreed standards need to be imposed across the board. That is why regulatory mechanisms and instruments of standardisation and control, developed at the international level, are becoming increasingly pervasive. One readily understands that this makes sense for areas such as transport (e.g. the Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme of the International Civil Aviation Organisation) and food (e.g. the International Organisation for Standardisation's Food Safety Management Systems Standard). Universal criteria for service and customer care, on the other hand, are contested. Although UNWTO and the International Organisation for Standardisation have been successful in creating international yardsticks in the area of tourism services (ISO 18513: 2003), sector-based interest groups see them as redundant and costly.² One major criticism is that the promotion of standardised services runs contrary to the tourists' desire for diversity in the travel experience, as well as negating cultural and geographical diversity in destinations – one of global tourism's driving forces.

The challenge of standardisation is extremely relevant in the context of cultural heritage management. Heritage destinations worldwide may be adapting themselves to the homogenising trends of global tourism, but, at the same time, they have to commodify their local distinctiveness in order to compete with other destinations (cf. Chang 1999). After all, it is the local particularity of heritage (sometimes branded as 'national') that tourists are most interested in witnessing and experiencing. In other words,

[T]he more globalisation, of which tourism is a main agent, homogenizes habits and landscapes all around the world, the more whatever is available of the past tends to be iconized as a symbol for national identification and, in touristic terms, as a unique sight.

(Peleggi 1996: 445)

Tourism marketers and imagineers around the globe capitalise on the following assumption: If all places on earth and their inhabitants have a culture, and if this culture is necessarily unique to a specific place and people, then its transformation into heritage – cultural assets in the form of the built environment, a living heritage expressed in distinctive local customs and song, dance, art and handicrafts, etc., and museums – should produce an exclusive product reflecting and promoting a distinctive place or group identity. Heritage is thus used to endow peoples and places with what in marketing terms is called a product's 'unique selling point'. Ironically, pioneering projects of originality and uniqueness have been successfully replicated to the point where they no longer express the sense of a locally distinctive identity that was the intention of their creators and promoters.

The global increase in tourism has exerted pressure on many heritage sites. The process of 'tourismification' of heritage confronts those stakeholders involved and communities affected with a whole set of complex issues, including authenticity, interpretation, heritage contestation, social exclusion, contested space, personal heritage, control and preservation (Timothy and Prideaux 2004; McKercher and Du Cros 2002). Glocalisation – the patterned conjunctions that shape peoples and places and by means of which they shape themselves – is a first approximation that suggests equal attention to globalisation and localisation (local differentiation) existing in a complex two-way traffic (Salazar 2005; Robertson 1995).³ It is a fitting term to denote the intertwined processes whereby new boundaries are created between local-to-global orders, and all gain strength. As an analytical concept, glocalisation directs our attention to the institutions and power relations through which globalisation as well as localisation are made possible.

In this context, it is important to point out that there are significant economic, social, political, management, conservation and interpretation differences between developed and developing countries in terms of heritage tourism. Especially poor countries have a hard time achieving the international standards set by the tourism sector (Salazar *in press*). There are many issues in the less-developed world that create everyday obstacles to the sustainable development and management of heritage, including the role of local communities in decision making, sharing in the benefits of tourism development, empowerment and power, ownership of historic places and artefacts, lack of funding and skills and forced displacement to accommodate tourism growth (Hampton 2005). The promise of sustainable heritage tourism becomes all the more difficult to realise if we take account of the fact that low-income nations receive only a fraction of global tourism revenue (UNWTO 2008).

The expansive growth of tourism after World War II greatly helped to promote the cosmopolitan idea of a common heritage, to be valued, shared and enjoyed by the global *ecumene*. In fact, global tourism and world heritage recursively reinforce and enhance each other in an ever-growing and influential lobby. UNESCO's high-profile campaigns to safeguard Abu Simbel in Egypt (1966), Borobudur in Indonesia (1973) and Angkor Wat in Cambodia (1993) are salient examples of this. World Heritage Sites (WHS), such as the three examples above, are considered to be the centrepieces of global heritage tourism (Shackley 1998). The World Heritage List is a rapidly

growing catalogue of the cultural and natural heritage that, according to the 1972 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the World's Cultural and Natural Heritage, is of 'outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science' (after having been nominated nationally and accredited internationally). The first twelve sites were inscribed in 1978. Thirty years later, the list includes 679 cultural, 174 natural, and 25 mixed sites in 145 countries (with European and Judaeo-Christian sites continuing to dominate).⁴ The original purpose of WHS designation was to assist with management and preservation of the sites and to encourage the development of management plans.

