



# HERITAGE, LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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**Abstract:** For many local communities in developing countries and elsewhere, the existence of large attractions nearby generates both benefits and costs. This paper examines some of the dynamics of the complex, nested relationships among host communities, their local heritage sites, and tourism management structures. Borobudur in Java, Indonesia, is used to illustrate the discussion of power, displacement and control, local participation, and the role of “new tourism” in developing countries. It further offers some reflections on how tourism planning and management might encourage small-scale local tourism enterprises for the benefit of both the host and guest populations. **Keywords:** planning, participation, hosts, economic development. © 2005 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

**Résumé:** Patrimoine, communautés locales et développement économique. Pour de nombreuses communautés locales dans des pays en voie de développement, la proximité de complexes touristiques importants génère des bénéfices mais aussi des coûts. Cet article examine certains dynamiques des relations complexes et emboîtées entre ces communautés d'accueil, leur patrimoine local et les structures de gestion de tourisme. L'exemple de Borobudur, sur l'île de Java en Indonésie, est utilisé pour illustrer la discussion concernant le pouvoir, le déplacement et le contrôle, la participation locale et le rôle du << nouveau tourisme >> dans les pays en voie de développement. De plus, cet exemple offre quelques points de réflexion sur la façon dont la gestion et la planification du tourisme pourraient encourager des entreprises locales touristiques à petite échelle dans l'intérêt de la population d'accueil ainsi pour la population de passage. **Mots-clés:** planification, participation, hôtes, développement économique. © 2005 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

## INTRODUCTION

The study of tourism, and the management of it, demands that it be seen as an extended field of relationships not readily disentangled from one another, not easily sorted... into clear-cut and exclusive, opposing categories: host and visitor, inside and outside, local and global, we and they, here and there (Geertz 1997:20).

Tourism's rapid international growth since the 60s has been well documented. Despite the recent sequence of external shocks since the

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September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States, including further bombings in Bali, Kenya, and Madrid, as well as the SARS epidemic and Iraq war in 2003, tourism is now the world's largest industry (WTO 2002, 2004a). Since the 60s, international tourism has been promoted as a major component of economic development and "modernization" strategies for many countries (OECD 1967; WTO 2004b) and seen as a "passport to development" (De Kadt 1979). The 20th century's long post-war boom created rising disposable incomes in industrialized European and North American countries. New transport technologies from the early 70s, particularly wide-bodied aircraft, resulted in falling real prices for longhaul travel. South East Asia, the Caribbean and parts of Africa (which had formerly been the luxury end of the international market for Europeans and North Americans) benefited from this development. In the 90s, increasingly fuel-efficient aircraft were introduced on longhaul routes, which combined with airline cost savings and competition, led to further falls in real ticket prices and, in turn, fueled further expansion of mass tourism.

In light of this expansion, many less developed countries (LDCs) were encouraged by multilateral institutions, including the World Bank and OECD, to host international tourism (OECD 1967). In addition, the demonstration effects of booming destinations such as Thailand also inspired other governments. For example, the successful "Visit Thailand Year" promotion was widely copied across South East Asia through the 90s by other ASEAN members (Dahles and Bras 1999).

Given tourism's economic significance in most LDCs, planning assumes a central role within the local political economy and highly detailed tourism development plans are created, with national, regional, and local masterplans drawn up (Hall 2000b; Inskip 1991). However, for many local or "host" communities located close to large heritage attractions, such development raises many issues. This paper considers tourism planning and its relationships to local communities and their economic development. In essence, it argues that there are two main aspects affecting present approaches to planning and local communities: the issue of power relations and the economic case for local community involvement.

## HERITAGE, DEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

International tourism, in addition to its economic contributions to wealth-creation, investment, and employment, also plays a significant role in the construction of many countries' national identities and, particularly, how a country wishes to be perceived by others. However, the "real" images portrayed in marketing material—whether of colorful local costume, ancient monuments, or "tropical paradise" beaches—are, highly contested realities that have been carefully constructed. In Indonesia, the focus of this paper, Picard (1996) argued that for Bali, the tropical paradise image was deliberately engineered by the President Suharto's regime: to facilitate economic development and to replace the late 60s popular imagery of Indonesia as a dangerous,

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