**Draft 17 September 2013: published as *UNESCO in Southeast Asia: World Heritage Sites in Comparative Perspective*, Institute of Asian Studies, Universiti Brunei Darussalam, Working Paper Series No 4, 2013.**

**UNESCO in Southeast Asia: World Heritage Sites in Comparative Perspective\***

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**The region’s 33 UNESCO World Heritage Sites (WHS) make a significant contribution to national identity, international profile, and government plans for domestic and international tourism development. Yet we still know very little about these sites in comparative terms. The sites are defined generally as those of ‘universal human value’.**

**Once UNESCO has inscribed a site then it becomes ‘a validation of quality’ and even more importantly it confirms its ‘authenticity’; these attributes can and usually do provide significant attractions for the international tourism market and governments also deploy them for political and economic purposes. Moreover, they are globally important, but they are also locally demarcated sites which are the focus of cultural encounters, social and political conflicts, and tensions and accommodations between competing interests (international bodies, national governments and their agencies, NGOs, conservation experts, tourists and local communities). They provide the ideal laboratories for multi-disciplinary analysis, bringing together perspectives from history, political science, economics, geography-ecology, sociology and anthropology.**

**Some preliminary and summary observations are presented here from a four-year British Academy-ASEASUK-funded project (2009-2013) designed to examine a range of both cultural and natural sites across seven countries in the Southeast Asian region. As far as I am aware this is the first large-scale comparative research programme of its kind and, among other issues, it considers how sites are being managed and how they are coping with the conflicting pressures to which they are subject in a globalising heritage industry and in serving as symbols of identity and prestige in national policy-making and development plans. In comparing sites within and beyond a particular country I draw out lessons for best practice in order to assist UNESCO and national governments in relation to their concerns about heritage protection, conservation and tourism development.**

\*Previous versions of this paper as a PowerPoint presentation have been delivered at conferences in Oxford and Cambridge 2011, 2012 and 2013, as a public lecture at Universiti Brunei Darussalam in September 2012, and in seminars at Ateneo de Manila in June 2012, Macau University of Science and Technology in July 2013 and Universiti Malaysia Sarawak in August 2013. This paper is, in part at least, a reiteration and reorganisation of some of the material that has already been conveyed in King and Parnwell (2010, 2011) and King (2012). My sincere thanks go to my colleague Michael Parnwell for his scholarly collaboration in gathering and co-publishing material on Thailand. The section on Melaka is based on my own field research, and also with reference to the important work of Nigel Worden. The section on the Philippines refers, with due appreciation, to the research of Johanna Fross and Erik Akpedonu.

**Introductory Remarks**

**‘World Heritage has become a global language, a world of its own, recreating and representing particular cultures, ethnic groups, and/or national icons to be shared universally’ (Keiko Miura, 2011a: 9).**

# This provisional and critical analysis of UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)-inscribed sites in Southeast Asia has emerged from a four-year (2009-2013) cross-national, multidisciplinary comparative programme of coordinated team research on selected World Heritage Sites (WHS) across the region entitled *World Heritage Sites in Southeast Asia: Cross-cultural and Management Perspectives*. The research team comprises Victor King, Janet Cochrane, Michael Hitchcock, and Michael Parnwell, with research assistance provided by Sigrid Lenaerts, Goh Hong Ching, Jayesh Paranjape, and Joanna Fross, and involving local researchers including Kannapa Pongponrat (Mahidol University, and now at the Asian Institute of Technology), Jayum Jawan (Universiti Putra Malaysia), I Nyoman Darma Putra (Universitas Udayana), Erik Akpedonu (Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila), and Kusmayadi Husein (Sahid Institute of Tourism). Others associated with this programme of work and those who have contributed to our previous edited volumes on heritage issues in Southeast Asia include Henning Borchers (Peace Brigades International, Indonesia, and New Zealand Human Rights Commission), Adèle Esposito (Ecole Nationale Supérieure d’Architecture de Paris-Belleville/International Institute of Asian Studies, Leiden-Amsterdam), Robert(o) Gozzoli (Mahindol University International College), Gwynn Jenkins (consultant in architectural heritage and cultural anthropology, Penang), Mark Johnson (University of Hull), Fiona Kerlogue (Horniman Museum), Keiko Miura (Georg-August-Universität Göttingen/Waseda University), Ooi Keat Gin (Universiti Sains Malaysia), Philippe Peycam (International Institute of Asian Studies, Leiden-Amsterdam), Annabel Vallard (Université libre de Bruxelles), Vu Hong Lien (School of Oriental and African Studies) and Tim Winter (University of Western Sydney).

The paper focuses on three countries: Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines, though members of the research team or those associated with it have also undertaken field research in the four remaining countries which have World Heritage Sites inscribed by UNESCO: Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and Indonesia, with some of the fieldwork spanning the last twenty years. Most recently some preliminary research has also been carried out in Brunei Darussalam by Victor King. Although the sultanate has no heritage sites at the moment, it signed the UNESCO Convention in 2011 and has aspirations to nominate sites in the near future.

Among other matters, the research examines the tensions that exist between the often competing interests, understandings and agendas of the various stakeholders involved in these globally important sites and the various pressures which are brought to bear on them from the stakeholders involved: local communities, national governments and their provincial and local agencies, international conservation organisations and associated experts and researchers, tourists (both domestic and international) and civil society institutions. It also needs to be noted that the act and process of inscription as a World Heritage Site also generates new actors, institutions and regulations (Miura, 2011a: 23). In addition, the project has a policy and practical dimension in that in comparing sites within and beyond a particular country it is intended to draw out lessons for best practice to contribute to UNESCO and national government thinking and approaches to heritage, conservation and tourism development. Specifically it considers whether or not these competing tensions and pressures are being or can be resolved, and what policy options work best in particular circumstances (and see for a general treatment of these management issues, Leask and Fyall, 2006; Esposito and Gaulis, 2010; and also Miura, 2011a on Angkor). The research therefore has a wide-ranging academic, conceptual and empirical focus but also seeks to present findings and recommendations which will feed into policy, management and decision-making about these sites designated as of ‘universal human value’.

International organisations like UNESCO and the World Heritage Centre in Paris, as well as its associated bodies including the Paris-based International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) based in Gland, Switzerland, and the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) in Rome, impose a set of conservation and protection requirements on the sites which are inscribed on the World Heritage List. These requirements are designed to ensure that the characteristics of the site (in some sense its ‘authenticity’) which were acknowledged as of ‘universal human value’ in the process of inscription, and derive from the *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World’s Cultural and Natural Heritage* (UNESCO, 1972; Francioni, 2008; and also see, for example, UNESCO, 1983, 2003, 2012) are protected, and, if appropriate, enhanced. However, these measures for protection and conservation do not always sit easily with national government interest in for example increasing their revenue from tourism and therefore promoting these sites in the national and international market-place, and in deploying them as symbolic centres for the construction and promotion of national identity and placing them in a national historical context.

Some cultural sites like Angkor in Cambodia play a significant role in nationalist history and are therefore sites of political engagement and contestation whilst also serving as major international tourist attractions and a resource for national socio-economic development (see, for example Winter, 2007). Other urban-based cultural sites and tourist venues like Ayutthaya in Thailand, Luang Prabang in Laos, George Town (Penang) and Melaka in Malaysia and Hué in central Vietnam are sites in which local communities reside or where people live and work in close proximity to them so that in this sense they are ‘living’ social and cultural landscapes with all the attendant problems presented for the conservation of built forms, the control of local residents and workers and the management of tourism. Natural sites like the national parks of Gunung Mulu and Kinabalu in Malaysian Borneo, Ujong Kulon in west Java, Indonesia and Khao Yai in central Thailand are crucially important reservoirs of biological diversity and centres for scientific research as well as places visited by eco-tourists and those who come for weekend leisure breaks, camping and trekking; they again present management issues in relation to both environmental protection and tourism development and control.

Given the status of these cultural and natural sites, the level of international attention and interest in their protection, conservation and management, the importance which governments attach to them as vital elements of national heritage, and in the case of cultural sites in particular, as crucial building blocks of national identity, as well as their role as a focus of tourism interest and activity, they present complex arenas within which a range of pressures, interactions and encounters can be examined and addressed. This paper touches on several issues: (1) how different constituencies construct, present, re-present, reshape and contest heritage; (2) the ideological control and manipulation of the sites which governments frequently exert on what they consider to be important elements of national identity, nation-building, history, achievement and international image; (3) the pressures which tourism exerts on these sites and the problems raised by government involvement in the promotion of and planning for tourism and other kinds of development; (4) the importance of encouraging the kinds of tourists (whether domestic or international) who are genuinely interested in and wish to be informed about sites as testaments to the cultural achievements of past generations, or at the very least to provide informative literature, signage, audio-visual materials and guides (without these being overly intrusive) so that the sites can be better understood, enlivened and contextualised; (5) the role of sites and what they are seen to represent as expressions of the particular everyday lives, circumstances, views and thoughts of those who engage with them and as expressions of wider political, economic and cultural issues; in other words, they serve not only as subjects of discourse but they enable the creation and elaboration of discourse; they are also part of a process of separating cultural resources from the local, usually active and ‘living’ situation within which they are embedded and relocating them in a global heritage context which emphasises authenticity, tradition and timelessness; (6) the variations in the effects of change and local responses to these effects across communities and areas within the same site and between sites; (7) the issue of local communities who live in or around the site and their involvement in or exclusion from WHS. Communities have often been removed from sites and restricted in their movement and livelihoods in the interest of conservation and to recreate cultural sites as historic or archaeological parks for the purpose of tourism promotion; and finally (8) these sites provide ‘a new genre of community, both imagined and real’ comprising ‘a new social space, new values and borders’ (Miura, 2010: 103); although the importance of WHS carries their importance and influence beyond their borders in that they are part of national and international flows of people, capital, ideas and values, they can also be seen as defined, bounded and localised spaces within which there are encounters, exchanges and conflicts; and finally (9) the process and implications of converting a local site into a national, public and global one, and, specifically in relation to certain cultural sites, their conversion from a sacred to a profane state need to be investigated.

The methods adopted in the research programme were relatively standard ones. We assembled a significant number of researchers, research assistants and associates to work in a cross-regional, multidisciplinary environment and to enable us to cover a large number of sites. In some sites we undertook pilot studies and rapid appraisal; wherever possible we have recorded sites in considerable photographic detail and compiled ‘photo-essays’ which relate images to narrative, analysis and text (see, for example, King and Parnwell, 2010 [and see 2011]; and King 2012); we have used UNESCO reports and other documentation, relevant tourist web-sites and tourist blogs (some of the detail in this paper is drawn from the World Heritage Centre’s site <http://whc.unesco.org/>); structured interviews of key personnel involved in the management, protection, conservation and promotion of these sites; questionnaire surveys of both local and international tourists; and, finally, focused conference panels and workshops.

**Heritage and Heritage Tourism Defined**

We know that heritage, both cultural and natural, is not handed down unchanged and pristine from one generation to another. It is subject to selection, construction, negotiation and contestation in the context of more general processes of local and national identity formation and in the arena of cultural politics (Hitchcock and King, 2003a, 2003b: 3-13; and see Harrison and Hitchcock, 2005 [2004]). Smith usefully summarises a set of key issues pertaining to heritage: questions about its ownership, its appropriate use, access to it as against conservation needs, heritage as a commodity, as entertainment and as an educational medium, and finally the interpretation and representation of heritage forms (2003:103).

As Miura argues eloquently, heritage is a concept which is difficult to define (2011a) and Herbert gives expression to this difficulty in suggesting that it is ‘among the undefinables’, though he categorises heritage into three broad types: ‘cultural’, ‘natural’ and ‘built environments’ (1989:10-12). In a narrow and simple sense heritage is ‘a legacy; a set of traditions, values, or treasured material things’ (Universal Dictionary, 1987: 721). Smith, taking the meaning somewhat further and emphasising human agency and the active engagement with heritage, proposes that it is distinct from but related to ‘the past’ and to ‘history’, and comprises ‘the contemporary use of the past, including both its interpretation and re-interpretation’ (2003:82). In introducing the notion of interpretation, which suggests that heritage is constructed, given meaning and imbued with significance, we move into a much broader conceptualisation of heritage which pertains to concepts of identity and nationalism operating within the arena of cultural politics (Peleggi, 1996: 432; Peleggi, 2002). In this latter sense heritage, presented and re-presented as something which relates to the past and which is in some way given special value or significance as ‘treasure’ or ‘legacy’, is constructed and appropriated by the state and its agents as an object worthy of political, economic and ‘touristic’ attention, although usually only certain items are selected for this purpose and others are discarded.

Black and Wall state that ‘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’ (2001: 123). In post-colonial developing states this process of identity construction is an even more urgent task and the need, in Anderson’s terms (1991:178-185), to ‘imagine’ the nation leads to the selection and deployment of archaeological finds and heritage sites to present images of national resilience, unity, and innovation, often in the context of an ‘imagined’ golden or glorious age of endeavour and achievement (Glover, 2003:17). The ‘essence’ or ‘genius’ of the nation is usually traced back to a glorious past and to benevolent and enlightened government when everything that is now cherished as demarcating and defining the nation was created and set in motion. Sukhothai and Ayutthaya in Thailand, Angkor in Cambodia and Melaka in Malaysia are pressed into playing this role in the national imagination.

In summary then the concept of heritage refers to tangible and concrete elements of the past (buildings, monuments, artefacts, sites and constructed landscapes), as well as those aspects of culture expressed in behaviour, action and performance (usually referred to as ‘intangible cultural heritage’) which are interpreted, valued and judged to be worthy of our attention, interest and protection. In addition to the state other domestic agents involved in the creation of meanings and understandings in relation to heritage and the past comprise local tourists and those communities which live in or in close proximity to heritage sites and those who secure their livelihood from working there. With specific reference to Thailand Reynolds has already examined the creation of a Thai identity and Thai-ness in some detail through the media, education and institutions such as the military and the monkhood (1993; and see Paritta, 2002). He draws attention to the increasing importance of tourism in ‘the development and marketing of Thai-ness’ and the ways in which the promotion of Thailand as a tourist destination also helps shape local perceptions of identity (1998: 135). A very significant element in this exercise is heritage and particularly heritage sites which are given recognition through UNESCO, ICOMOS, IUCN and ICCROM because it provides these locations with both ‘international status and authenticity’ (ibid; and see Peleggi, 1996: 433, and 2002). Yet we should also note that ‘remnants of Thailand’s past’ have been used to construct a national identity since the foundation of Bangkok and the Chakri dynasty, and these remnants are ‘excellent resources for building a politically useful heritage’ (Van Esterik, 2000: 109; and see Evrard and Prasit, 2009b: 239-245).

As already mentioned heritage is also contested and transformed not only by domestic agents but also by global actors, including representatives of international organisations such as UNESCO, researchers and international tourists. It has therefore become a highly politicised project to do with identity and conflicts over its character and trajectory (Pires, 2010). UNESCO’s World Heritage Centre based in Paris and its associated Committee which meets annually designates World Heritage Sites as of either ‘cultural’ or ‘natural’ or ‘mixed’ (both cultural and natural) importance, and more particularly as sites of ‘outstanding universal value’ (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/>; and see Adams, 2003:91-93; Hitchcock, 2004: 461-466; Long and Sweet, 2006:445-469; Peleggi, 1996: 432; Rössler, 2006; Smith, 2003: 38, 105-116; UNESCO, 2012). Since the late 1960s heritage has been internationalised by such bodies as UNESCO which has ‘helped to generate a new set of understandings of culture and built heritage’ (Askew, 1996: 184). Peleggi says with reference to national heritage in Thailand that the past and its expression in built forms are ‘iconicised’ and they become ‘the only reliable sources of national identity’ (1996). They are displayed both to an international audience and to the citizenry, but, of course, given processes of conservation and landscaping their authenticity is invariably staged.

The *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World’s Cultural and Natural Heritage*, which was introduced to protect global heritage, was adopted by UNESCO in 1972, and the ‘criteria for selection’ of sites to be included on the World Heritage List (and see UNESCO, 1983; see list of UNESCO sites in ‘A Southeast Asian Context’ below, and for UNESCO Tentative Lists on Southeast Asia see Appendix 1). Until 2004 these sites were selected using six cultural and four natural criteria, but since then they have been brought together in revised guidelines to comprise a composite list of ten criteria displayed on the Centre’s web-pages under the title ‘The Criteria for Selection’. As one would expect the list is sprinkled with superlatives: for example, the first is ‘to represent a masterpiece of human creative genius’, another ‘to bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared’, yet another ‘to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history’, and another ‘to be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change’.