The mere inscription on the WH list usually coincides with a boost in visitation rates (Pedersen 2002). UNESCO's list thus plays an instrumental role, not only in safeguarding heritage, but also in increasing international visitor numbers (and all the problems associated with this). Many WHS have quickly become major attractions. With millions of tourists visiting the 878 sites each year, tourism has not only been economically rewarding, it has also become a major management concern. By definition no two WHS are alike, but they all share common problems such as the need for a critical balance between visitation and conservation. Many sites lack trained personnel and policy makers sometimes lack the experience necessary to use tourism as a tool for sustainable development. In 1999, ICOMOS adopted its International Cultural Tourism Charter, a policy document detailing the importance of managing tourism at places of heritage significance.⁵ The overriding importance of tourism to WHS, both as an opportunity and, if poorly managed, as a threat, was recognised by the World Heritage Committee when it authorised the World Heritage Centre, in 2001, to develop a Sustainable Tourism Programme.⁶ This has resulted, among other things, in a practical manual on tourism management (Pedersen 2002).

Since 2004, National Geographic's Centre for Sustainable Destinations has asked hundreds of experts to rate tourism destinations on several criteria. The idea behind this yearly exercise is to improve stewardship and attract the most beneficial, least disruptive forms of tourism. In 2006, the panellists evaluated 94 WHS destinations. Among the highest-scoring cultural sites were the Alhambra (Spain), Vézelay (France), Guanajuato (Mexico), Córdoba (Spain), Bath (UK) and Évora (Portugal). At the bottom of the list were the Upper Middle Rain Valley (Germany), Kyoto (Japan), Assisi (Italy), Avignon (France), the Loire Valley (France) and the Banks of the Seine (Paris). These type of rankings, together with the biennial World Monuments Watch list of 100 most endangered cultural heritage sites and UNESCO's own list of World Heritage in Danger, provide opportunities to raise public awareness, foster local participation, advance innovation and collaboration, and demonstrate effective solutions.

Such actions are necessary because the tendency to adopt top-down heritage planning and management procedures has often resulted in the disenfranchisement of local people, giving greater prominence to expressions of national, 'official' culture and nationalism at the expense of local culture (Wall and Black 2004). This kind of approach has tended to freeze sites and displace human activities, effectively

excluding local people from their own heritage. With tourist awareness of the significance and location of WHS at an all-time high, no wonder governments strategically choose which monuments to nominate as symbols of national character and culture and which ones not. While in some instances packaging WHS to cater to a world market appears to be subservient to the nationalistic needs and criteria of the individual countries in which the sites are to be found (Boniface and Fowler 1993), WHS are, *par excellence*, global heritage products. Every international visitor contributes to the globalisation of heritage by asserting the value of the site as universal and the right of general accessibility to it (Di Giovine 2008). However, the very concept of universal heritage is increasingly contested. After all, it privileges an idea originating in the West and requires an attitude towards culture that is also distinctly European in origin. Within the discourse of universal heritage, there is little room for specific cultural, political or religious positions that diverge from Western, secularist viewpoints. The fact that the very concept of heritage is underpinned by the globalisation of Western values has prompted challenges, resistance and misunderstandings (Salazar and Porter 2004; Porter and Salazar 2005).

Today, global heritage tourism largely continues to base policies around a Western-centric network of organisations and technologies. The intergovernmental agencies of UNESCO officially charged with the definition, recognition, designation and protection of World Heritage (especially the World Heritage Centre and its expert advisory groups such as ICOMOS) are often blamed for this bias. While they certainly play a role, it is rather a hesitant and ambiguous one. After all, the sites designated on the WH list represent those national choices and priorities that have successfully been lobbied for, rather than any international standard (Ashworth and Tunbridge 2000). In other words, organisations like UNESCO offer a forum for national representation rather than world governance. World heritage is 'the sum of scrutinised national heritages, a situation which has the potential to create competition given that heritage becomes an expression of national self-esteem' (Timothy and Boyd 2003: 15). Ironically, UNESCO's apolitical stance towards cultural conservation feeds directly into the heritage-tourism-development nexus created by many governments. Indeed, we should not forget that many countries, especially poor ones, see tourism as a major tool to develop, and that development in the eyes of those in power often equals erasing local, traditional cultural practices.⁷

Of course, world heritage is but one facet of the move towards globalisation and while a shared heritage is desired by certain countries, it is not a universal presumption. Moreover, UNESCO's idea of a WH list is not new. Various precursor listings have been compiled over the ages to catalogue the most spectacular natural and cultural heritage in the world. One of the first known inventories was the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, based on guidebooks popular among Hellenic sightseers, including monuments located around the Mediterranean rim.⁸ This ancient list inspired the creation of many similar rankings ever since. Recently, the Swiss-based New7Wonders Foundation invited people around the globe to cast their votes on the Internet for the New 7 Wonders of the World. Over 100 million people worldwide participated. On 7 July 2007, the foundation organised a

televised declaration ceremony in which it announced the winners: the Great Wall (China), Petra (Jordan), Chichén Itzá (Mexico), the Statue of Christ Redeemer (Brazil), the Colosseum (Italy), Machu Picchu (Peru) and the Taj Mahal (India). The results were cleverly used by the winning countries to boost both national pride and international visitor numbers. For the same reasons, countries such as Canada, Poland, Portugal, Russia and Ukraine (who were not included in the final list) organised their own national Seven Wonders campaigns.

Interpreting local heritage for a global audience

Although seldom acknowledged, the globalisation of heritage through tourism can seriously influence its interpretation, both for locals and tourists. We should not forget that cultural heritage mainly has value because of the selective meaning that people ascribe to it, often through personal identification and attachment. The way people relate to a place is not so much caused by the specific site attributes but by the visitor's personal motivations and perceptions (Poria et al. 2003). Those who view a site as bound up with their own heritage are likely to behave significantly differently from others. A single heritage site can provoke varied degrees of understanding – be it on a local, national, regional or even global scale. In fact, there is no heritage without interpretation, and the attached subjective meaning is always culturally (re)constructed and often contested, because 'society filters heritage through a value system that undoubtedly changes over time and space, and across society' (Timothy and Boyd 2003: 2). As Adams writes:

In today's context of international tourism, 'heritage' and 'tradition' become all the more intensely rethought, rearticulated, and recreated and contested, both by insiders and outsider packagers, politicians, and visitors. Tourism does not simply impose disjunctures between the 'authentic past' and the 'invented past', as earlier researchers suggested, but rather blurs these artificial lines, creating new politically charged arenas in which competing ideas about heritage, ritual, and tradition are symbolically enacted.

(Adams 2003: 93)

As a tourism construct, a wide variety of individuals and institutions attribute meaning and authenticity to heritage (Peleggi 1996).

The interpretation of heritage is important to defining, evoking and enhancing its meaning (Uzzell 1989). Making the different layers of multiple and shifting meanings and their dissonances accessible and understandable, for both local residents and tourists from varied backgrounds, requires carefully designed strategies of representation. Interpretative services are not a special favour to visitors; they are an essential part of the work of heritage management (see Figure 7.2). As Moscardo argues, 'successful interpretation is critical both for the effective management and conservation of built heritage sites and for sustainable tourism' (1996: 376). This is an extremely challenging task, because the desire to (re)present heritage for both



Figure 7.2 Aspiring heritage guides learning the tricks of the interpretation trade (Photo by the author)

domestic and international audiences often creates a tension around the selection of stories to be told and what is to be left untold (Salazar in press). Moreover, 'although the global heritage dialogue tends to present the built environment as an empty container, places of heritage remain places where real people live and where real conflicts may arise' (Al Sayyad 2001: 22).