It is interesting in the list that one ‘cultural’ criterion has been given something of a subsidiary status in that the Committee considers that it ‘should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria’. Heritage using this criterion corresponds with a broad anthropological definition of ‘culture’. In other words it is ‘to be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance’. More recently in its *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity* (2003, and see Appendix 2), UNESCO has reaffirmed the importance of oral tradition, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festivals, and traditional craftsmanship in its criteria for selecting heritage sites (other relevant conventions are the *NARA Document on Authenticity* [1994], the *UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage* [2001] and the *UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* [2005]). Finally, there is a criterion that partly overlaps with notions of traditions, ideas and beliefs, but which addresses the dimension of cultural exchange and process within the context of broader cultural regions, that is: ‘to exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design’. In sum, UNESCO’s concept of cultural heritage is very broad, but, given those cultural sites currently on the World Heritage List, the emphasis is still on groups of buildings, monuments and settlements which require some form of protection, conservation and preservation for posterity, and are therefore tangible sites of historical, aesthetic, artistic, architectural, archaeological, scientific, technological or ethnological value.

UNESCO’s definition of ‘natural heritage’ in global terms refers to areas which embody outstanding physical, biological, and geological features and those which have significance in terms of uniqueness and their importance in the evolution of the natural world. They may ‘contain superlative natural phenomena’ or be ‘areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance’. They may be ‘outstanding examples representing major stages of earth’s history’ or ‘representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of….ecosystems and communities of plants and animals’. Finally, there is emphasis on the importance of natural habitats where biodiversity needs to be conserved, particularly where there are threats to ‘species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science and conservation’.

In the Southeast Asian context just over a third of the designated World Heritage Sites are ‘natural’, including national parks. As of 2013, and following the meeting in Cambodia in June 2013, the 21-member World Heritage Committee working on behalf of UNESCO’s World Heritage Centre had 981 sites on its list; of these 759 were cultural, 193 natural and 29 were mixed sites; there are currently 1,583 properties on what is called the Tentative List (TL), a provisional list approved by UNESCO for those countries or ‘state parties’ which have submitted them for possible future consideration for inscription as World Heritage Sites. UNESCO has also placed 44 sites on a ‘World Heritage in Danger Llist’ including the Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra. Finally, in the Asia Pacific region the majority of the WHS are to be found, not unexpectedly in China, India and to a lesser extent Japan.

Here we should also re-emphasise the major preoccupations of those international organisations which focus on Southeast Asian heritage. UNESCO (and its regional offices in Bangkok and Jakarta), ICOMOS, IUCN, ICCROM, The World Monuments Fund, The International Council of Museums (and its Asia Pacific Organisation), and The Getty Conservation Institute, and, at the regional level, the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO) and the Southeast Asian Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts (SPAFA) invariably stress the concepts of ‘tradition’ and continuity, expressed particularly in built heritage and material culture, which needs to be designated and given special attention, managed, monitored, conserved and protected (<http://icom.museum/>; <http://www.getty.edu/conservation/>; and see Vines, 2005). Even though there is recognition of the importance of ‘living’ cultural sites, overall this emphasis on outstanding cultural (and natural) legacies, which is also expressed in the heritage tourism industry, tends to indulge in nostalgia for the past and in the presentation of the exotic and an idealised and ‘essentialised’ Orient (Kennedy and Williams, 2001; and see Berliner, 2012).

‘Heritage tourism’ has also proved difficult to define and categorise. Smith remarks that terms such as ‘heritage tourism’, ‘arts tourism’, ‘ethnic tourism’ or ‘indigenous tourism’ are often used interchangeably. However, she prefers to classify them, along with ‘urban cultural tourism’, ‘rural cultural tourism’, ‘creative tourism’ and ‘popular cultural tourism’ as separate sub-types of a broad category of ‘cultural tourism’, recognising that cultural tourists as a highly differentiated category consume not just the cultural products of the past but also a range of contemporary cultural forms (2003:29-44; Clarke, 2000:23-36; Hughes, 2000:111-122). Cultural tourism is therefore no longer seen, as it was in the past, as ‘a niche form of tourism, attracting small [sic], well-educated and high-spending visitors’ (ibid:45). Heritage tourism therefore comprises that part of cultural tourism which, according to Richter, is ‘applied by some to almost anything about the past that can be visited’ (1999: 108). Tourism in this case becomes a ‘history-making business’ or at least an activity which commercialises the past (Shaw and Williams, 2002:203). The complexities of tourism as a set of socio-cultural phenomena also present problems for social science, particularly anthropological analysis. As Ness advises in her detailed and perceptive study of the development of tourism in Davao City, southern Mindanao in the 1990s, when tourism expanded rapidly, ‘it is nearly impossible for anthropology’s classical paradigms of culture to handle tourism, since it tends to involve global or “supercultural”, as well as multicultural, pseudocultural, and transcultural processes’ (2003: 4).

In summary UNESCO, though it appears to operate in a neutral, rational and logical environment based on the principles of heritage assessment and evaluation which have been agreed, and which are administered at the global level, is in fact deeply involved and implicated in the politics of culture. Miura captures the dilemmas with which UNESCO has to grapple in a sequence of questions: ‘what is heritage, who is the rightful owner, what can be practised and what not, what rules of ownership should be adopted, how much access to heritage various actors be allowed, who is to manage heritage and how to do it [?]’ (2011b: 98). UNESCOisation, in the desire to protect, preserve and conserve also incorporates sites into a process of standardisation: sites are compared one with another; they are evaluated and graded according to a set of universally agreed criteria and they are then branded in terms of the set of characteristics which UNESCO has identified and approved for them.

**A Southeast Asian Context**

The region’s 33 UNESCO World Heritage Sites (as of July 2013) make a significant contribution to national prestige and identity, international profile, and government plans for domestic and international tourism development. Yet their comparative study is still in its infancy, though we do have some detailed studies of particular sites; for example, Angkor-Siem Reap (Esposito, 2011; Hauser-Schäublin, 2011; Miura, 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c; Winter, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2007); Ayutthaya (Aphivan 2005; Aphivan Saipradist and Staiff, 2007; Gozzoli, 2011; Peleggi, 2002); Borobudur (Black and Wall, 2001; Taylor, 2003; Nagaoka, 2011), George Town (Cartier, 1993, 1996, 1997, 1998a, 1998b, 2001; Goh, 2002; Jenkins, 2008, 2010; Jenkins and King, 2003; Jones, 2010; Kahn, 1997; Khoo, 2007; Tjoa-Bonatz, 1998, 2000); Hué (Johnson, 2001, 2010; Long, 2003; Vu and Quynh-Du Ton-That, 2012; Melaka (King, 2012; Worden, 2001, 2003, 2010), and Luang Prabang (Berliner, 2010, 2011, 2012; Long and Sweet, 2006; UNESCO, 2004).

The inventory of Southeast Asian sites in the order when the state parties signed the Convention is as follows:

* **Philippines (1985) 5 sites (3 cultural, 2 natural, 29 on TL)**
* **Lao PDR (1987) 2 sites (2 cultural , 2 on T L);**
* **Thailand (1987) 5 sites (3 cultural, 2 natural, 4 on TL);**
* **Viet Nam (1987) 7 sites (5 cultural, 2 natural, 7 on T L);**
* **Malaysia (1988) 4 sites (2 cultural, 2 natural, 2 on TL);**
* **Indonesia (1989) 8 sites (4 cultural, 4 natural, 26 on TL);**
* **Cambodia (1991) 2 sites (2 cultural, 9 on TL);**
* **Myanmar (1994) 0 sites (8 on TL)**
* **Brunei Darussalam (2011) 0 sites**
* **Singapore (2012) 0 sites (1 on TL)**

**The detailed list of sites comprises the following with those where we have undertaken research, 21 in all (though at different levels of intensity) marked with an asterisk. The year of inscription is indicated in brackets.**

**Philippines: Baroque Churches of the Philippines\* (1993, Church of the Immaculate Conception, San Agustin [Intramuros, Manila], Nuestra Senora de la Asuncion, Santa Maria [Ilocos Sur], Santo Tomas de Villanueva [Iloilo, Panay], San Agustin [Paoay, Ilocos Norte]); Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park\* (1993); Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras (1995; on World Heritage in Danger list 2002-2012); Puerto-Princesca Subterranean River National Park\* (1999); Historic Town of Vigan (1999).**

**Lao PDR: Town of Luang Prabang\* (1995); Vat Phou and Associated Ancient Settlements within the Champasak Cultural Landscape (2001).**

**Thailand: Historic City of Ayutthaya\* (1991); Historic Town of Sukhothai and Associated Historic Towns (Si Satchanalai, Kamphaeng Phet)\* (1991); Thung Yai-Huai Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuaries (1991); Ban Chiang Archaeological Site (1992); Dong Phayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex\* (2005).**

**Viet Nam: Complex of Hué Monuments\* (1993); Ha Long Bay\* (1994); Hoi An Ancient Town\* (1999); My Son Sanctuary\* (1999); Phong Nga-Ke Bang National Park (2003); Imperial Citadel of Thang Long (2010); Citadel of the Ho Dynasty (2011).**

**Malaysia: Gunung Mulu National Park\* (2000); Kinabalu Park\* (2000); Melaka and George Town, Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca\* (2008); Archaeological Heritage of the Lenggong Valley (2012).**

**Indonesia: Borobudur Temple Compounds\* (1991); Prambanan Temple Compounds\* (1991); Ujong Kulon National Park\* (1991); Komodo National Park\* (1991); Sangiran Early Man Site (1996); Lorentz National Park (1999); Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra\* (2004; on World Heritage in Danger List from 2011); Cultural Landscape of Bali Province: the Subak System as a Manifestation of the Tri Hita Karana Philosophy\* (2012).**

**Cambodia: Angkor\* (1992; on World Heritage in Danger List 1992-2004); Temple of Preah Vihear (2008)**

Two sites from Southeast Asia were considered for inscription during the June 2013 meeting of the World Heritage Committee (Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary in the Philippines and Cat Tien National Park in Vietnam), but neither was accepted by the Committee at this round.

However, studying these sites in isolation tends to emphasise their uniqueness rather than that they are all subject to a set of international criteria and conventions which constrains them to be managed in a particular way with the observation of important, universally determined and agreed guiding principles. In my view, the research available to date is site-focused and therefore patchy and lacks any kind of coherent approach to the issues and problems which these sites generate. The closest we get to a more comprehensive overview of the issues in the Southeast Asian region are the two recent volumes which have been edited by Michael Hitchcock, Victor King and Michael Parnwell *Tourism in Southeast Asia: Challenges and New Directions* (2009) and *Heritage Tourism in Southeast Asia* (2010) (and for an earlier statement of some of the issues, see Hitchcock, King and Parnwell, 1993, and Hitchcock and King in a special issue of *Indonesia and the Malay World*, 2003). The *Heritage Tourism* book contains chapters on George Town, Melaka, Angkor, Hué, Halong Bay, and Vat Phou.

Comparative studies are few and far between; there is the doctoral research by Heather Black on Prambanan, Borobudur, and Ayutthaya (1997) and two relatively short chapters by Black and Geoffrey Wall on the same cases, one published in *Interconnected Worlds: Tourism in Southeast Asia* (Black and Wall, 2001) and the other which comprises a brief commentary in *The Politics of World Heritage* (Wall and Black, 2005). Their research focuses on local involvement, the meanings attached to World Heritage Sites by those who live near or in and around these sites, and the interests and engagements which local communities have with them. Black and Wall observe that local people usually have different values and perspectives with regard to these sites from international and national agencies and officials, art historians, archaeologists and conservationists, and tourism developers and entrepreneurs. One of the major questions they pose is ‘Do local communities benefit or are they often ignored in the formulation of plans and in their detailed execution?’ Their conclusion is that local people, who have often been moved or displaced from these sites, feel separated from their heritage and disenfranchised. Sites are translated from the local environment into ‘national’ monuments and icons; and they then, with the blessing of UNESCO, transcend national boundaries.

Invariably in the ‘synoptic’, ‘top-down’ kind of planning and management to which these ‘archaeological parks’ are subjected, the needs, opportunities and rights of the locally resident populations are usually ignored; they are not represented or consulted and the national or official culture in which these sites are included, usually supported and advised by international experts, is emphasised at the expense of local culture (Black and Wall, 2001: 122; Wall and Black, 2005: 156-159). The fluidity of local actions and processes becomes rigidified into externally imposed administrative structures, national and international funding regimes, inventories of cultural resources, the intervention of international cultural experts, and the world-wide mission to protect and conserve globally recognised cultural and natural sites. Black and Wall concluded that the opportunities offered to enhance the interpretation and the multidimensional character of the sites in order to make them more meaningful to tourists and to others with an interest in them were thereby lost. In addition, local people do secure some economic benefits from tourism-related activities in their area, though sometimes not as much as one would expect in that migrant workers and entrepreneurs also move in to take advantage of opportunities generated by enhanced visitor numbers.

Overall Black and Wall argued that the management and understanding of the importance and place of these sites in both local and national life would be increased immeasurably if there was more attention given by heritage protection agencies to the development in partnership with local people, of a ‘true atmosphere of stewardship’ (Black and Wall, 2001: 134). In my view Black and Wall address a most important issue in evaluating the management of World Heritage Sites. However, some sites give much more relevance to this theme of local participation than others in that certain of the cultural sites and some of the national parks offer limited possibilities for genuine local involvement in that they are geographically remote, with relatively small populations living nearby and they have a relatively low level of tourism potential.

Similar conclusions on local involvement have been reached in another comparative study, though again this is not a wide-ranging cross-national study, but one which concentrates on the two World Heritage Sites in Cambodia – Angkor and Preah Vihear. In a recent edited book by Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin (2011a; and see 2011b), Keiko Miura observes that ‘many of the traditional practices conducted by the local inhabitants in the space of Angkor were denied’ (2011a: 22), because those responsible for managing it and formulating policies saw it as belonging to the nation and the world, and not to a few local inhabitants. As with Ayutthaya, Prambanan and Borobudur top-down decision-making prevailed and Miura demonstrates in detail that governments ‘consider it part of the national mandate to decide what heritage to conserve, how to define and present it, and the role that local people should play in the enhancement of this classical cultural display’ (2011c: 131; and 2011a: 31). Local communities living in and around the site of Angkor found themselves restricted, constrained, and, at times, relocated (2011a: 27). Furthermore, the living cultures which energise a particular site are often marginalised or traditionalised, and as Miura states in relation to Angkor and its tourism potential ‘Conserving the static landscape as an ancient archaeological park may not be the only thing that tourists want to see, but more interactive and participatory tourism’ (2011c: 144).

There has also been an active European consortium which was coordinated by Dr. Annabel Vallard, previously of CNRS in Paris and now at the Université libre de Bruxelles working on a comparative project entitled *Urban worlds and UNESCO’s politics of culture in Southeast Asia*. This programme of work has been designed to create an international network of researchers focusing on UNESCO policies relating to cities and urban worlds in Southeast Asia. It brings together researchers from eight institutions and three European countries (France, Belgium and Germany) across the disciplines of anthropology, geography, history and architecture. The team has concentrated on urban-cultural sites and not on any of the natural sites; therefore, its remit is Luang Prabang (Lao PDR) (which was the first case study conducted by the team; see, for example, Berliner, 2010, 2011, 2012), Hué and Hoi An (Vietnam), Siem Reap/Angkor (Cambodia), Melaka-George Town (Malaysia), and Vigan (the Philippines). The project has posed various questions: What impact does ‘patrimonialisation’ by UNESCO have on a city? What elements are affected directly or indirectly, by what processes, and with what intensity? What is in actuality maintained, preserved or protected? What kind of new life is then given to local social spaces? Do some objects and places resist and move in other directions?

Despite the low level of activity up until now, interest in comparative research on Southeast Asian heritage is definitely on the increase. An interesting example, though not directed to world heritage as such, is Lunn’s cross-regional research on ‘war memorialisation’ in Thailand, Singapore and Vietnam (2007). Another is the recent edited book on *Rethinking Cultural Resource Management in Southeast Asia* (Miksic, Goh and O’Connor, 2011) which again does not address world heritage issues primarily, but does examine a whole range of matters to do with how heritage is thought about, decided upon and administered. The book is important because it considers countries which have not usually been at the forefront of research on heritage and cultural resources: Timor Leste, Myanmar, and the Philippines in particular, as well as Singapore, Cambodia and Vietnam. The World Heritage Site of My Son in Vietnam also features in the volume.

We also find high profile region-wide conferences being planned on the theme of cross-national comparison, heritage and the state. The Institute of Southeast Asian Studies along with the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at the National University of Singapore, and in collaboration with the International Institute of Asian Studies, Leiden-Amsterdam is organising a conference on the theme of ‘State Policy and the Cultural Politics of Heritage-making in East and Southeast Asia’ in January 2014. The concerns seem to strike a familiar chord from what I have just been addressing in my introductory remarks to this paper. The conference will be examining the ‘multi-faceted role of the state’ in determining the process of selecting which of the nation-state’s cultural attributes are to be considered as ‘legitimate’, how and in what form these attributes are represented, the details of the official cultural narrative of heritage, the ways in which resources are allocated to meet particular national cultural objectives, the debates and conflicts over what is selected, represented and funded, and the issues of sustainability and accountability which are engendered by and through the involvement of the state in heritage protection and conservation on the one hand and heritage representation, display and promotion on the other.