What does the globalisation of heritage do to its interpretation? Alternative readings of heritage as imbued with local values and meanings risk being subsumed, and thus erased, by the universalist assertions of global heritage tourism. When the interpretation of heritage crosses boundaries and becomes entangled in the complex web of global tourism, it can have the effect of disembedding local (or nationally) produced senses of identity. Local tour guides, therefore, play an instrumental role in mediating the tension between ongoing processes of global standardisation and local differentiation. Paradoxically, they often seem to rely on fashionable global tourism tales to interpret and sell their cultural heritage as authentically 'local' (Salazar 2007). This is partly because tourists appear to appreciate interpretations that combine narratives about the particularities of a destination with well-known tourism imaginaries that are circulating globally. In tourism to developing countries, for example, marketing has long capitalised on cultural economies of the exotic and the primitive, each of which are to be discovered in the pre-modern, traditional. However, this does not mean that local guides merely reproduce normative global templates. Guiding is always to some extent improvised, creative and spontaneous,

in this way defying complete standardisation. In the interaction with tourists, local guides become themselves creative producers of tourism rhetoric (Salazar in press).

Highly trained heritage guides not only benefit tourists but also the local community, by preparing and instructing visitors to be more culturally sensitive and ethical, follow minimal impact or responsible behaviour and encourage respect and proper consideration for local traditions and customs. UNESCO has recently also become aware of the importance of professional tour guiding and the organisation has taken a proactive role in benchmarking heritage interpretation, especially in Asia. Increased tourism activities at heritage sites tend to overlook the importance of transmitting knowledge about and learning the significance as well as the cultural value of such sites (Dioko and Unakul 2005). The UNESCO Asia and Pacific region office in Bangkok, Thailand, was among the first to acknowledge this. In 2005, it proposed, together with the Asian Academy of Heritage Management network, a regional-based programme for heritage tour guide training (UNESCO 2005). The Macao Institute for Tourism Studies is the first institution to offer a 'Cultural Heritage Specialist Guide Training and Certification Programme for UNESCO World Heritage Sites'. The programme aims to address several important challenges arising from the greater and more frequent interface between heritage and global tourism and how on-site tour guides specially trained in heritage guiding can play a central role in meeting these challenges. It is noteworthy that this is an example of a 'regional standards of excellence' practice, rather than an attempt to create a global benchmark.

Glocalising heritage: the case of central Java, Indonesia

Java is the fifth largest and most populated island of the Indonesian archipelago. The central region of Java comprises of two provinces: Central Java and the much smaller Yogyakarta Special Province. The earliest signs of habitation in this fertile volcanic area are prehistoric. From the seventh century the region was dominated by Hindu and Buddhist kingdoms, giving rise to the eighth-century Buddhist shrine of Borobudur, the ninth-century Hindu temple complex of Prambanan, and many other temples. Islam, coming mainly via India, gained ground in the inner areas of the island during the sixteenth century. The Dutch began to colonise the archipelago in the early seventeenth century. The British established a brief presence on Java under Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles (1811–16), but the Dutch retained control until Indonesia's independence 130 years later. When the Dutch reoccupied Jakarta after the Japanese occupation of Java during World War II (1946–49), Yogyakarta functioned as the stronghold of the independence movement by becoming the provisional capital of the newly declared Republic of Indonesia. In return for this unfailing support, the first Indonesian central government passed a law in 1950 granting Yogyakarta the status of Special Province and making its Sultan Governor for life.

Organised tourism to the centre of Java first developed under Dutch colonial rule, mainly through the *Vereeniging Toeristenverkeer* (Association of Tourist Traffic of the

Dutch East Indies), which opened an Official Tourist Bureau in Weltevreden (now Jakarta) in 1908. After independence, the new Indonesian government continued to promote international tourism, although President Sukarno's political rhetoric was markedly anti-Western. Under Major-General Suharto's New Order government (1966–98), long-term planning and a relatively stable environment for business transformed the country's tourism, and Yogyakarta became a major gateway to central and east Java, both for international and domestic visitors. By the mid-1990s, tourism had become Indonesia's third most important source of foreign revenue and Yogyakarta the second most visited destination after Bali.

While central Java offers a whole range of touristic activities, the main product is cultural heritage. The three Indonesian cultural sites on UNESCO's WH List – the Prambanan Temple Compounds (1991), the Borobudur Temple Compounds (1991) and Sangiran Early Man Site (1996) – are all located in central Java. Four others – the Yogyakarta Palace Complex, the Ratu Boko Temple Complex, the Suku Hindu Temple and the Great Mosque of Demak – are since 1995 on UNESCO's tentative list. The most common tour package includes visits to Borobudur, the Yogyakarta Palace and Prambanan. When time permits, tourists also have a chance to experience central Java's rich intangible cultural heritage, including performing arts (traditional court dances, Ramayana Ballet, shadow puppet plays and gamelan orchestra performances), traditional craftsmanship (woodcarving, batik design, the silverware from Kotagede and the pottery from Kasongan) and occasional ritual or festive events (such as the annual Sekaten and Labuhan festivals).

As Dahles points out in her study on the politics of cultural tourism in Indonesia,

[T]he cultural heritage of the Yogyakarta area has shaped the (international) images of Indonesia, as government propaganda has used architectural structures like the temples and the sultan's palace and expressions of art like the Ramayana dance to promote Indonesian tourism world-wide.

(Dahles 2001: 20)

This kind of image building particularly happened during the New Order era, when the central government (led by Javanese) strongly favoured central Java in its (re)invention of Indonesia, promoting it as the cultural heart of the nation. The current planning and development of heritage tourism in the area is in the hands of many authorities at various levels: city (Yogyakarta City Department of Tourism, Arts and Culture) and regency (Magelang, Sleman and Klaten Tourism Offices), provincial (Central Java and Yogyakarta Provincial Tourism Offices), Java (Jawa Promo), national (Ministry of Culture and Tourism), regional (ASEAN Committee on Trade and Tourism and APEC Tourism Working Group), and global (UNWTO and UNESCO) levels. Because policy makers at these different echelons have widely diverging interests, decisions taken at one level are often contested at another.

UNESCO has a long-standing history of involvement in central Java's heritage. In 1972, it launched a US\$25 million safeguarding campaign to restore Borobudur, often listed as one of the seven forgotten wonders of the world. Concurrent with the