Let me now turn to the three case-studies, bearing in mind that we have already reported some of these data in previous publications in that our research programme is ongoing and an update of the results and findings is also due to be published in an edited book which is currently being prepared (see King, 2014, forthcoming).

**The Three Cases: Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines**

Each of the country case studies demonstrates the complex interactions between global and local processes, but in all cases the state and its agencies intervene to ensure that the country’s World Heritage Sites are pressed into the service of the nation. In the case of Thailand the research team has examined three locales: Sukhothai (and Sri Satchanalai), Ayutthaya and Khao Yai; in Malaysia my own focus has been on Melaka with some reference to George Town; and in the Philippine studies our research assistant examined Puerto-Princesca Subterranean River and the Tubbataha Reefs (Fross, 2013), and I have done some work on the Baroque Churches. In other words in this paper I am considering a range of cultural and natural sites in different national settings.

Thailand demonstrates, most of all out of the three, the vital importance of the national symbolic dimension and the considerable significance of domestic tourism interest as against international tourism. In other words, despite the fact that Thailand along with Malaysia has by far the largest international tourism industry in Southeast Asia, with regard to its cultural and natural heritage sites we have to ask the question ‘Does international tourism matter all that much?’ The main pressures in the Thai case appear to be generated by the domestic market in that the heritage sites are arenas of national symbolism, national identity formation and, in the case of the cultural sites of Sukhothai and Ayutthaya, national religious affirmation and pilgrimage (where they are part of living cultural landscapes), as well as places where the wealthy Thai middle class spend leisure time in pursuit of what we might term ‘Thai-ness’. Nevertheless, given the ever-increasing domestic interest in these sites visitor numbers are generating all kinds of problems in relation to the sustainability and protection of the heritage infrastructure.

In the case of Melaka we find that a site is being used in part at least to express and legitimise a Malay-Muslim political agenda and the ‘reclamation’ of the role of the Malays and the sultanate system in Malaysian history within a post-independence ideology of pluralism and multiculturalism. Different parts of the Melaka World Heritage Site give expression to different segments within Malaysia’s plural society – in this case primarily Malay-Muslim and hybrid (*peranakan*) Chinese communities with a marginalised Eurasian element. George Town, Penang, as a largely British-constructed colonial enclave tells a rather different story, but it too expresses Malaysian pluralism. In partial contrast to Thailand, Malaysia’s historic cities are playgrounds for both local and international visitors, particularly Penang, but all of these sites have to cope with increasing tourism pressures. Melaka and George Town are also much more subject to the Malaysian government policy of promoting economic growth and development through the tourism industry and encouraging the more general development of the service sector (hotels, leisure and retirement accommodation, retail outlets, and office blocks). This Malaysian federal and state government concern with tourism development seems to be less prominent in the Thai cultural heritage sites of Ayutthaya and Sukhothai which are seen as a continuing part of the living cultural heritage of the Thais and the focus of religious practice and pilgrimage.

In the Philippines the international tourist market is relatively modest in contrast to Thailand and Malaysia; sites such as the Baroque churches (and the historic town of Vigan) as products of Spanish colonialism do not play the role in the Philippine national psyche that Ayutthaya, Sukhothai and Melaka play in Thai and Malaysian national identity construction. The Philippine World Heritage Sites which are scattered, and in the case of Tubbataha (and Vigan) and to a lesser extent Puerto-Princesca, relatively remote from the main tourist circuits and difficult of access, are currently shielded to a degree from excessive visitor pressure. But as in Thailand what pressures there are in the Philippines are being generated primarily by the domestic and not the international tourist market, and by an expanding leisure-seeking middle class.

**Thailand**

Although heritage sites are the object of the international tourist gaze it is important to emphasise just how much they are also destinations for mainly urban-based middle class tourists from within Thailand. This is especially the case for Ayutthaya and Khao Yai which are in very easy reach of Bangkok on the major highways for those who visit for a day, or more particularly stay in hotels near these sites during the weekend. But increasingly, it is not just Bangkok that is a source of affluent domestic tourists in Thailand. The catchment area for urban middle class Thai tourists has expanded far beyond the Bangkok conurbation since the onset of the country’s economic boom in the early 1980s, associated with the ‘urbanisation’ of the capital city’s rural hinterland. This process of ‘extended metropolitanisation’ (McGee, 1991: 2008; McGee and Robinson, 1995; Ginsburg, Koppel and McGee, 1991; Forbes, 1997; Jones, 2002; Parnwell and Wongsuphasawat, 1997; Sowatree Nathalang, 1992) has brought urban functions and form, and urbanism to a region that stretches more than 100 kilometres towards the east, west and north of Bangkok, effectively enveloping Ayutthaya some 67 km away, and reaching to the very edge of Khao Yai at the Khorat Plateau some 175 km away. These developments have significant implications not only in terms of the volume of urban tourists who now visit heritage sites in Thailand but also in relation to the ways in which domestic visitors perceive, act in and interact with heritage sites, which in turn has a bearing on management imperatives. This domestication of tourism sites in Thailand is only one example of a much broader trend in the expansion of domestic and intra-regional tourism in Asia (Winter, Teo and Chang, 2009a, 2009b).

Let me now examine in a little more detail the characteristics of those urbanites who gaze on, encounter and use heritage sites for recreational purposes. During the last two decades academic interest has increasingly focused on the ‘new urban middle class’ in Southeast Asia, as an important component of ‘the new rich’ (Robison and Goodman, 1996a; 1996b; and see Abdul Rahman Embong, 2001a, 2001b, 2001c, 2001d, 2002, 2006a, 2006b; Earl, 2004; Hattori, Funatsu and Torii, 2003; Hsiao, 1993, 1999, 2001, 2006, and Wang, 2001; Kahn, 1991; Mulder, 1979, 1983, 1989, 1990, 1998, 2004; Ockey, 1999; Pinches, 1996, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 1999d; Rodan, 1996; Sen and Stivens, 1998; Thompson, 2007). The middle class is defined primarily by the acquisition and use of an advanced level of education and specialist knowledge, and is the product of changes in the economic organisation of developing societies and the demand for people with new skills and expertise (Hewison, 1996: 142-145; Mulder, 1998: 99; Rodan et al, 2001, 2006).

Importantly in relation to the expansion of tourism and leisure members of the middle class are also defined by their lifestyles and consumer behaviour. They are consumers par excellence in pursuit of new lifestyles; they ‘consume’ media products, electrical and electronic ware, fashion and luxury goods, cuisine, entertainment, tourism and educational services (Robison and Goodman, 1996b:1; Abdul Rahman Embong, 2006a: 160; 2001a). Modernity, in a very direct sense, is increasingly about consumption practices, and consumption is a vital element of status, identity, image construction and the everyday experience of class (Rappa, 2002: 2, 38; Robison and Goodman, 1996b:1; and see King, 2008: 95-106). In his detailed examination of ‘middle classness’ in Malaysia Abdul Rahman Embong also suggests that members of the middle class are differentiated from others “because of their relatively superior cultural and organizational assets not possessed by those from the working class”; in other words, they “enjoy a special position because they exercise some autonomy” and they have “greater market capacity in performing their tasks” (2002: 10; Robison and Goodman, 1996b: 2; Prudhisan and Chantana, 2001a: 381-413; 2001b: 276-290).

Although it is problematical to define a middle class and draw boundaries around it because, with specific reference to Thailand, its members are “diverse in their origins, socio-economic background, economic interests and political experiences” (Prudhisan and Chantana, 2001b: 263), a useful categorisation is provided by Hsiao and his colleagues in their comparative study of the middle class in East and Southeast Asia (2001). They see the Southeast Asian middle class as ‘a class in the making’. For them it comprises three main segments: the ‘new middle class’ (educated salary-earning professionals, executives, managers, technocrats, intellectuals and administrators), the ‘old middle class’ (small proprietors and the self-employed including shop-keepers whose educational level is somewhat lower), which was often referred to in the Marxist tradition as the petit bourgeoisie (see van der Kroef, 1953), and the ‘marginal middle class’ (lower grade white collar clerical and sales and service workers and small proprietors who deal with more routine tasks), sometimes referred to as ‘lower middle strata’ (Girling, 1985: 178; Prudhisan and Chantana, 2001b: 276-290). These latter usually overlap with, and, in some respects, are indistinguishable from elements of what we might term the upper working class, often of skilled and semi-skilled manual workers (Hsiao, 2001: 5-8, 35-36; and see Abdul Rahman Embong, 2002: 1; Hewison, 1996:143; Robison and Goodman, 1996b:9). Broadly however, members of the middle class are distinguished at the upper levels from ‘capitalists’ or a bourgeoisie in that they do not command much capital nor do they control large enterprises and at the lower levels from the working- or lower class in that they have higher levels of social and cultural capital in terms of education and skills, more market opportunities and a greater consumption capacity.

In the case of Thailand the urban middle class, primarily concentrated in (and more recently around) Bangkok emerged largely from the industrialisation, urbanisation and educational expansion which took place rapidly from the 1960s (Funatsu and Kazuhiro, 2003; Girling, 1996; Ockey, 1992, 2001; Prudhisan and Chantana, 2001a, 2001b). In addition many small-scale proprietors and businesspeople had moved into Bangkok from the provinces from the 1970s to take advantage of the expanding economy. Indeed about 50 per cent of the Bangkok middle class overall derives from the provinces and rural areas. However, only about a fifth of the members of the middle class were from lower class origins and about a quarter of the current middle class who took advantage of educational and training opportunities were from various segments of the middle class itself, particularly the old middle class already resident in Bangkok. In addition, the new middle class, some of whom have been educated abroad, has tended to reside in new planned estates and apartment blocks scattered throughout the city (Prudhisan and Chantana, 2001b: 277-290; Hsiao and Wang, 2001: 3-38).

The middle class had benefited in particular from state-generated economic development and the increasing access to education from the 1970s. They were rewarded with higher incomes and were developing particular ‘consumer tastes and symbols’ (housing, cars, electronic goods, recreational and social activities, including vacations); they were tending to marry with those of their own class background and to draw distinctions between themselves and other classes, particularly the working class; most of the members of the Bangkok middle class also subjectively identify themselves as middle class; and they were oriented to achievement, careers and success. The television and global media, including advertising, also presented certain kinds of valued middle class lifestyles which served as models for behaviour (Prudhisan and Chantana, 2001b: 262-267; 281-285).

In spite of the economic crisis in Asia in 1997-1998 which had a severe effect on Thailand, and on the incomes and employment of the middle class, there has been some recovery since then. Members of the new middle class in particular, as well as some members of the old middle class continue to pursue a lifestyle which recognises the importance of leisure pursuits, which include such activities as spending weekends away in resort and spa hotels or holidays abroad, playing golf, joining health, fitness and sports clubs, communing with and gazing upon nature, eating out in particular restaurants, dressing in designer clothes, using computers, cell phones and digital cameras, being seen in upmarket cars which carry status (especially some young and well-to-do members of the Bangkok middle class drive sporty cars), and increasingly adopting certain Western habits like drinking wine. We can see much evidence of these lifestyle markers in such places as Khao Yai and Sukhothai often over a weekend.

Evrard and Prasit (2009a, 2009b) have also taken a close look at the emergence and evolution of domestic tourism in Thailand and offer insights which have some bearing on visits to World Heritage Sites in the country. They point out that, in 2004, there were 74.8 million Thai tourists [or more accurately tourist visits/activities], compared with just 11.6 million foreign tourists (ibid: 301), and yet the latter have received disproportionate attention hitherto and there is a tendency to see Thai domestic tourism simply as an emulation and replication of Western tourism (see Winter, Teo and Chang, 2009a, 2009b). Evrard and Prasit find important differences in the motivation and behaviour of Thai domestic tourists which have implications for both tourism and heritage management. The rapid growth of Thai tourism reflects the ‘enhanced desirability of travel’ (ibid: 302) – which has been constructed both socially and economically – set against a motivation of ‘metropolitan escape’, facilitated by increased personal mobility in terms of disposable income, more time for leisure and improved communications networks. Nevertheless, although domestic tourism in Thailand is a primarily middle class phenomenon, we should recognise that day and weekend excursions to places of interest in close proximity to Bangkok and other urban centres are not confined to that class. Ayutthaya, for example, with its important religious meaning for the Thais is visited frequently by those from lower and working class backgrounds as well.

At the heart of Thai domestic tourism is an implicit nationalism and an explicit nostalgia which have transformed people, places and landscapes from being things feared, avoided, ignored or looked down upon into things attractive and curious that are worth visiting and worthy of preserving (ibid: 302-303); domestic tourism attractions also importantly make a contribution to ‘the sense of “feeling Thai”’ (2009b: 251) While foreign tourists seek the exotic and authentic, the Thai tourist seeks *sanuk* (fun), convenience and ‘Western symbols of modernity’ (2009a: 307), with a ‘dominant metropolitan core commoditising and fetishising the weaker cultural and natural periphery’ (ibid: 317). Ayutthaya and Sukhothai have thus emerged as symbols of Thai nationalist origins, both being former Thai capitals; whilst Khao Yai is a national symbol of nature, once feared, now tamed, accessible and curious (see Cohen, 2008). We travel to see what we no longer have in our own modern lives – hence cultures, history and nature – and Thais are no different in this regard: The ‘”Thai tourist dream” [has been] nurtured by urbanization, heritage policies and the idealisation of the rural’ (Evrard and Prasit, 2009a:311). ‘On the whole, the improvements in communications networks, the multiplication of “local histories”, the idealisation of the rural, the politics of heritage, as well as the availability of numerous magazines, journals and travel guides devoted to these subjects directly contributed to the development of leisure mobility among Thai citizens and consequently of a domestic mass tourism industry’ (ibid: 312, and 2009b: 244-245).

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) knows precisely where to situate its World Heritage Sites. In a promotional pamphlet entitled *Paragons of World Heritage* it introduces these sites with a statement which emphasises the role that they play in giving expression to the Thai nation and its invented past (and see Winter on Angkor and Cambodian nationhood, 2007) We find that the ‘ancient Thai kingdom reaches back thousands of years’ and that these ‘national treasures’ serve as ‘dignified reminders of a glorious past’ (TAT, 2008a: 5). The roots of the Thai nation are therefore not only traced back some seven hundred years to the foundation of thirteenth- century Sukhothai but are projected back to the distant past, some 5,000 years to the Bronze Age site of Ban Chiang in North-East Thailand, a past which is described as ‘glorious’ (ibid). This is also not merely an isolated national plea for recognition because the ‘internationally esteemed UNESCO has recognised the outstanding value of Thailand’s historic and natural conservation sites and has bestowed six such destinations [more precisely five sites counting the Sukhothai complex as one] with the title of UNESCO World Heritage Sites’ (ibid). The cultural sites are managed on behalf of the Thai government by the Fine Arts Department in the Ministry of Education which is involved in conservation work, historical studies and the planning of land use and tourism promotion. The natural forest complexes are managed by the Royal Forest Department which has its National Park officers on site.

Most importantly in one of the official guides to Ayutthaya published by the Tourism Authority of Thailand, the national value of the cultural sites to Thailand are expressed in the words of His Majesty the King, Bhumipol Adulyadej, which are appended to the back cover: ‘A new building today is just the pride of the builder, but an ancient monument is the pride of the Nation. A single ancient brick alone is valuable and should be preserved. Without Sukhothai, Ayutthaya and Bangkok, Thailand would be meaningless….’ (TAT, 2000). Sukhothai and Ayutthaya in particular are presented as ‘the antecedents of the modern Thai nation-state’ (Peleggi, 1996: 433). These messages are reinforced in major tourism guidebooks (see for example, on Ayutthaya *Lonely Planet*, 2007: 194). Although modernity and globalisation are acknowledged what is emphasised are the essential elements of ‘Thai-ness’ which are continually reinforced in the government tourism promotional literature: Thailand retained its independence when their neighbours were inexorably incorporated into Western colonial empires in the East; there is a very strong adherence to the ‘national religion’, Theravada Buddhism and the monastic order, (the *Sangha*); Thais are staunchly loyal to the monarchy and hold it in deep reverence; there is a set of cultural characteristics which delineate the Thai nation expressed in language, ritual, dance, architecture, behaviour and personality. These cultural commonalities override or at least neutralise ethnic difference and cultural dissonance.

What is more the UNESCO status of Thailand’s World Heritage Sites does not seem to be promoted to the extent which one might have anticipated, although some of the private sector tourism companies, particularly resort hotels and golf resorts, operating around such sites as Khao Yai, do associate themselves with the global heritage industry and attempt to take advantage of their proximity to a UNESCO site. In the TAT *Golden Wonderland* brochure the ‘ancient wonders’ section provides a brief one-page summary of the heritage sites. The UNESCO sites of Ban Chiang, Sukhothai and Ayutthaya are referred to in relation to the historical development of the Kingdom of Thailand, and in the case of Sukhothai and Ayutthaya emphasis is placed on ‘the architectural achievement of the Thais’ (ibid: 16). There is no mention in this section at least of UNESCO World Heritage Site designation. In our field survey at Khao Yai national park there was a similar lack of reference to it being a UNESCO World Heritage Site on signposts in and around the park and it is certainly not promoted as such in some of the general tourism literature available to international tourists. In the main exhibition, museum and souvenir area of the park there is very little indication of its UNESCO status, though it was designated in July 2005 and the overwhelming impression is of a National Park. After all it was founded as Thailand’s first National Park in 1962; it has operated on this basis for nearly 50 years and international recognition through UNESCO seems merely to have been a recent bonus.