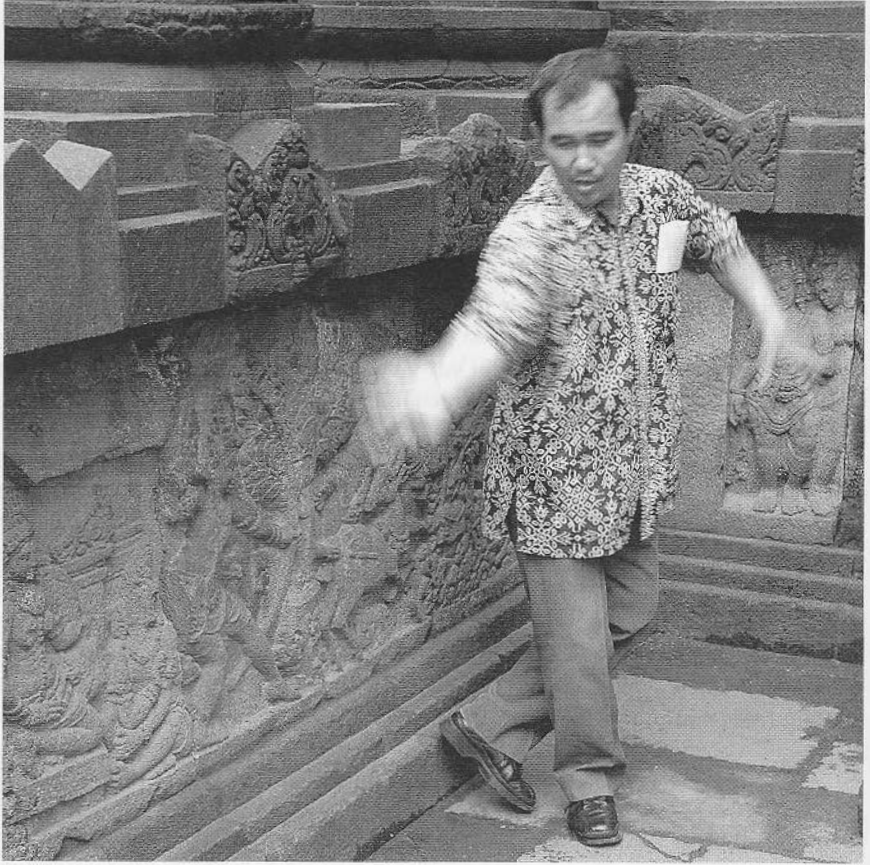


Figure 7.3 Local tour guide enacting part of the Ramayana story at Prambanan

elevation of Borobudur and Prambanan to WHS in 1991, UNESCO collaborated with UNDP and the former Indonesian Directorate General of Tourism in the ambitious 1991–94 ‘Cultural Tourism Development Central Java-Yogyakarta’ project (UNESCO 1992). Since the May 2006 earthquake, UNESCO has been actively involved in the rehabilitation of the damaged Prambanan temple complex. Another influential global player in the area’s heritage management is the non-profit World Monuments Fund, which listed Kotagede Heritage District in Yogyakarta on its 2008 World Monuments Watch list of 100 most endangered sites. Kotagede, which suffered severe damage after the 2006 earthquake, is also the current focus of the local Jogja Heritage Society.

It is no coincidence that sites such as Sangiran (prehistoric), Prambanan (Hindu) and Borobudur (Buddhist) appear on UNESCO’s list of World Heritage, whereas Suku temple or the Sultan’s Palace are not (yet) included. After all, the central government in Jakarta proposes sites to UNESCO and it is in its strategic interest to

nominate politically 'safe' monuments. Sukuh temple, for instance, is a beautiful Hindu temple tucked away in the highlands of Central Java. It is unique, not only in overall design, but also in decoration: it is the only known erotic temple on Java. Around the temple, statues and reliefs of erect male members abound. Given the moral sensibilities of the majority Muslim population (and the increasing power of fundamentalists), Sukuh is not a site the Indonesian government would want to promote. The Sultan's Palace, on the other hand, is Muslim (or, at least, partly) but a place where current politics are being played out instead of a 'dead' heritage site, such as the Ratu Boko Hindu-Buddhist complex. The internationally little-known Mosque of Demak, the historical place from where Islam spread around Java, probably has more chance of being reclassified as world heritage than the Sultan's Palace. Such politics of heritage serve as a reminder that, ultimately, a WHS is the product of agency on the national level. Besides, the Indonesian government has its own national list of *cagar budaya* (heritage conservation).⁹

Central Java is not only passively undergoing outside influences in its heritage management, but also acting as a symbolic location where broader heritage tourism agendas are being set. As a fashionable venue for conventions, Yogyakarta has had its share of key conferences in this domain. In 1992, for instance, the International Conference on Cultural Tourism led to the Yogyakarta Declaration on National Cultures and Universal Tourism. This was followed up in 1995 by an Indonesian-Swiss Forum on Cultural and International Tourism and in 2006 by an UNWTO-sponsored International Conference on Cultural Tourism and Local Communities, leading to the Yogyakarta Declaration on Cultural Tourism, Local Communities and Poverty Alleviation. In 1994, the city hosted the APEC Tourism Working Group meeting and, in 2001, it welcomed the East Asia Inter-Regional Tourism Forum. In 2002, Yogyakarta housed the ASEAN Tourism Forum.

During the last decade, central Java's tourism has suffered from a whole series of unfortunate events in Indonesia and the wider region (Salazar in press). However, 2006 dealt a fatal blow to the already ailing industry. Between May and July of that year, the area had to endure numerous natural disasters, including multiple eruptions of Mt. Merapi (one of the most active volcanoes in the world), a minor tsunami (reminding Indonesians of the tragic 2004 tsunami in Aceh) and a major earthquake of 5.9 on the Richter Scale, killing around 6,000 people and leaving an estimated 1.5 million Javanese homeless.¹⁰ Large numbers of tourists cancelled their trips to Java, exposing the fragility of the local tourism sector but also bringing to light the resilience of its workers. Prambanan was among those sites hit by the quake, along with parts of the Sultan's Palace. Borobudur did not suffer from the earthquake but had to be cleaned because the monument was covered under dark grey ash from Mt. Merapi's eruptions.