These sites are placed firmly in a Thai national space and attract large numbers of domestic visitors. Indeed it has been suggested that ‘the tourist industry’s agenda is extraordinarily compatible with the government agenda with regard to national identity and public culture’ (Van Esterik, 2000: 120). After all the Thai government had decided to protect these sites before it sought UNESCO registration, and what seems to have happened is that the national agenda has remained pre-eminent in this programme of heritage promotion. In the 1980s the TAT began seriously to promote its ‘cultural heritage’ in part at least to counter the country’s more racy, nightlife image, but also because it had embarked on major restoration work of its ancient monuments from the 1970s (Peleggi, 1996: 435). A very significant opportunity to promote the kingdom and its national identity was in 1987 and 1988 to mark King Bhumipol’s sixtieth birthday with the 1987 Visit Thailand Year and other promotions. Here we have an interesting example of the way in which UNESCO listing is sought after and, in the promotion of the sites so designated, partially ignored. Peleggi says ‘The preservation of historic and archaeological sites has been undertaken by the Thai authorities on quite a large scale since the mid 1970s…’ (1996: 433).

What is also worth noting is that historically Thai domestic tourism began as a royal and more broadly an elite project and rather than implicit was explicitly very closely connected to the development and construction of the Thai nation state (2009b: 243). From the mid-nineteenth century outlying sites visited by members of the elite became increasingly fixed, mapped and claimed and were incorporated into the ‘Siamese geo-body’ (Thongchai, 1994: 13). A nation is an imagined community (Anderson, 1991), but it is also a geographical and spatial entity, which has territorial boundaries within which national landmarks and particularly shrines and sacred places are located and which serve to provide symbolic centres both expressing and embodying nationhood and the constructed history of the nation. The national elements of this domestic tourism have also been carried into the more recent period of local mass tourism (and see Winter, Teo and Chang, 2009a: 11-14).

Domestic tourist numbers and dynamics, at least those involving these World Heritage Sites, reflect a growing number of independent, affluent urban people taking short-term road trips with friends and family. The vast majority of visitors (this includes excursionists and tourists) made their own way, by road, to the sites rather than relying on group tours, and approximately 50 per cent travelled with friends or family in clusters that averaged 3 to 6 people. A further feature of travel to the WHS was the quite high proportion who visited with teams of workmates or school and university classes, especially to the more distant Sukhothai and Si Satchanalai Historical Parks. Although the majority of visits to these sites were relatively short-term, on occasion they were also destinations for extended vacations, especially Khao Yai where there are numerous resort and spa hotels and golf courses. Heritage sites are therefore seen as places which one visits to indulge in relaxation and sight-seeing and where one photographs and is photographed away from the congestion and high pressure of urban living.

The growth of the middle class has in turn been influenced by Thailand’s integration into the global market, rapid urbanisation and exposure to modern values. But running through this process of change is a rootedness in the essence of being Thai which involves a complex admixture of historical and cultural elements which have a strong connection with perceptions of heritage, nationalism, identity and being. This is one reason why heritage sites have become, or have been promoted as, important destinations for Thai urban middle class tourists. The government is placed in the awkward position of both trying to capitalise on the economic returns from heritage tourism whilst at the same time seeking to protect, conserve and preserve heritage sites and resources from the ravages of development, including tourism, often using management techniques and principles that have been adopted from other settings, but not adapted to local contexts. This also creates tensions for and with the local people who live in or nearby important heritage sites, particularly where they and their traditional practices (e.g. of veneration, gathering of forest products) are excluded in the interests of preservation for future generations, or promotion for higher-spending outsiders, or displacement by external operators and operatives who muscle in on local business opportunities.

In examining the relations between national identity, culture and heritage in Thailand Reynolds captures what we are attempting to address appositely in drawing attention to the enormous impact which Bangkok has on the rest of the country, including its World Heritage Sites. Admittedly he was writing before the economic catastrophe of the late 1990s but, in our view, his observations still hold. He says ‘As Thailand’s economic boom has pushed Bangkok-based business to the far corners of the country over the past decade, it has become increasingly difficult to speak of any part of the country as remote’ (1998: 116). More particularly he notes that ‘[t]he forces driving this development are complex and derive….from business expansion, tourism and government development strategies’ (ibid: 117).

The case studies have revealed domestic tourism and urbanisation pressures to be significant factors in intensifying the tension between the mobilisation and conservation of Thailand’s World Heritage Sites (at least the three under consideration here), and as such our study points to areas that hitherto have been neglected in mainstream heritage tourism discourse (Winter, Teo and Chang, 2009). Thus, the expectation that globally designated sites are arenas for the international tourist gaze has to be heavily qualified in the Thai case, and this has implications for the ways in which we conceptualise tourism encounters and impacts. The study has also revealed the vital importance of Bangkok as the country’s dominant metropolis and extended metropolitanisation as an underlying economic, physical and cultural process, as a source of tourists and as a major influence on the use and development of these sites and spaces (particularly Ayutthaya and Khao Yai). Linked to this, the ways in which the appreciation, use and construction of heritage in Thailand is intertwined with the materialisation of a Thai middle class has also emerged as an important theme that arguably has resonance in other parts of Southeast Asia. The growth and spatial spread of middle class tourists and excursionists, and their consumption of cultural and natural heritage sites can be interpreted as being linked to a search not only for an authentic Thai identity rooted in a past which is given expression in monumental ruins but also a lost rural/natural Thailand.

The rapid growth of domestic tourism in Thailand, and its steady inclusion of heritage sites as destinations for day trips, weekend breaks and, less frequently, longer stays (the average stay by domestic tourists to all three of the sites under study here is less than two days: [www2.tat.or.th](http://www.tat.gov.th)), has significant and distinctive implications for the management of these sites. Preliminary observations have revealed significant variations in management issues and responses across the three sites. Ayutthaya is the most ‘exposed’ site not only to tourism pressures but also the encroachment of urban settlement and the seepage of vendors and others keen to capitalise on the site’s economic potential. There is very real tension between the municipal authorities and the site managers in terms not only of their respective visions for the site’s future development but also responsibility for and the modalities of site management today. Khao Yai is partly protected by its status as a National Park, but has been subject to a burgeoning leisure sector development around the park perimeter which, on the one hand, has dramatically increased the numbers of people visiting the vicinity of the park on a regular basis, but also, paradoxically, keeps people entertained without the felt need to enter the park during each visit to the area. Sukhothai, as a less frequented heritage space, is arguably more manageable, but there has been criticism that the site is being turned into ‘a Buddhist Disneyland’.

***Ayutthaya***

In the particular case of Ayutthaya there is a host of tourism-related activities which have grown up in and around Ayutthaya: from elephant and ox-drawn cart rides, a visit to an elephant camp, snake shows, annual Buddhist festivals, arts and crafts fairs, handicraft centres, shopping for souvenirs, river cruises and boat tours, home stays and bicycle tours. In addition some urban development has invoked protest from conservationist groups about inappropriate buildings appearing near to the ancient sites and the encouragement given to mass tourism by both government agencies and private tourism operators (Peleggi, 1996: 438). These pose major problems for conservation and ensuring that the intervening and neighbouring landscapes are appropriate for a national and international heritage site. In attempts at controlling urban encroachment there has been a proposal to extend the boundaries of the conservation area to provide a buffer zone but this is made difficult because of the very close proximity of the urban area where people live and pursue their livelihoods. It is unlikely that a buffer zone can be established without demolition and relocation of some existing urban areas which predictably will generate local protest and resistance. *Lonely Planet* delivers a somewhat harsh verdict that the ‘modern city that grew among the rubble is busy and provincial, adding a distracting element of chaos to the meditative mood of crumbled kingdoms’ (2007: 194).

The ancient monuments have also required much more extensive restoration because of the level of Burmese destruction. Restoration had already begun from the mid-nineteenth century but it commenced in earnest from the mid-1950s when the Thai Cabinet allocated a significant budget for the repair, restoration and protection of some of the main temples. It was sustained in earnest during the 1970s, and various bodies cooperated in this major task including the Fine Arts Department, the Department for Urban Planning and the Municipality of Ayutthaya. According to some critics some of the work was not done sympathetically. Some of the repair with grey-coloured concrete sits uneasily with the original red-bricked structures (Buckley, 1992: 195, cited in Peleggi, 1996: 438).

Since then and following UNESCO designation the Fine Arts Department responsible for conserving and managing the historical park submitted its *Master Plan on the Conservation and Development of the Historic City* *of Ayutthaya* to government and it was approved by the Thai Cabinet in 1993. Government funds were released in 1994, following some revisions to the plan, to ensure that the programme could be implemented, although the level of financial provision has fallen short of what was specified in the plan and the need to address the impact of urban encroachment, the uncontrolled local stall-owners and traders operating within the park precincts, and very importantly the increasing tourism traffic and pressure of visitor numbers on some of the sites. For example, the issuing of entrance tickets to the main park areas between October 2007 and September 2008 indicates that in these sites alone Ayutthaya received just under 1.4 million visitors a year (about 45 per cent local, and 55 per cent overseas). Many more would have visited Ayutthaya to attend sites and temples which do not require an entrance ticket. These visitors are also a major market for local traders, whose control usually falls within the jurisdiction of the municipal authorities. Particular problems were experienced following restoration and landscaping work by the Fine Arts Department in 2001 when over 500 booths and stalls moved into the Wihan Phra Mongkhon Bophit temple area, close to the ruins of the old royal palace. Eventually, after much foot-dragging and negotiation between the various parties involved, the traders were relocated to a less obtrusive site nearby.

There was also a particularly urgent need for funds for emergency support and consolidation work following the serious floods of 1995, and some of this was supplied by private commercial interests; given that Ayutthaya is surrounded by water on a low-lying flood plain at the confluence of three major rivers then the problems of flood damage are very great indeed. However, anti-flood defences are now in the process of construction overseen by the Department of Public Works and the city planning authorities.

Even from 1976 the Fine Arts Department had drawn a boundary around the most important historic areas to be protected and had commenced the Ayutthaya Historical Park project in 1982 with the development of the *Master Plan* in 1987 (FAD, 1996: 36). The plan included archaeological and historical research and the restoration of monuments; the rehabilitation of parts of the ancient canal system; the development and improvement of infrastructure in the historic city; landscaping and the removal or improvement of those features of the environment not considered to be in harmony with the site; improvement or relocation of residential communities close to the monuments and their socio-economic development; relocation of industrial plants and factories not in keeping with a historic site; and the development of academic and tourism services and the premises of those involved in managing the site (ibid: 38-43). Some of these responsibilities are also contained within two national laws: one is the *Act on Ancient Monuments, Antiques, Objects of Art and National Museums* which was passed in 1961 and amended in 1992, and the *Regulations of the Fine Arts Department Concerning the Conservation of Monuments*, 1985. In a built up area like Ayutthaya the *City Planning Act* 1975 also comes into play and various environmental regulations which the municipal and provincial authorities and other government bodies have jurisdiction over. Given that the main feature of Ayutthaya is its religious buildings the Department of Religious Affairs also has an advisory role in the restoration and maintenance of these structures and the Tourism Authority of Thailand is also involved in the tourism promotion and development of Ayutthaya.

There has to be negotiation over how urban development is controlled in the best interests of conservation and so that the historic areas of the city are not overwhelmed by unsightly buildings and by increases in traffic flows. It is clear that in such a complex inter-departmental situation of potentially competing interests and agendas, the sheer problem of establishing and developing clear lines of responsibility and communication is a major issue. Predictably every organisation involved also produces its own literature on the historical park and its attractions. Clearly Ayutthaya, though deserving of its UNESCO WHS status because of the place which it occupies in the national history and identity of the Thai people, presents major management problems and it is not evident that all the mechanisms and structures are in place to enable the historical park to cope with current and anticipated pressures.

***Sukhothai***

UNESCO designated Sukhothai as a World Heritage Site in 1991; it was officially inaugurated as a Historical Park in 1977 and opened to the public in 1988 along with Si Satchanalai and Kamphaeng Phet (Peleggi, 1996: 438; Van Esterik, 2000: 112). The management of tourism is much easier than Ayutthaya given that Sukhothai is a 450-kilometre, five-hour drive away from Bangkok or a seven-hour bus journey, or by air or rail to Phitsanulok, some 50 kilometres away; most visitors will either come on a one-night two-day excursion which includes both Sukhothai and Sri Satchanalai or they are individual or small group international tourists who also visit for a short while and return to Bangkok or, as is usual with back-packers they stop off there on their way to Chiang Mai and the northern hill areas. During the late 1980s and early 1990s Sukhothai Historical Park attracted both international and domestic tourists in about equal numbers with an overall total of approximately 400,000 annually (Peleggi, 1996: 438). In Sukhothai the ancient monuments are scattered in clusters over a relatively large area and tourists, both international and domestic (during our researchin 2009 they came from France, Italy, Scandinavia, the USA, Canada, Japan and China among others), usually hire bicycles at the park entrance and spend a half-day to a day cycling around on well surfaced roads. There is reasonable signage in both English and Thai describing the main temple complexes.

The ancient monuments are now a beautifully maintained and landscaped Historical Park located on the outskirts of the municipal centre of Sukhothai some 12 kilometres from the town centre, and comprising over 100 structures (royal palaces, temples, city gates, walls, moats, dams, ditches, ponds and canals) and 193 individual monuments scattered over some 70 square kilometres. Most of the structures are posted with signs informing visitors that they should not climb onto the brickwork, though it has to be said that the quality of some of the early restoration work has been questioned and even to the casual observer leaves much to be desired (Van Esterik, 2000: 112). The most impressive structures are the first royal palace and the temple of Wat Mahatat (‘the spiritual and political heart of Sukhothai’), founded in the thirteenth century by the first recognised ruler, Si Indraditya (TAT, 2008a: 9). The Chakri kings, especially King Mongkut (Rama IV) established a direct connection between their dynasty and the legacy left by Sukhothai, taking some of the most important treasures to Bangkok and thereby legitimising their own rule.

There has been some ribbon development along the approach road to the park catering to tourists, including restaurants, bars, coffee houses, souvenir and handicraft shops, guest houses and a low rise bungalow-type hotel. This development is relatively unobtrusive and does not affect the ambience of the park. However, during its restoration from the late 1970s some 200 households had to be relocated from the park precincts in order to landscape with trees, plants and water, and to develop a tourist infrastructure with roads, car parks, restrooms, information services and ticket office and to ensure that the perimeter of the park itself was protected (Peleggi, 1996: 438). There are also restaurants and souvenir shops at the entrance to the park. The market town of Sukhothai does not hold much interest for the tourist; it is a rather nondescript place, but it has developed some tourist areas by the river where guesthouses are located and there is hotel accommodation, souvenir shops and restaurants in streets just off the main thoroughfare. It suggests that the main visitors to Sukhothai town do not vacation here, but are short-stay, primarily domestic visitors as well as budget travellers.

***Sri Satchanalai***, a sister settlement of Sukhothai, some 45 square kilometres in size and about 50 kilometres to the north on the east bank of the Yom River is rather more remote and removed from urban development (TAT, 2008a: 15-16). It is not particularly well sign-posted, there are no signs forbidding visitors to climb on the monuments of which there are some 134, and although reasonably well maintained, with an internal road system so that the park can be easily covered on hired bicycles, the grounds are not as well manicured as at Sukhothai. There is clearly a tourist interest but it is linked to Sukhothai. There are very few tourists who journey directly to Sri Satchanalai, nor does it seem to be very well equipped for large numbers of tourists. It has restaurant facilities, a bicycle hire shop, some souvenir sellers, basic facilities for tourists, but very little in the way of information for foreign tourists. Again we assume that this is a site of more interest to domestic tourists, but is certainly visited by foreign package tourists from Bangkok and back-packers. Closely linked to Sukhothai, its crowning glory is Wat Chang Lom (Elephant Temple) with pachyderm sculptures surrounding the central bell-shaped *chedi* which was commissioned by King Ramkamhaeng in 1285, and is an example of early Sri Lankan-influenced temple architecture (ibid: 15).

The other related site is the smaller fortress settlement of ***Kamphaeng Phet*** (‘Diamond Wall’) 80 kilometres south of Sukhothai and situated on the Ping River, which is rather off the beaten track and seems to have only modest tourist interest. It was designed as a defensive fortification for Sukhothai and developed mainly from the mid-fourteenth century. Its remoteness and the lack of tourist interest have rendered the site rather unkempt; the TAT brochure refers to ‘overgrown temples…[which have]…a wilder and more untouched atmosphere compared to its familiar neighbour [Sukhothai]’ (ibid: 17).

Nevertheless, the restoration and conservation of Sukhothai and its projection as a site of benevolent government and as an essential element of Thai national identity have been the focus of considerable debate (and see Van Esterik, 2000: 111-112). Reynolds, citing the Master’s dissertation of Maurizio Peleggi (1994), points out that one Thai historian has claimed that the historical narratives of Sukhothai’s importance are ‘fictions and myths’ and that its presentation to the visitor gives no clues as to the ‘urban setting and planning of the past’ (1998: 136). It has to be said that though the historical parks are wondrous and awe-inspiring places to visit, and provide the visitor with a feeling of religious tranquillity, they give no positive indication of what the communities who created them and lived and worked there were like and how the ancient monuments that survive fitted into what must have been vibrant religiously-oriented farming societies focused on highly stratified urban social systems comprising royalty, nobility, administrators and monks.

In response to criticism that Sukhothai was in danger of becoming in effect a ‘Buddhist Disneyworld’ the Fine Arts Department responsible for the management and care of the site made some significant changes to the development plan, but ‘the site was so highly charged with symbolism and tourist potential that it was impossible to resist inventing more tradition’ (ibid). Sukhothai is now the site for a *Loi Krathong* festival held annually in November which attracts a large number of Thai visitors. But Reynolds suggests that ‘[t]he historical legend of the festival is a fabrication, incurring the wrath of an archaeologist and ethnohistorian, Srisakra Vallibhotama, who has been a persistent critic of such heritage projects’ (ibid). The identification of the festival as a genuine Sukhothai tradition was an attempt to give it an authenticity which was not supported by any firm historical evidence. Apparently the TAT decided that ‘staging’ festivals at heritage sites would increase their touristic appeal rather than promoting their historical, architectural, artistic and aesthetic appeal (Peleggi, 1996: 439).

Despite these debates and the somewhat artificial, captured-in- time presentation of the park, there is no doubt that it is very well maintained; tourism is controlled and there are no noticeable pressures on the site emanating from the nearby urban area. Its distance from Bangkok has not deterred a relatively substantial number of visitors from seeing the park and it is now firmly rooted in the national heritage and identity of Thailand.

***Khao Yai [Dong Phayayen-Khao Yai]***

Khao Yai (‘Big Mountain’) was Thailand’s first National Park, designated in September 1962 (and also designated an ASEAN Heritage Park in 1984), located to the south of the provincial centre of Nakhon Ratchasima on the edge of the Khorat Plateau some two hours’ drive to the north-east of Bangkok. There are also daily flights and rail services from Bangkok to Nakhon Ratchasima, or a three-hour bus journey to the town closest to the park, Pak Chong. Khao Yai National Park (KYNP) is part of a much larger forest complex spread along the rugged Dong Phayayen upland range and covers an area of just over 6,150 square kilometres. Although Khao Yai is the most well known and most visited of the national parks in this region there are altogether five designated parks in the complex: Khao Yai NP, established in 1962 (2168 km2); Thap Lan NP, est. 1981 (2236 km2); Pang Sida NP, est. 1982 (844 km2); Ta Phraya NP, est. 1996 (594 km2); and the Dong Yai Wildlife Sanctuary, est. 1996 (313 km2). The Dong Phayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex is spread between six provinces and three geographical regions: Prachin Buri in the east, Nakhon Nayok and Sara Buri in the central and Nakhon Ratchasima, Buri Ram and Sra Kaew in the north-east region (TAT, 2008a: 26-27; [www.eoearth.org](http://www.eoearth.org); [www.unep-wcmc.org/sites/wh/pdf/DONG%20PHAYAYEN.pdf](http://www.unep-wcmc.org/sites/wh/pdf/DONG%20PHAYAYEN.pdf)).

The forest complex presents a range of forest types, from moist, hill and dry evergreen forest to mixed deciduous and dry dipterocarp forest intermixed with some open grasslands where logging and agriculture had taken place before the area was placed under national protection (National Park Office, n.d; Lonely Planet, 2007: 464-466). The forest complex was inscribed as a World Heritage Site in 2005 under Natural Criterion (iv): viz. the site should ‘contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation’ and ‘should contain habitats for maintaining the most diverse fauna and flora characteristic of the biographic province and ecosystems under consideration’ (UNESCO, 2002, 11-12; UNESCO, 2008, 13).

In the approach to Khao Yai little seems to have been made of its world heritage status. It was only fairly recently designated, and at the entrance to the park its status as a National Park rather than a World Heritage Site is given prominence. It was listed because it provides an outstanding example of a site of ecological and biological diversity containing significant natural habitats which provide a home to threatened and endemic species including elephants and tigers. It is clear that its protected status dating from the early 1960s has acted to prevent some encroachment into the foothill areas bordering the park. It now appears to be a relatively well kept and guarded sanctuary for fauna and flora, but this has not always been the case and all along the approach roads to the park and around its perimeter there has been extensive, mainly Bangkok-generated leisure developments including resort hotel complexes, spa resorts, guest houses and lodges, golf courses, restaurants and steakhouses, souvenir shops and retail outlets, horse-riding farms and vineyards with organised wine tasting tours. Often those staying in the surrounding hotels and guesthouses will spend a half-day or one day in the park and also become involved in other activities outside the park. A familiar pattern is that men (mainly) play golf and women and children go into the park to the waterfalls and for a picnic. For those without transport most of the hotels and guesthouses will also arrange tours to the park.

What appears to have happened is that the park, with protected status for almost 50 years, has been a magnet for all kinds of leisure developments catering mainly to the weekend and vacation needs of Bangkok’s burgeoning population but it also serves as a convenient weekend spot for residents of nearby provincial settlements like Nakhon Ratchasima and Sara Buri. The park provides a limited range of accommodation catering for campers (there are two camp sites), trekkers (there are dormitories) and couples or families who rent two-sleeper bungalows and larger villas and who want to experience and enjoy walking, hiking, night safaris, and bird- and animal-watching. For the more recreational type of activity the luxury hotels with swimming pools, spas, golf, and good food, and, for increasing numbers of Bangkok’s middle class, drinking wine, then the surrounding resorts will cater for all these needs.

There has been a massive expansion of these facilities during the past 20 years, and despite the economic downturn of the late 1990s several new resort hotels are currently under construction, though some half-finished and unoccupied complexes are testimony to the boom-and-bust atmosphere along the perimeter of the park. The owners and managers of some resorts have also deliberately created a Western, or specifically a Mediterranean flavour in their resorts; within close proximity the traveller can move from Italianesque golf resorts like Toscana, to the retail outlet of Primo Posto, reminiscent of a Hollywood film-set staged in the hills around Florence, to the vineyard of Granmonte and its upmarket Vincotto restaurant, to the French-designed hotel and restaurant of Chateau de Khaoyai. For those unfamiliar with wine from Thailand, day or weekend trips are organised from Bangkok for vineyard tours, wine-tasting and dining. There has been a significant increase in wine consumption in Thailand in recent years, and one sign of this is not just the increase in production but also the formation of the Thai Wine Association in 2004. Its website informs us that Thai wine production now stands at one million bottles per year with 1,200 employees. Though some of the production is for export a considerable amount goes to restaurants and hotels in the Bangkok and Khao Yai region (www.thaiwine.org/). There are at least eight wine merchants in Thailand, five based in Bangkok, one in Khao Yai and two in Phuket (www.wine-searcher.com/merchant/). Certainly among some circles the existence of Granmonte vineyard and its restaurant, PB Valley winery and The Great Hornbill Grill, Chateau des Brumes, and the Farm Winery and Spa Resort in the vicinity of the national park enhances the touristic profile of the area.

The crucial issue here is whether the burgeoning tourism, urban consumption-related developments and local farming and other activities around the perimeter of the park are creating unmanageable pressures from the perspective of heritage conservation. When KYNP was originally created under the 1961 National Parks Act, its main function was ‘for public education and enjoyment’ ([www.eoearth.org/](http://www.eoearth.org/)), and the Act itself was very pro-tourism (Wong, 2008, 201). The Park was initially zoned for ‘intensive use’, ‘outdoor recreation’ (12% of the area), ‘special use’, ‘forest regeneration’, ‘strict nature reserves’ and ‘primitive areas’ (78% of the Park) ([www.eoearth.org/](http://www.eoearth.org/)). But three perennial problems have been hard to manage. First, before designation as a National Park, and for some time afterwards, local people have made use of the forest and the resources it provides. As recently as 1991 some 195 families held disputed tenure certificates to land inside Khao Yai, there are still several villages inside the Park’s borders, and in some of the other parks human settlement and farming are realities that are not ever going to disappear (21.5% of Thap Lan NP is under settlement, agriculture and commercial tree plantations, and the forest in many places is severely degraded: [www.eoearth.org/](http://www.eoearth.org/)).

This is clearly a challenge for conservation, but it is not a simple problem to resolve partly because local people feel they have historical and traditional rights of access to the forest complex; they also feel that the forest’s resources are being protected for the benefit of the urban middle classes at a cost to their livelihoods, and this leads to conflict, mistrust and continued encroachment (Wong, 2008, 201). It is also very difficult to keep people out of the Park: ‘Khao Yai is like an island, surrounded by a sea of villages’ (Tassanee, 2006, 1); it has no buffer zone, which means that farming and population settlement (there are 104 villages surrounding Khao Yai) come right up to the park’s borders. People can just walk in and out of the park. Illegal settlers have been removed over the years, and ranger patrols have intensified to protect not only wildlife from poaching but also valuable NTFPs such as Aloewood (*Aquilaria crassna*), the resin of which is a very valuable ingredient of the perfume industry and found only in Southeast Asia (Tassanee, 2006, 1).

Simply trying to keep local people (and also Cambodians in the eastern reaches of the forest complex) out of the forest is not, in itself, likely to solve the problem: high levels of poverty locally, and limited alternative livelihood opportunities sometimes make the lucrative resources of the forest rather difficult to resist. Accordingly, since 1999 the park authorities (Department of National Parks), together with the US-based World Conservation Society and an NGO WildAid have been working with local communities – including former poachers – to educate local people about the importance of conservation whilst also helping to develop alternative income-earning opportunities such as mushroom cultivation, organic farming and flower planting (Tassanee, 2006, 1).

A second problem is that, historically, the close connection between political and business interests in Thailand has meant that conservation protection under national park legislation has often been stronger on paper than on the ground. Field-Marshal Sarit, upon designating Khao Yai a national park, allocated local development rights to senior members of his regime. For instance, in 1961 a nine-hole golf course was constructed in the heart of what was then being gazetted as a National Park, and the then-head of the Tourism Organisation of Thailand, who was an army general, was allowed to construct tourist infrastructure, accommodation and official dwellings inside the park. A major road also runs right through the middle of the park (Wong, 2008, 202). From 1964 national park and tourism development policies were synchronised, and as a result Khao Yai was subject to more than three decades of development activities which conflicted with the principles of conservation and protection (ibid.). Domestic tourist interest in the park intensified in 1985 after a journalist produced a feature on the park and its attractions in a popular Thai magazine (Wong, 2008, 206).

More recently, within a more democratic and transparent political environment and growing public interest in and concern for the protection of nature, conservation legislation has been much more strictly enforced and the principles of protection appear more seriously adhered to. The park was temporarily closed to the public in 1991, and overnight stays inside the park were banned in 1992 (more recently this has been relaxed, with tourists staying in chalets and camp sites owned and operated by the Royal Forest Department/National Park authorities), and much of the tourism-related infrastructure, including the golf course, was removed (Wong, 2008, 204). It is this much stricter enforcement of conservation legislation that has pushed tourism- and recreation-related development to the perimeter of the park, especially near the western approaches which are closest to the Bangkok EMR and which caters principally for the affluent middle class (Wong, 2008, 204: citing Vandergeest, 1996), at precisely the same time – and indeed linked to the same social changes that have been taking place in Thailand – that more people are interested in approaching nature and natural landscapes as part of their leisure pursuits. Continued tourism growth also seems to be a major focus of strategy. According to research conducted with officials inside the park by Tim Wong, ‘Increasing numbers has become the central management focus … As a senior park manager commented during the research: “The park is not necessarily important because it is Thailand’s first national park, but because it is one of the most interesting places for tourism in Thailand. We have to take good care of the environment so it will not affect tourism”’ (Wong, 2008, 204).

A third concern is Thai domestic tourists’ behaviour in and perceptions towards natural areas. Erik Cohen (2009) has produced a very informative article that maps out the historical association of the Thais with nature, and more recently Thai urbanites’ engagement with wild animals and natural places. As we have seen earlier in this paper, Evrard and Prasit (2009, 301) have identified the ‘exoticism of the “other”’ as an important driver of modern domestic tourism in Thailand as urban tourists venture into rural and ethnic peripheries, and as “local cultures and their symbols become objects of desire and marketing for tourists” (ibid., 304). Cohen suggests that wild animals’ ‘otherness’ is a similarly important motivation for Thais to venture to natural places in the (often forlorn) hope of encountering big mammals in the wild (2009, 2): ‘The wild animal, encountered in a natural setting, seems to offer an authentic experience of fascinating Otherness’ (ibid., 3). Thais’ ‘engagement’ with animals takes place in a variety of settings, ranging (now very rarely) from the purely natural, through semi-natural (in national parks and wildlife sanctuaries), semi-contrived (as in zoos, aquariums), and contrived (animal performances), and ranges from active to passive and interactive to non-interactive, with ‘ludic presentations of humanized animals in contrived settings’ being increasingly the dominant mode (ibid., 6).

Tourist-animal encounters in semi-natural settings are an increasingly sought-after experience, particularly for urban residents whose life experiences have rarely delivered such encounters in the past. For this reason ‘the rich fauna of Thailand is a significant tourist resource. The tourist authorities and entrepreneurs promote the country for the manifold opportunities to see different species of animals, birds and fish’, ironically at just a time when the previous abundance of these species had been severely depleted by the very processes of modern development that lie behind people’s renewed interest in animals and nature (ibid., 9). ‘A discrepancy hence emerged between the image of a country rich in animal life, and the difficulty of actually encountering many of the species in their natural setting. This incongruence had a significant influence on the manner of tourist-animal engagement in Thailand’ (ibid., 9-10).

National parks have become very important destinations for Thai tourists and excursionists, but their leisure interests and patterns rarely coincide with either the times or locations where wildlife is likely to be encountered. It is for this reason, perhaps, that many tourists leave national parks disappointed, or in fact simply travel to scenic spots such as waterfalls, or just travel to the vicinity of places such as Khao Yai but rarely venture into the park itself. The climate of Khao Yai is much more pleasant than Bangkok, and, in line with Evrard and Prasit’s statement (cited earlier: 2008, 307) that the Thai domestic tourist principally seeks fun, convenience and ‘Western symbols of modernity’, it is perhaps understandable that the vast majority of weekend excursionists remains in its resorts, guesthouses and second homes. Thai domestic tourist behaviour may thus be a helpful factor in nature conservation.

However, Cohen also reveals a rather more insidious side to the behaviour of domestic ‘ecotourists’. Because ‘many animals have retreated to the remote areas of the park, beyond the circumference of the officially created trails … visitors have few chances to encounter wild animals in their natural environment during a brief routine visit. [So,] some visitors, instead [of] arduously searching the forest for wild animals, prefer to lure them to their encampments by offerings of food… Feeding [animals] seems to be a common practice, though discouraged by the park authorities. Some animals also approach encampments to rummage through the garbage’ (Cohen, 2009, 17).

There are thus significant management challenges which require an understanding of process, preference and impact. But very often, management approaches are guided by global practices and standards, and are still heavily geared towards international tourists (who are the minority in all three sites). But the way these sites are seen and used varies considerably between foreign and domestic tourists (see also Evrard and Prasit, 2009). International tourists usually see them as global ‘must sees’, whereas domestic tourists see them as sites of leisure to be spent with family and friends as well as vital elements of national pride and identity and (in the case of Khao Yai) as a medium to recapture or recover (for urban middle class Thais) a lost rural or natural idyll. International heritage bodies focus on the protection and conservation of ‘authentic’ representations of human achievements and natural evolution, whereas national governments deploy these sites for national political purposes and to generate tourist revenue. Thus an immediate policy recommendation that emerges from the research is that UNESCO must recognise these sites as ‘living’ cultural and ‘natural’ landscapes and that any management plans must incorporate domestic tourism, local perceptions, and the involvement of local communities (see also Hitchcock, King and Parnwell, 2010). This in turn might encourage those who promote tourism to change the way in which they present these sites to the wider world.