The disasters disclosed some of the local-to-global politics driving heritage tourism. It took almost a month before UNESCO sent international experts to measure the damage to Prambanan. During that time, the monument was closed to visitors. After the assessment, a newly built viewing platform (very similar to the ones erected after 11 September 2001 around Ground Zero in New York) allowed tourists to

see the main temple complex from a safe distance, without being allowed to enter it. PT Taman Wisata, the state-owned enterprise managing the park, decided not to lower the entrance fees (US\$10 for foreigners). Anticipating tourist complaints, many local tour operators decided to suspend trips to Prambanan. The few tourists who still came to visit did not want the service of a local guide (approximately US\$5 extra) because they knew that they could not get near the main temples anyway. This left the local guides in a very precarious situation. Some of the security guards in charge of protecting the site offered foreign tourists to enter the damaged main complex anyway, in exchange for sizeable amounts of cash. The on-site guides knew about these practices but preferred to keep quiet.

The calamities became the feeding ground for new interpretative narratives and imaginaries (Salazar 2009). The adversity precipitated a spontaneous revitalisation of old Javanese myths and mystical beliefs, including the legend of Loro Jonggrang (see Figure 7.4).¹¹ In the weeks following the earthquake, the Prambanan guides



Figure 7.4 Rara Jonggrang or Prambanan? Local versus global interpretations of heritage (Photo by the author)

blamed UNESCO for keeping the main temples closed to the public (preventing them from earning their living). This translated into their narratives containing much fewer references to the organisation or to the officially sanctioned interpretations of the WHS. Through initiatives such as the 2008 Prambanan Camp for World Heritage Volunteers, the negative perception of UNESCO in Prambanan was somewhat adjusted. This project, in collaboration with the Archaeology Department and Provincial Tourism Office of Central Java, enabled international volunteers to assist the experts with the restoration of the temple and to increase the heritage awareness of local youth. The example of Prambanan illustrates how, in times of change, the local meaning and function of heritage can change too. The growing supralocal interdependence of heritage tourism is irreversible but variously received (Salazar in press). The global recognition by UNESCO, for instance, is used strategically when guiding for foreign tourists, but local guides clearly sensed and criticised the organisation's 'distance' in the period after the earthquake – not recognising that, often, national instances were to blame rather than international ones.

What's next?

As this chapter has illustrated, cultural heritage tourism is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it can be a positive force to retain cultural values and to help mitigate threats. On the other hand, global tourism can become itself a menace to the sustainable management of heritage. Therefore, a good understanding of the tourism sector, its markets and trends is instrumental to sustainable heritage management (cf. Pedersen 2002). Those in charge of heritage sites clearly need to pay closer attention to reconciling the needs of the various parties involved, each with their own interests. Instead of one universally accepted meaning, the significance of heritage – be it natural or cultural, tangible or intangible – is characterised by pluriversality. Heritage appropriation and interpretation are always enmeshed in complex webs of meaning, variously cherished and expressed by shareholders at different levels. Cultural heritage is, by nature, a unique and fragile non-renewable resource. Therefore, it is imperative to understand how to develop these sites sustainably while protecting and conserving them for the long term. If not, irreparable and irreversible damage can be done. Although often heralded as a likely solution to conservation and community development challenges, local staff and communities in poor countries do not always have the resources, experience or training they need in order to use tourism as an effective instrument for achieving these goals. The tools to provide coherent and sustainable heritage management are yet to be fully developed or effectively applied. As I have argued, heritage interpretation and (re)presentation by local tour guides play a key role in this.

To make local heritage workers more competitive in the current landscape of international labour circulation, standardisation seems to be the way to go. Even if there remain great local variations in qualifications, there is a global tendency to standardise, reinforcing the idea that tourism is a global practice. This chapter has argued that thinking of globalisation and local differentiation as being opposed to

each other is not very helpful in understanding and explaining contemporary tourism. The constant (re)shaping of local heritage is in many respects part of and simultaneously occurring with the globalising process itself. By studying the daily practices of local guides and the way they (re)present and actively (re)construct local culture for a diversified audience of global tourists, we can learn a lot about how processes of globalisation and localisation are intimately intertwined and how this glocalisation is transforming culture – through tourism and other channels. Such studies bring to light that the processes of negotiation regarding the interpretation and (re)presentation of heritage are highly complex, multifaceted and flexible owing to the involvement of various parties with different interests in these interactions.