**Malaysia**

In moving to our next case study it is important to acknowledge that in the Federation of Malaysia the issues there are if anything even more complex than in Thailand because the Malay-Muslim-dominated government has used and transformed urban landscapes in their nation-building policies, but the established urban areas which are the focus of these policies, are usually home to visually prominent and demographically and economically significant Chinese and to a lesser extent Indian populations. Urban areas therefore express and embody particular sub-national ethnic identities, not only of various Chinese communities, but also increasing numbers of Malays and other Muslims, numerically smaller populations of Indians, and a whole host of hybrid peoples, including, in the case of Melaka, Portuguese- and Dutch-Eurasians, Baba-Nyonya or Peranakan Chinese and Indian Chitties; these mixed populations are usually the product of acculturation, cultural exchange and intermarriage between immigrants and indigenes. Therefore, there is often ongoing tension between the need to protect and conserve a historically and culturally important site (and in UNESCO terms, its authentic or original characteristics) which has been bequeathed to the world by earlier generations and provide it with its ‘universal human value’, and the pressures exerted by the vagaries of changing human political, social and economic interests, values and use, and the changing demands of tourism, leisure, recreation and consumption.

Malaysia like Thailand has one of the largest tourist industries in Southeast Asia, and although, it has consistently promoted cultural tourism along with the usual tourist leisure pursuits of sun, sand, sea and shopping, as well as increasingly ecotourism, at the official and popular promotional level there has also been a recent and noticeable shift in emphasis in the Malaysian Tourism Ministry’s presentation of Malaysian culture and heritage (Tourism Malaysia, 2009a; and see 2009b and 2009c). In this the World Heritage Sites of George Town, Penang, and Melaka, inscribed as recently as 2008, play a prominent part (UNESCO, 2008c, 2008d). Tourists are invited to ‘come and experience the heritage of all Asia’; the promotion makes much of the different populations which have come from various parts of Asia and the Middle East to the ‘crossroads’ of Malaysia, and ‘a succession of Europeans’ (2009a: 2-3). In some respects this promotional strategy parallels that of Singapore. The plural, multicultural societies of Malaysia and Singapore are ideal vehicles for claiming in tourism advertising that a visit to these countries also gives the visitor an ‘instant’ experience of Asia.

Certainly Melaka plays a part in this picture; it exemplifies ‘ancient kingdoms’ which through trade brought people from China, India, Persia and Arabia, and from Europe (the Portuguese, Dutch and British). Rather than Malay pre-eminence what is emphasised is ethnic and cultural variety (a ‘mosaic’), the mix of cultures, multi-ethnic harmony, ‘a peaceful blend’, and a ‘colourful spectrum’ (ibid: 2-4). Moreover, heritage is depicted not so much in terms of built forms and artefacts, but much more in terms of living cultures, celebrations and festivals, costumes, music and dance, games and pastimes, cuisine, and handicrafts (ibid: 6-36, 47-56). The section on architectural heritage in Tourism Malaysia’s *Heritage and Crafts* (2009a) covers some ancient or old forms, but it makes play of the fact that Malaysia has also ‘created its own world-class icons’ (ibid: 37). The two examples featured are both from Melaka and are both European in origin - Christ Church and Porta de Santiago – as well as Straits Chinese shop houses there (ibid: 45-46). The following section focuses primarily on Melaka.

***Historical Context***

The focus of much of the recent research on Melaka has been on the central position which it occupies, as a former global port settlement, in the history and the cultural symbolism of the Muslim-Malays, the Malayan Peninsula and the wider nation-state of Malaysia (Sandhu and Wheatley, 1983a, 1983b; and see 1983c: 566-567). The strategic and commercial importance of the Straits of Malacca had, in Carolyn Cartier’s words, generated in Melaka a centre of ‘cultural transformation, economic power and political leadership’ (2001: 193). In addition, as Cho and Ward state ‘At their greatest, the port’s trading connections reached from Maluku to Suez (thence indirectly to Europe), from Japan to East Africa, from Luzon to the Persian Gulf’ (1983: 623). Having been founded around the turn of the fifteenth century as a ‘minor chieftainship’ on the periphery of other more powerful states, particularly Ayutthaya in Thailand and Majapahit in Java, it grew into a major international trading emporium (Sandhu and Wheatley, 1983c: 499). With its strategically located deep water harbour and a sheltered river mouth on the Straits of Malacca to enable it to establish control over the exchange and distribution of trade goods carried on the seasonal north-east and south-west monsoon winds, Melaka’s economy came to be founded on ‘the centralized collection and exchange of goods produced elsewhere’ (from Asia came tin, gold, diamonds, pearls, spices, silks, bird feathers, aromatic woods and other tropical forest produce, natural medicinal items, aphrodisiacs, rice, salt, tobacco, tea and many other items in exchange for weapons, metal ware, cotton cloths, glassware, perfumes, opium, dyestuffs and other manufactured goods) (Cho and Ward, 1983: 624). The port provided warehouse facilities, a bazaar, ship provisions and a Malay-run shipbuilding and repair industry; it also developed the maritime military capacity to control seaways and coerce traffic to call at Melaka and to exercise suzerainty or at least patronage and authority over its vassals.

Most importantly, as a result of its wide range of international connections ‘In the fifteenth century the streets of Melaka must have been as cosmopolitan as those of any city of the contemporary world’ (ibid: 624). Its historical importance and its allure to traders, merchants, missionaries and adventurers from far-flung places are captured in the words of Sandhu and Wheatley who demonstrated Melaka’s significance in their celebratory edited work in two volumes and covering 1,600 pages (1983a): for them Melaka was ‘one of the most famous trading emporia that the world has known, its fabled wealth a byword from Lisboa to Peking’ (1983b: 50). More than this ‘Its *raison d’être* was a network of connections both regional and extra-regional, which made it a central place among central places, the hinge point between eastern Asia and the lands to the West’ (Ginsburg, 1983: 289). Over the thousands of miles of river, sea and ocean on which valuable Oriental spices were carried the Straits of Malacca was the only waterway on these trade routes which enabled ‘a virtual monopoly’ of that lucrative commerce to be established and sustained (Sandhu and Wheatley, 1983c: 504).

In ‘patrimonial’ and ‘galactic’ style it extended its reach and authority through the island world of Southeast Asia, and in so doing the Melakan thalassocracy played a crucial formative role in the development and dissemination of Malay culture, language and literature as well as serving as a centre of Islamic learning (ibid: 509-512). In historical terms Melaka bears many similarities with Sukhothai, although the latter was a land-based state, in that both states played crucial and formative roles in the genesis of what are now significant, dominant and widespread cultures in Southeast Asia – Malay and Thai. What is more Melaka’s traditions, expressed above all in the *Sejarah Melayu* (the Malay Annals) and the *Bustanu’l-Salatin* (Garden of the Kings) are ‘without equal in the Malayo-Indonesian world, in terms of either quantity or quality’ (Wake, 1983: 128). Yet at the same time, from its beginnings as a Malay state Melaka forged diplomatic and trade relations with China, partly to counter the threat from Siamese Ayutthaya and Javanese Majapahit, and the Chinese maritime presence at that time and China’s imperial patronage was an important element in the early development of Melaka as an entrepôt; the Chinese maritime connection goes back to at least the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) and there is evidence of a Chinese trading community in Melaka on the arrival of the Portuguese there, with a significant increase in numbers during the sixteenth century (Sandhu, 1983a: 94, 96-97). The connection with the world of Islam also afforded Melaka important relations with Arab, Persian and particularly Muslim Indian cultures (Sandhu, 1983b: 174-177).

Melaka’s importance was attested to, as in other ports along the Indian-China trade routes like Galle in Sri Lanka, Hoi An in Vietnam and Macao SAR (all of which have also been inscribed by UNESCO as World Heritage Sites), by the imperialist interests of a succession of European powers (in Melaka’s case Portugal, the Netherlands and Britain). Yet the European political, economic, cultural, symbolic and architectural impacts on these strategic nodal points in Asian trade made it difficult for newly independent governments, in their attempts to construct an indigenously-framed nation-state, to reconcile their colonial heritage with the image of a new post-colonial nation-state based on the achievements and aspirations of their native ancestors.

This dilemma was especially acute in the case of Melaka, in that the original material, cultural and architectural expressions of its greatness as a Malay-Muslim maritime sultanate, which through the fifteenth century had extended its political, economic and cultural reach to large areas of Asia, parts of Africa, the Middle East and indirectly to Europe, were effectively eliminated by European colonialism. Irwin says ‘With a disregard for Muslim susceptibilities typical of the time, the Christian Portuguese erected their fortress on the ruins of the Great Mosque of Melaka and constructed it, in part at least, out of stones taken from Malay religious buildings and from the graves of former Malay sultans’ (1983: 783). This was not altogether unexpected in that most of the buildings were made of easily disposable natural materials. The indigenous origins of the port centre and its seat of economic and political power in the Sultan’s palace and the state mosque were replaced in the first instance by Portuguese architectural forms, religious and civic buildings and concepts of urban landscape in a fortified, walled town; as Sandhu and Wheatley remark ‘the Portuguese had done their best in so far as the equatorial climate permitted to create within the walled enclave of Melaka the ambience of an Iberian city’ (1983c: 531).

Furthermore, in the residential and market area known as Upeh on the other side of the river from the Portuguese town earlier indigenous buildings were gradually replaced by other Asian cultural implants from outside the region, particularly from southern China, and to a lesser extent India. Yet this was not a process of simple replacement of Malay forms by European and southern Chinese ones; even during the zenith of the pre-colonial Malay sultanate its far-flung trade had resulted in the creation of a multicultural port-centre, and aside from Malays who were in the majority at that time, there were communities of Chinese, Hindus, Bengalis, Gujaratis, Tamils, Parsees, Malabaris, Arabs and Javanese among many others (see Sandhu, 1983b: 179). Then during Portuguese rule clearly delineated ethnic quarters were also identified in the suburb on the right bank of the Melaka River and extending along the then coastline, and these probably comprised buildings made primarily of wood and other natural materials which conformed to local architectural forms. Here was found Kampung Keling where South Indians, mainly Tamils resided, Kampung Cina (China) for southern Chinese residents, Kampung Jawa for the Javanese, and Kampung Bendahara where the chief native Malay official and his retinue had their residence. A Malay fishing settlement also extended inland along the Melaka River (Sandhu and Wheatley, 1983c: 532).

Following the post-Portuguese Dutch succession in the seventeenth century we find in 1678 communities of Dutch, Portuguese Eurasians, Chinese, Muslim Indians and Hindus, Malays, Bugis and an ethnically mixed collection of ‘slaves’ (Sidhu, 1983: 32). In addition, the Dutch kept broadly to the Portuguese spatial division between a European civic zone and an ethnically mixed residential zone, though some Dutch residents began to move into spacious townhouses in the area opposite the administrative district and across the river from it. Moreover, ‘[t]he significant fact about the distribution of housing during the Dutch period was ….. the spread of brick dwellings outwards from the walled city primarily into the northwestern suburb.... By 1678 nearly a quarter of all houses in the city were constructed of brick’ (Sandhu and Wheatley, 1983c: 535). The Dutch also introduced building regulations covering the planning, construction and use of materials (Wan Hashimah and Shuhana, 2005: 2).

Malay residential dominance during the sultanate period was gradually displaced from its northern suburbs along the Melaka River (in what is now the heritage zone) and Kampung Hulu (which was also a district for Arab residents) to such districts as Kampung Morten and Durian Daun Dalam; central Melaka is now the home primarily of Chinese, many of whom are what is known as ‘Baba’ or in the Malay language ‘Peranakan’; these were traditionally hybrid communities which emerged from processes of acculturation (in the Malay language, cuisine, dress, some everyday lifestyle elements, and in the reinterpretation of certain aspects of Chinese religion, kinship and formal organisations) as well as from the intermarriage of Chinese immigrant males with local women. They were identified as a localised and partially integrated Chinese community in cultural terms, and under British colonialism oriented themselves to their colonial masters as British subjects, emphasising the importance of learning the English language and working for and in the interests of the colonial regime. More than this Melaka was where ‘Baba society has its origins and deepest roots’ and it flourished within the particular political framework of the British Straits Settlements (Clammer, 1983: 156-158). It was from here that Baba migrants took their culture to Penang, Singapore, the Malay States, Phuket in southern Thailand and even to Indonesia (ibid; and see 1980).

Thus, early Melaka and its indigenous Malay and Muslim roots and rationale were removed, one might say obliterated, and a Malay-Muslim sultanate as a head-link within the commercial and trading networks of the Malay-Indonesian world and the wider Asian region, and as a significant disseminating point for Malay culture, language, Islam and political concepts and values, became a colonial port and a place for European settlement; during the Portuguese period it also became linked more firmly to European markets and European-dominated sea-going empires, and with the growing importance of trade with China but more especially the expansion of tin-mining and the cultivation of estate crops like rubber in the Malay States during the later British period, the numbers of Chinese residents there increased, though not on the scale of Penang and Singapore. In addition, the function of Melaka as a trading emporium diminished to be replaced by its role as a European residential, administrative and garrison town and a regional capital for those neighbouring hinterland areas where tin-mines and estates were located which were worked primarily by Chinese and Indian labourers.

Cartier says bluntly ‘Melaka’s Islamic past is missing in the cultural landscape’ (ibid: 194). More than this ‘Ironically today, Melaka – the land and place where the “Sultanate of the Malay Kingdom” was born, has no Sultan at all to name and reign. Instead, the twisting fate of history, has the Yang di-Pertua Negeri or The Governor installed as the Head of State following the British tradition’ (Wee, 2009: 21). Melaka’s status as the premier sultanate in what was to become Peninsular Malaysia was removed, the royal family fled after the Portuguese conquest, and other successor sultanates, particularly Johor and Perak, which owed their origins to the connection with the Melaka sultanate, stepped in to take its place. The sultanate of Brunei across the South China Sea in northern Borneo also benefited commercially from the demise of Melaka.

Lest we assign too much emphasis to the European elimination of a Malay political and cultural legacy I might also remark here that, following the Dutch and British succession, much of the architectural heritage of the Portuguese like that of the Malays before them was also removed. Under the administration of the Dutch East India Company ‘The Portuguese churches, monasteries, and convents which had previously dotted the town were destroyed, allowed to decay, or resumed for Company use’ (Andaya, 1983: 199; and see Maeda, 1998: 3). In contrast the major heritage structures at the heart of Melaka which were built by the Dutch, were co-opted by the British and then the newly independent Malay(si)an government, though the British destroyed much of what was left of the Portuguese legacy. Following Malayan/Malaysian independence the Malay-dominated Malaysian state then began to reclaim Melaka and to put upon it a Malay-Islamic national stamp, as we shall see. This process of reclamation has also been presided over, predictably, by the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) which has enjoyed control of the state of Melaka since 1959 and has provided a series of UMNO Chief Ministers since then.

Cartier also suggests that the mobile, cosmopolitan population of Melaka with a history of intermarriage between different ethnic groups has been progressively re-ordered since Malay(si)an independence in terms of contemporary national ideologies and the development of nationalist movements (ibid: 194; Milner, 2008, 2010). Indeed Cartier sees this as a major problem in presenting Melaka to a wider audience: its roots in a dynamic, mobile, open, eclectic, hybrid trading enterprise has been replaced by a narrower, inward-looking nationalist agenda. Melaka’s history like that of George Town, based on cosmopolitanism, cultural hybridisation and ethnic intermixture, and the cultural encounters between Europe and Asia have therefore been subject, in an independent Malaysia, to a national political discourse based on ethnic discreteness and communalism; but this merely continues a process of ethnic rationalisation and simplification which was instituted by the British.

The complexity of Melaka’s population has been reduced on the national stage to three broad ethnic categories comprising ‘Malay’ (though with additional communities which are, for certain purposes, brought together as *bumiputra* [indigenous people]), ‘Chinese’ and ‘Indian’. The mestizo communities have then had to decide how they accommodate themselves to these three macro-ethnic categories. These politically driven issues have obvious implications for the ways in which Melaka has been presented, to some extent transformed and then deployed in nation-building and it helps explain some of its recent history as a heritage site and a centre of tourism development. It also helps us understand some of the difficulties the Malaysian government experienced before the country secured its first UNESCO cultural site inscription, although the inscription was only agreed with the provision that both Melaka and George Town should be considered together as ‘historic cities’.

In theory at least, UNESCO, having approved twin sites linked by the Straits of Malacca, has left open the question of whether or not other future submissions might be included under this umbrella, though for the time being it has only approved two sites within one country; those additional cities or urban areas which might lay claim to inclusion are Phuket (in Thailand), Acheh, Medan, Palembang and Jambi (in Indonesia), Kuala Lumpur (in Malaysia) and Singapore. It is very unlikely that some of these would qualify, given that post-independence, government-driven development and modernisation programmes have removed what UNESCO would consider as acceptable and viable heritage under its criteria of sites of universal value. Nevertheless, it again underlines, so it would appear, the equivocation and open-endedness with which UNESCO approached its decision to inscribe Melaka and George Town, and presumably the difficulties of handling a series of urban developments which owe their genesis to a trans-national waterway but which, in terms of the nomination procedure, are dealt with by a United Nations system based on constituent units referred to as ‘State Parties’ or in other words sovereign nation-states.

This in turn highlights a dilemma in the inscription process in that certain heritage sites cannot be prescribed and delimited in nation-state terms and yet UNESCO receives nominations from a particular country which lays claim to a site within its territorial discretion. The recent Thai-Cambodian military confrontation over the Preah Vihear temple complex in Cambodian territory which is disputed by Thailand, and which was inscribed by UNESCO at the same meeting as the Melaka-George Town inscription, is strikingly apposite in this connection (Hauser-Schäublin, 2011b). It suggests that UNESCO might well have to develop a much more focused and direct trans-national mechanism in the nomination process in order to avoid nationally driven boundary disputes.

From its heyday under the sultanate and then the Portuguese from 1511 and the Dutch occupation from 1641, Melaka’s importance as a port-centre declined from the late eighteenth century through the nineteenth century (Ginsburg, 1983: 290). Its harbour became increasingly silted; it was not deep enough to take larger, sea-going vessels and it was rapidly superseded by Penang and then by Singapore, after the British established themselves along the Straits of Malacca from the last part of the eighteenth century. The British had become temporary caretakers of Dutch-owned Melaka from 1795 to 1818 during the Napoleonic Wars and the French occupation of the Low Countries, and during this time the British officials and merchants in Penang were determined ‘to reduce the trade of Malacca. This reflected the fact that the two ports belonged to rival European empires, with radically different social structures, systems of governance, and cultural traditions of doing business’ (Webster, 2011: 908). Melaka was officially handed over to the British in 1824 by the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of London, but the Dutch presence in Melaka continued beyond then (ibid: 920-921). Even before the conclusion of the treaty the British had begun to shift the focus of trade from Melaka to Penang and especially after 1819 to move to Singapore as it increasingly became the major entrepôt between India and China. By the 1850s Malacca had been administratively, culturally and economically incorporated into the British Straits Settlements but in relation to Singapore and Penang it ‘came to be regarded as the junior partner’ (ibid: 922) and in the estimation of a Governor of the Straits Settlements in 1895 as ‘a mere suburb of Singapore’ (Sandhu and Wheatley, 1983c: 518). Even during Dutch rule there had been a progressive shift of interest from Melaka to the Dutch possessions in Java and Sumatra from the 1650s in that commerce came increasingly to be concentrated in Batavia and the Dutch interest in Melaka was primarily military and focused on the need to deprive other European powers of a base there, rather than commercial (ibid: 514). Melaka’s fate was eventually sealed following Malaysian independence when other ports, particularly Port Klang and Port Penang, were favoured in the Malaysian government’s plans for economic growth and modernisation.

As a result today the economy of Melaka does not depend on sea-borne trade, and about three-quarters of the Gross Domestic Product of the state of Melaka (which is a larger territory than the metropolitan area) is derived from tourism and related service industries. Under British administration Melaka became increasingly a regional service centre for the surrounding agricultural hinterland (Chi, 1983: 652). It might be argued therefore that what has survived of Melaka’s urban heritage has been in part the result of its decline as an international port and therefore the absence of the need to redevelop and modernise the old harbour area around the Melaka River. The relative neglect of Melaka in national development terms in relation to Penang, the greater Kuala Lumpur area and Johor Bahru meant that the pace of change was modest enough to enable the municipal and state governments to be selective and they have ‘not been in a position to make serious planning or promotional mistakes’ (Osborn, 1983: 476). With a few exceptions much of the central urban area of Melaka Town remains low-rise, though high-rise low-cost flats were built at the southern end of Jalan Bendahara attached to the core area (Chi, 1983: 700). Furthermore, the need to re-house residents away from the overcrowded core area has been largely achieved by suburban residential developments which began to appear from the 1960s (Lim, 1983: 719-720). The charm of Melaka and its global heritage value therefore depend on its compact, narrow streets with a mixture of architectural and cultural styles, and a large number of surviving public and religious buildings (Seow, 1983).

***Melaka, Symbolic Constructions and Tourism***

Yet the promotion of heritage for tourism development and the purposes of national image and identity, even in the case of Melaka, is only part of a much wider set of constructions. The major state government guide to Melaka endorsed by the Chief Minister says ‘But Melaka is not just about going back in time....[there is] the new Melaka, a thriving city and business centre, that has taken its rightful place in the development of Malaysia as we know it today, particularly its business profile’ (Schubert et al, 2004: 23). The place of protection and conservation in heritage sites becomes worryingly uncertain when we are told in effect that Melaka has transformed its cultural and natural treasures into economic opportunities: landscapes into recreational activities (for tourism, golf, trekking); cultural identities into ‘a showcase for the tourist’; and antiquities and handicrafts into ‘a shopping paradise’ (for bargain hunters) (ibid). This is a clear and positive statement about the commoditisation of culture and nature. A ‘sleepy hollow’ in the 1980s, Melaka experienced ‘a vigorous surge of economic activity’. Reinvigorated it ‘now responds to the pulse of commerce’ (ibid: 25).

Interestingly the Melaka State’s Tourism Promotion Division advertises a range of leisure interests and activities in its literature. In its brochure *Melaka Tourism: 12 Subsectors* predictably it opens with ‘Melaka’s appeal lies in its rich and colourful past. Melaka is renowned as the place where the history of Malaysia began (Tourism Promotion Division, 2009: 2)’. The Tourism Division then moves into the presentation of a diverse tourism product: ‘Today, there’s a lot more to Melaka in addition to its fascinating stories, legends and historical attractions’ (ibid). After an introductory section on ‘History’ (comprising the main historic sites with the addition of a Melaka tree and a bullock cart ride) and ‘Culture’ (which describes the main ethnic groups but then includes a curious catch-all of attractions: the Tranquerah Mosque, the Baba Nyonya Heritage Museum, Mini Malaysia and Mini ASEAN Park, Jonker Walk, the Chitty Museum and Auyin Hill resort), the brochure covers ‘Recreation’, ‘Sport’, ‘Shopping’, ‘Convention’, ‘Health’, ‘Education’, ‘Agro’ (tropical fruit farm, Tropical Fruit World and an ‘Aboriginal Living Native Village’, home stays), Makan-makan’ (cuisine), ‘Melaka My 2nd Home’, and ‘Youth’ (ibid: 3-31). Previous surveys of tourist interests do highlight the main attractions of the civic/heritage buildings and museums, the weekend evening heritage walk through Jonker Street and cruises along the Melaka River, but these still seem not to be capable of maintaining a mass tourism industry in Melaka state. Indeed Maeda drew attention to the undeveloped character of the banks of the Melaka River for tourism purposes in the 1990s, though there have been various leisure developments during the last decade (Maeda, 1998: 12, 22). Overall heritage is certainly there but it is embedded in a large leisure and tourism industry and one designed to appeal to a wide range of tourists both domestic and international.

In spite of the problems which the management bodies responsible for Melaka’s heritage have to address, the questionnaire survey which our research team administered suggests overall that visitors were positive about their touristic experiences. We must, however, be aware that the sample may be skewed in relation to certain background characteristics (age and educational background for example). Nevertheless, the findings indicate that foreign tourists are more likely to be searching for authenticity in the heritage buildings and in their appearance, and they wish to see something of the living cultural communities which give the buildings and the site meaning and vibrancy. Domestic visitors, on the other hand, most of whom are fully aware of the historical significance of Melaka and its place in the national psyche, are much more concerned with the provision of facilities (such as transport, parking, food, and shady places to rest) and in ensuring that they can enjoy themselves in their leisure activities with family and friends. However, both foreign and domestic tourists are also concerned about the provision of reliable and user-friendly information and guidance about the site. Even a casual observer will quickly find that there are no authoritative and well written guides to Melaka, either in English or the Malaysian national language.

What is very clear in our ongoing research is that there is still a major tension between heritage conservation and the concern to promote economic development and large-scale infrastructural projects, including the continuing land reclamation in and around the historic port, and the construction of new mega-tourism facilities which continue to spread along the coastline in the vicinity of the old town. On balance it would seem that development rather than heritage conservation and protection is favoured. This tension has also been expressed in the decision to repeal the Rent Control Act which has served to undermine the living cultural communities in Melaka (though not as much as in George Town). Nevertheless, Melaka does have a well developed heritage management structure and it has succeeded in retaining and supporting a considerable amount of the historic core area, even though the landscapes and vistas from St Paul’s Hill leave much to be desired from an historical, aesthetic and architectural perspective. In this connection the site is already compromised but it is difficult to contemplate what might have been done to meet the needs of the historic core and its protection and at the same time develop other modern facilities (for accommodation, retail, leisure, support services) which the tourist requires.

Having said all of this a major problem which is threatening to endanger the tourist enjoyment of the historic site is the volume of traffic, the noise and pollution it generates and the problems it poses for pedestrians who are attempting to gaze on the streetscapes in relative safety and calm. Given the street layout and the constraint of having to cross the river on the limited number of bridges which are routed through the heritage area, this will be difficult, but some restrictions on traffic and some pedestrianisation will have to be introduced sooner rather than later.

The pressures of mega-development are even more obvious in George Town. The development of a Penang New Urban Centre with a 65-storey office tower and podium shopping mall (Kompleks Tun Abdul Razak [KOMTAR]) was undertaken in the 1970s on 11 hectares of land in the heart of old George Town, entailing the compulsory purchase of land and premises. Over 3,000 people were relocated along with small trades, businesses and street hawkers (Jenkins and King, 2003: 50-52). In addition, by the 1990s the areas surrounding the old town, including Jalan Sultan Ahmad Shah, had suffered from massive redevelopment as well, with ‘an incongruous mix of residential and commercial properties, of mansions and 20- to 30-storey high-rise towers sitting side-by-side’ (ibid: 54). ‘Between 1995 and 1999 over 120 new high-rise buildings sprang up within the George Town Boundary’ (ibid: 55). An even more dramatic change was the Repeal of the Rent Control Act in 2000, which has led to the large-scale departure of tenants from the historic core, vacant properties, evictions, the adaptive re-use of some buildings, and illegal renovations (ibid: 49-50). Some living cultural communities have disappeared. UNESCO inscription has saved some parts of George Town and the work of NGOs, conservation-conscious architects and urban planners, along with a range of voluntary organisations has been invaluable, but the pressures of development are still intense and the struggles between conservationists and modernisers continue to pose a real problem for this heritage site.

***Melaka as a Site of Malay and Malaysian Identity***

In examining the symbolic use of heritage sites we see in the case of Melaka the complexities surrounding the ways in which global heritage has, in Cartier’s terms, been ‘imaged’. This process of ‘imaging’ derives from Melaka’s singular position in Malay and Islamic history in Southeast Asia and its role in the construction of the national identity of a modernising, post-colonial nation-state. Melaka’s importance was confirmed in the words on the plaque unveiled by the then Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamed in 1989: translated it reads ‘the historic city of Malaysia. Here is where it all began....the birth of a nation’. Indeed it was the first Prime Minister of Malaya and then Malaysia, Tunku Abdul Rahman, who made the first declaration on 20 February 1956 of the forthcoming independence of the Federation of Malaya at Padang Pahlawan, Bandar Hilir in central Melaka. The emblematic connection between Melaka, the politically dominant Malays and the wider nation of Malaysia is clear. The state emblem, flower and flag resonate with Malay and Islamic symbols and with Melakan history. In literature and web material issued by Tourism Malaysia, which is the promotional arm of the federal Ministry of Tourism, Melaka is usually styled ‘Malaysia’s Historical City’ (2009b: 18-19). Moreover, during the last decade, campaigns by the Melaka state government’s Tourism Promotion Division rehearse the theme of the close symbolic connection between Melaka and Malaysia in the slogan ‘Visit Historic Melaka Means Visit Malaysia’ (Schubert et al, 2004: 22; Tourism Promotion Division, 2009).

However, as we have seen, there has been a shift in emphasis from an earlier Malay-focused agenda to one which presents Melaka as ‘a melting pot of all the races, reflecting the diverse multiracial society that today distinguishes this country’ (Schubert et al, 2004: 23). This expression of multiculturalism is much more directly experienced by tourists to George Town, a colonial creation which does not have to address, or at least in not such an obvious way, the issue of the position of Malaydom and Islam in Malaysian national history. Nevertheless, even here in devising messages and discourse in relation to buildings and urban districts, there has been a tension between presenting the theme of ‘harmonious multiculturalism’ (which is in tune with UNESCO requirements) as against one which continues to construct separate ethnic groups and reorder the Malaysian plural society to confirm Malay-Muslim hegemony (Goh, 2002: 190-192; Kahn, 1997: 100-101, 111-113; Jenkins and King, 2003: 45-46).

Let me first examine the earlier representation of Melaka as an essentially Malay creation and construction. As Worden demonstrates in his carefully crafted paper on identities and nation-building, the construction of a close relationship between the Malays, Islam, and Melaka, and these in turn with the modern nation-state of Malaysia required ‘some deft remodelling’ (2010: 132). The historical domains of the Malay-Muslim world of Melaka of the fifteenth century were not coterminous either with the territories which the British brought together as the Straits Settlements and the Malay States and which on independence (with the exclusion of Singapore) became the Federation of Malaya on 31 August 1957, or even less with the wider territories which included the northern Borneo territories (with the exclusion of the Sultanate of Brunei) and which became the Federation of Malaysia on 16 September 1963.

European colonialism resulted in the division of the Malay world between what was to become the British domains and, to the south, the Netherlands East Indies, later to become the independent Republic of Indonesia. In particular, the roots of Melaka and Malay culture in Sumatra which became incorporated into the Dutch domains and then Indonesia were distanced from the Malays of the Malayan Peninsula even though a considerable percentage of what is now the Malay population of Malaysia traces its ancestry and history to communities in what is now Indonesia. The Malays of southern Thailand and the Muslim populations of the southern Philippines were also excluded. This politically generated distancing process between Sumatra and the Malayan Peninsula became even more prominent after Sukarno’s ‘Confrontation’ of the then newly created Federation of Malaysia from 1963 when Indonesian Malays were firmly separated from their cousins to the north, but even before then the concept of a ‘Greater Indonesia’ in the 1940s had come to nothing (ibid: 132). Therefore, Melaka as a Malay sultanate which derived from the Indonesian islands to the south and which bridged the Straits of Malacca (as other maritime states like Srivijaya in Sumatra had done before) became increasingly fixed territorially in a Malay(si)an Malay polity.

Another important consideration in nation-building was the identification of those elements in Malaysia’s history and culture which could be brought together to constitute a national identity. This was made especially difficult in a new country made up of previously differently administered and historically separate units and comprising a medley of peoples and cultures, a significant proportion of which came from outside the Malay-Indonesian archipelago and the wider Southeast Asia. The ethnic composition of Melaka and Penang was even more complex in that as port centres they were the focus of migrations and settlement from a wide range of places, and subject also to a considerable amount of cultural exchange and intermarriage. How then to unify the nation in a shared identity? This exercise, in important respects, was an extraordinarily difficult task. As the dominant symbols, both in the pre-colonial and the British colonial period, were associated with the Malay sultans, and the senior local administration under the British system of indirect rule was primarily made up of Malays, then it was to be expected that the Malays would play a dominant part in the post-colonial state (Crouch, 1996). The Malay-dominant government then chose Malay- and Muslim-centred symbols, including the institution of the sultanate and kingship, which in turn harked back to, at least in part, an ‘imagined tradition’ and an unbroken connection with the past, the Malay language as the national language, and Islam as the national religion; and this is where Melaka, as the state located in Malaysian territory, played an important role as the source, ancestral anchor, geographical locus and the legitimacy of the newly created Malay(si)an state.

As Worden says with reference to the Malay concept of a kingdom (*kerajaan*), and more importantly the authority of the king or *raja*: ‘Some Malaysian scholars have argued that the “Malacca tradition” of kingship, law and authority survived the Portuguese conquest through the Johor-Riau empire and into the eighteenth century, and was by implication incorporated into the modern Malaysian nation-state’ (2010: 133). More than this, Melaka ‘provided the model for the present Sultanates in the Peninsula, with the exception of Negeri Sembilan’ (Mohd Yusoff, 2004: 28; Zainal Abidin, 1983: 101). Even the concept of ‘Malay’ and ‘Malaydom’ was intimately associated with Melaka. Milner, in his detailed exploration of the meaning of ‘Malay’, proposes that a major problem in examining Malay identity is determining ‘when “the Malays” came into being as a community extending beyond individual Archipelago states’ (2010: 12). He poses the question ‘Who are “the Malays”?’ and importantly what it means to be ‘Malay’ (2008). In addition, he puzzles over the issue of ‘race’ and ‘ethnicity’ as applied to the Malays (2010: 10, 13). He suggests that the emergence of the idea of ‘Malay’, for him, ‘comes into view’ during the fifteenth-sixteenth century Melaka sultanate, when we see reference to ‘Malay’ or ‘Melayu’ in the Melakan *Malay Annals* (*Sejarah Melayu*) and in Magellan’s expedition word-list (ibid; and see Reid, 2001:30).