As global tourism continues to expand, heritage sites will be the source of historically unprecedented numbers of tourists. Most indicators suggest there will be a huge increase in tourism worldwide over the next ten years, virtually doubling the current numbers. It is estimated that China alone will produce 100 million outbound tourists by 2025. Interestingly, a large amount of the increased travel for leisure will be intraregional (rather than global). At any rate, the predicted growth of intraregional tourism – 1.2 billion intraregional arrivals per year by 2020 (WTO 2001) – will seriously change the global tourism landscape. For cultural heritage tourism, the challenges of global (and, ever more, regional) standardisation and local differentiation will take on new dimensions. While the management of heritage is usually the responsibility of a particular community or custodian group, the protection, conservation, interpretation and (re)presentation of the cultural diversity of any particular place or people are important challenges for us all.

Notes

- 1 Since the definition of heritage has been expanded to include not only material manifestations (monuments and objects that have been preserved over time) but also living expressions and the traditions that groups and communities have inherited from their ancestors and transmit to their descendants, the previously made distinction between heritage tourism and cultural tourism has become redundant.
- 2 While there is protest against standardisation at the global level, homogenising policies proposed by regional blocs – which are believed to be more culturally uniform – are perceived as less of a problem. This is particularly the case in Asia, the continent with the fastest growth rate of intra-regional tourism. APEC, for instance, is successfully developing its own Tourism Occupational Skill Standards while ASEAN is working on a Common Competency Standards for Tourism Professionals Framework.
- 3 The glocalisation concept is modelled on the Japanese notion *dochakuka* (becoming autochthonous), derived from *dochaku* (aboriginal, living on one's own land). This originally referred to the agricultural principle of adapting generally accepted farming techniques to local conditions. In the 1980s, the term was adopted by Japanese businesspeople to express global localisation or a global outlook adapted to local conditions. The marketing technique of melding the global inside the local quickly spread worldwide.
- 4 The cultural heritage sites are described as those monuments, groups of buildings or locales with historical, archaeological, aesthetic, scientific, ethnological or anthropological value.
- 5 See http://www.international.icomos.org/tourism_e.htm

- 6 With the promotion of sustainable tourism actions and improved tourism practices a concern at many WHS, the World Heritage Tourism Programme develops policies and processes for site management and for the states parties to the Convention to address this increasingly important management concern. It implements actions to preserve sites for future generations and contributes to sustainable development and intercultural dialogue. See <http://whc.unesco.org/en/sustainabletourism/>
- 7 Until the 1970s, such ideas and practices were common in the Western world as well. The all-pervasive ideology of modernisation equated traditional societies with underdevelopment and an inferior phase to full development.
- 8 The seven ancient wonders included the great pyramid of Giza (Egypt), the hanging gardens of Babylon (Iraq), the statue of Zeus at Olympia (Greece), the temple of Artemis at Ephesus (Turkey), the mausoleum of Mausollos at Halicarnassus (Turkey), the Colossus of Rhodes (Greece) and the lighthouse of Alexandria (Egypt). The only wonder that stood the test of time is the Great Pyramid of Giza, which was inscribed as a WHS in 1979 and is one of Egypt's major tourism attractions.
- 9 The national regulation concerning the preservation of cultural sites and objects (*Undang-Undang Nomor 5 Tahun 1992, Pemeliharaan Benda Benda dan Situs Benda Cagar Budaya*) was based on Dutch colonial law (*Monumenten Ordonantie, Staatsblad 1931, No. 238*).
- 10 Since the disasters also greatly affected my fieldwork, I wrote a public weblog entitled *Earthquake Disaster: An Anthropologist's Report from Yogyakarta, Indonesia*, with reflections as the events unfolded: http://www.museum.upenn.edu/new/research/blogs/earthquake_blog.shtml
- 11 According to local beliefs, the statue in the north chamber of the central Shiva shrine does not represent the Hindu goddess Durga but Loro Jonggrang (Javanese for slender virgin). Legend has it that she was a Javanese princess who agreed to marry a man she did not love if he could build her a temple ornamented with a thousand statues, between the setting and rising of the sun. When the man was about to fulfil her demand, she tried to trick him. He was so furious that he petrified her and she became the last (and most beautiful) of the thousand statues.

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