It was then during high colonialism from the nineteenth century and the European preoccupation with categories, classification, identifying and mapping that the concept of a ‘Malay race’ (*bangsa Melayu*) crystallised and when the wider Malay world (which still has some resonance) was divided into nation-state-based Malay identity (Milner, 2010: 13). But Milner finds the roots of this emerging Malayness located, as has Worden, in the institution of the sultanate and the relation between the ruler and the subject; in Milner’s words ‘a *raja*-centred world’ (ibid: 15; 2008: 127). The Melaka Sultanate, with its power and authority based on descent, the association of the ruler with Islam and Allah, and the loyalty, respect and obedience owed to the ruler by his subjects expressed in the concepts *daulat* and *derhaka*, and its structure of government was therefore the model of successor sultanates on the Malayan Peninsula (Zainal Abidin, 1983: 101-110; and see Chandra Muzaffar, 1983: 48-50).

Milner draws attention to the different ways in which Melaka was deployed in post-independence nation-building in Malay(si)a. In the court epic *Hikayat Hang Tuah* Milner draws attention to Tunku Abdul Rahman’s translation of the Melakan hero, Hang Tuah’s loyalty to his sultan to his support for ‘the Malay race’ (2008: 159). More than this ‘In almost every major address to the party, Tunku Abdul Rahman, UMNO President and Prime Minister for the first thirteen years of Merdeka [independence], stressed the importance of adhering to this concept. He differentiated his colleagues on the basis of their loyalty to him’ (Chandra Muzaffar, 1983:51). This was also sometimes translated into loyalty to the United Malays National Organisation and particularly to its collective leadership, but as Malay politics and the Malaysian political system more generally developed in the post-independence period it became loyalty to the Malay community which carried the utmost importance (ibid: 63).

Milner argues further that rather than the concept of Malay as a ‘racial’ category, which is a more recent political construction, we should think of it as a ‘cultural style’ or ‘civilization’, and again, with reference to the epic of Hang Tuah this perspective can be traced back to the Melaka sultanate. The emphasis was not so much on genealogical relationship or biological unity but on ‘Malay ways’ and the ‘ways of Melaka’ (2010: 24-26). In this regard people can ‘become Malay’; they take on ‘Malayness’; and this was a characteristic of Melaka in that Malays were described in the court literature as ‘hybrids’ and the Malay community as open and flexible. As Milner says ‘”Malayness” had the capacity to be communicated to newcomers’ (ibid: 25). In recent years and in the interests of post-colonial nation-building the concept of ‘Malay’ has become increasingly an ideological one which, in certain contexts, has translated Melakan openness into a national policy of assimilation of those who are not Malay.

The historical importance of Melaka in nation-building therefore resulted in its becoming increasingly part of the politicisation of heritage and that role in turn fed into government plans to promote tourism in its national plans for economic growth. Yet, as we have seen, there were two particular contradictions in this post-colonial project. First, there were no material or physical remains left of a Malay-Muslim heritage in the historic core of Melaka that extended back to the golden years of the pre-Portuguese sultanate that were available to deploy for national and tourism purposes. Secondly, the need to promote economic growth within the context of the New Economic Policy (NEP) so that it could be harnessed to a redistribution strategy in favour of the *bumiputera* and which did not alienate the other ethnic groups and which in turn would provide the basis for rapid capital accumulation, required state-directed and promoted economic development. In the case of tourism what was favoured in the 1980s and 1990s was the development of large-scale tourism projects with their related infrastructure and not so much the conservation and protection of heritage. The tension and contradiction between heritage and modernisation have been a persistent theme in the recent history of Melaka and in the wider Federation of Malaysia.

**Reclaiming Malay Heritage**

Particularly since the introduction of the New Economic Policy one of the major issues which faced the Malay-dominated federal and state government in central Melaka was how to give material weight to the symbolic and historical importance of the Malay sultanate, given that urban landscapes are a means to express, give meaning to and enter into discussion about ethnic and national identities. A major development which was designed to reclaim it for the Malays and Islam was the construction in wood of what was said to be a replica of the fifteenth century Sultan Mansur Shah’s Palace (*Istana Kesultanan Melaka*) which was opened by Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamed in July 1986 (Cartier, 2001: 198; Maeda, 1998: 5). It is claimed to be based on sketches in the *Malay Annals* which, as the earliest Malay written text, sets out the character of and principles underlying this exemplary Malay-Muslim sultanate and those Malay heroes who demonstrated the community values which needed to be upheld (Cartier, 2001: 203). It houses a Cultural Museum (*Muzium Budaya*) whose exhibitions present a Malay- and sultanate-centred history of Melaka and Malay cultural achievements; it dwells on court ceremonial and ritual and on the attributes of the traditional Malay-Muslim polity (*kerajaan*). Importantly it is a re-creation of the past, but one which transposes the original location of the palace from St Paul’s Hill itself to the foot of the hill. The palace is also surrounded by the Historic City Memorial Garden ‘in Islamic design’ (Worden, 2010: 135). More recently a Melaka Sultanate Water Mill, based on Islamic technology, was built in 2008 on the Melaka River (Tourism Promotion Division, 2009: 6). Cartier says ‘The new Sultan’s Palace functions to recreate history and even out perceived inequities in the representational historic landscape by featuring a prominent landmark associated with the first sultanate in Malaysia and the arrival of Islam to the peninsula’ (1998a: 160).

In addition, most of the European buildings which were bequeathed the independent Malaysian state have been converted into museums which celebrate not a colonial legacy but one which serves a local agenda; the Stadthuys for example, opened in 1982, houses the Museum of History and Ethnography (*Muzium Sejarah dan Etnografi Melaka*) and presents the history of the sultanate and European and Japanese occupation, Melakan society, cultures and everyday life (ibid). The Museum of Literature (*Muzium Sastera*), on the hill slope above the Stadthuys in a building formerly occupied by the Melaka State Development Corporation and part of the Stadthuys complex, and opened in 1995 yet again celebrates the Malay history of Melaka with historical documents, Malay literary genres, local Malay writers and national literary figures (ibid). The British Clubhouse is home to the Proclamation of Independence Memorial and the Malay Governors’ Collections ‘have been placed in Seri Melaka, the residence of the Dutch and then the British Governors’ which is located on St Paul’s Hill near the church (Worden, 2010: 135). Close to the Stadthuys on Jalan Kota is also the Melaka Islamic Museum (*Muzium Islam Melaka*) which occupied a beautifully restored building which used to be home to the Melaka Islamic Council (*Majlis Islam Melaka*); it focuses on the historical relations between Islam and Melaka (www.virtualmuseummelaka.com). The Malay and Islamic World Museum (*Muzium Dunia Melayu dan Islam*) in Bastion House on Jalan Kota, the former building of the British-owned Dunlop Company until 1986, again reinforces some of the central themes of Malaysian nation-building. The Malaysia Youth Museum (*Muzium Belia Malaysia*), opened in 1992 is close by Christ Church and the Stadthuys and was designed in recognition of the contribution made by young people to the building of the nation; it pays particular attention to UMNO Youth, which is the youth branch of the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), the pre-eminent political party in Malaysia. To reinforce the overwhelming national importance of this Malay political party at the foot of St Paul’s Hill in the museum district along Jalan Kota there is also the Melaka UMNO Museum which, through photographs, letters and other documents describes the history of the party which was founded in Melaka and its contribution to the securing of independence and in building a modern nation.

Reinforcing the political and national messages which abound in the historic core of Melaka, a recently opened exhibition on St Paul’s Hill is the Democratic Government Museum which occupies the State Legislative Assembly building, opened by the Governor of Melaka on 31 August 1961; the Assembly has recently moved to new premises in Ayer Keroh. The museum is designed to trace the development of parliamentary democracy in Malaysia since independence ([www.virtualmuseummelaka.com](http://www.virtualmuseummelaka.com)). Another museum on Jalan Kota is the People’s Museum (*Muzium Rakyat*) opened in 1992 and located in the former Municipal Council building which contains a miscellany of local cultural materials and displays; the building also houses a Kite Museum, which draws attention to the importance of kites in Malay culture and across the world, and a Museum of Enduring Beauty which illustrates how beauty is conceived and perceived across cultures. There is a Royal Malaysian Navy Museum (*Muzium T.L.D.M.*) close to the central area which traces and celebrates the history of the national navy and its contribution to the nation. As part of the Maritime Museum Complex and opposite the naval museum on Jalan Merdeka near the mouth of the Melaka River is a sixteenth-century replica of the Portuguese man-of-war, the Flor de la Mar, the flagship of Afonso de Albuquerque, the Portuguese admiral and conqueror of Melaka. But even in a replica of a Portuguese vessel the exhibitions are devoted to the heyday of the sultanate and its demise with the arrival of the Europeans. Cartier concludes even in the 1990s that ‘In each of these museums, the state promotes national culture in the textual descriptions accompanying displays or photographs’ (1998a: 161).

Melaka has a high density of museums on and surrounding St Paul’s Hill and these serve two functions. Most of them place the Malays, Islam and the nation at the centre of the urban landscape; they are an artificial recreation of heritage and the nation displayed where the Malaysian nation is said to have begun. But as places for tourists to visit and gaze on and hopefully to ponder and absorb the messages and symbols conveyed, they also serve a leisure function. Cartier remarks of the state’s heritage tourism plans that museums ‘answer to the need for activity oriented tourist experiences’ (1998a: 160). From the perspective of the state government, which has entertained ambitious plans to establish a wide range of museum and heritage sites, they are designed to contribute to what is seen by officialdom as an authentic heritage experience.

The obverse of this incorporation of Melaka heritage into Malay culture was the attempt to remove or marginalise Chinese heritage. Cartier has examined in detail the disputes and conflicts over government plans formulated in 1984 to transform the site of the traditional Chinese cemetery at Bukit Cina (Chinese Hill or Sam Po Hill) into a mixed-use site for offices, retail outlets and condominiums along with a cultural-historical centre which included a hotel, sports centre, cultural theatre, library, research institute, handicraft area, mosque, pagoda and temple (1993:359-360; 1997: 555-586). The earth would be removed and used in reclamation work which was then under way at the nearby waterfront. The government plans were also in competition with a private sector bid. This 42-hectare site to the southeast of the central urban area was, as Cartier explains, ‘an important *fengshui* landscape’ which also served as ‘the local jogging park’ (2001: 199). The cemetery dated to the sixteenth century and ‘may be the oldest remaining traditional Chinese burial ground in the world’ (1993: 359). It was also the site of some 12,500 Chinese graves some of which date from the mid-seventeenth century and is said to be the most historic and largest Chinese cemetery outside mainland China (ibid: 364; Maeda, 1998: 8).

In the event, a local preservation movement which was organised by the trustees of the Cheng Hoon Teng Temple, who were also trustees of the cemetery, succeeded in carrying its case to the national government and to the international conservation movement as well as to Chinese organisations within and outside Malaysia. The movement also gained the support of the respected former Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman (Cartier, 1993: 362). Moreover, the Temple organisation had in its possession an ordinance of 1949 which prohibited the development of the burial grounds (ibid: 364). As a result of the campaign the development project was abandoned in February 1985 (Cartier, 1997: 555-586; 1993: 361). The very arguments which the government used to demonstrate the importance of Melaka as a historic site were also used by the preservation movement; in other words the Chinese cemetery was argued to be ‘an unparalleled landscape of Malaysian national history’ (2001: 200). In particular, Bukit Cina was seen as a site which was the setting for important events occurring at each major phase of Malaysian history and it also provided material evidence of Malay historical involvement in and presence at the site. Two large unidentified high status Malay graves (probably of Sumatran origin) date from the sultanate period and a significant number of other Malay graves are located there. This evidence of Malay interment contributed to the case which the preservation movement argued in that they proposed that the presence of both Malay and Chinese dead at Bukit China pointed to the harmonious relationships which existed between these two communities in ancient times (Cartier, 1993: 367). Bukit Cina was also the site of early Portuguese settlement, with a church, monastic quarters and a garden, though these were destroyed by an attack from the Acehnese and ‘the structures and gardens of Bukit Cina did not survive the Dutch siege of 1641’ (ibid: 368). The campaign was successful and government plans were dropped, providing a large, ancient and sacred heritage site which also serves a community function near the heart of old Melaka.

***Melaka and Recent Tourism Development***

In the interpretative summary of their monumental two-volume edited work on Melaka Sandhu and Wheatley argued for the development of heritage tourism (1983a, 1983b, and see specifically 1983c: 566). At the time they were writing, tourism, as a source of revenue and employment, ‘had been exploited only to a minimal degree’ (ibid). Hotel rooms available stood at about 600 and hotel employment less than 400 (ibid). A decade earlier in 1970 there were no international standard hotels in Melaka, few attractions and no systematic tourism promotion. Although tourist arrival statistics are somewhat unreliable by 1975 visitors were recorded at a modest 76,000 though this probably does not capture the numbers of domestic day-trippers (Maeda, 1998: 4-5). By 1982, with the increasing emphasis nationally and locally on tourism development these had increased apparently to 660,000 which seems a rather large and unlikely increase, though again more realistic if it included day-trippers. However, with considerable growth in federal funding for tourism development through the 1980s and the support of the State Economic Development Corporation from 1982 it does seem feasible that visitor numbers had exceeded the one million mark by the early 1990s (ibid). Heritage attractions started to be developed in the 1980s; the History Museum was opened in the Stadthuys in Melaka in 1982 and the building underwent renovation and conservation in the late 1980s; the Sultanate Palace and Museum was also opened officially in 1986 (ibid). The first international standard hotel was up and running in Melaka by 1984 (ibid: 6).

In the first stage of tourism development in the 1980s there was also very little in the way of interest in heritage and historical tourism since a considerable number of the heritage sites (both in Melaka and George Town) were related primarily to a colonial and a non-Malay, non-Muslim past. Although there was a gradual increase in awareness of the importance and potential of heritage conservation and related tourism activities in the 1980s, it was not until the 1990s that the importance of heritage landscapes began to be incorporated into the Malaysian government’s strategic planning for economic development, and Melaka began to play an increasing role in this shift in tourism policy. This was, in part at least, in response to a changing global market in heritage and probably prompted, not in small part, by the actions of such bodies as UNESCO’s World Heritage Committee and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). Heritage and the living cultures in which it is embedded and expressed therefore have become a global business, and most governments around the world have signed up to the World Heritage Convention.

The Malaysian government was attracted to the market potential of heritage and wider cultural tourism as another strand in its overall policy to expand its tourism sector. Jenkins remarks pertinently that ‘UNESCO listing does not exist without tourism’ (2008: 247). In the case of Melaka this was crucial for generating employment; from the mid-1980s central Melaka began to lose some of its traditional trades and residents as a result of the relocation of businesses, the competition from new leisure-related developments outside the old town, the outmigration of young people and the pressures to redevelop heritage properties (JICA, 2002: 12). To reflect the increasing importance of heritage issues as well as the emphasis on tourism development the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism was reorganised in March 2004 into two bodies: the Ministry of Tourism with its agency the Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board (or Tourism Malaysia) ([www.tourism.gov.my](http://www.tourism.gov.my)) and the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage ([www.motour.gov.my](http://www.motour.gov.my)). The responsibility for heritage management and policy has therefore been separated from that for tourism policies and promotion, and yet both ministries are in various ways engaged in heritage tourism issues ([www.heritage.gov.my](http://www.heritage.gov.my)). In 2006 a Federal Department of National Heritage was established and with the further politicisation of heritage the responsibilities of the Ministry of Culture were widened in 2008 to become the Ministry of Unity, Culture, Arts and Heritage. At the state level there are also official bodies responsible for tourism; in Melaka it is the Melaka State Tourism Promotion Division and the Tourism Unit ([www.melaka.gov.my](http://www.melaka.gov.my)). Conservation and heritage matters are the responsibility of the Municipal Council and its Conservation Committee and the Melaka Museums Corporation ([www.unescobkk.org](http://www.unescobkk.org)).

But even then in Malaysia the shift to an interest in heritage and history has not precluded a strong and continuing commitment to the construction of large-scale tourism- and leisure-related projects. It is these that generate a high level of tourist revenue rather than the quiet and protected streets of an urban heritage quarter which generally do not lend themselves to a large volume of visitors. The importance of promoting mass tourism rather than niche tourism is obvious. Indeed in 1997 just before the decision to join with Penang in applying for inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List the Chief Minister of Melaka announced the decision to proceed with four ‘megaprojects’ or ‘leisurescapes’ designed to triple the number of tourist visitors to Melaka to 4.5 million annually (Cartier, 1998a: 151). By the late 1990s urban transformations around the historic core of old Melaka were obvious: new retail outlets, shopping malls, hotels, apartments and office blocks (Maeda, 1998: 6). In Penang this has happened on an even grander and more dramatic scale.

Malaysian analyses of the tourism market suggested that domestic tourists and those from the Southeast Asian region particularly Singapore, would not only wish to gaze on colonial and historical landscapes and would therefore need other leisure attractions, whereas there was scope for the marketing of heritage to Western tourists (ibid: 152). The emphasis on ‘megaprojects’ is also linked to the important contribution which the construction industry makes to Malaysia’s economic development and the increasing shift from manufacturing industry to construction, real estate and services during the 1990s (ibid: 153-156: Ooi and Goh, 2010). The process was facilitated following an amendment to the Land Acquisition Act in 1987 by giving the state the power to acquire land which was considered necessary for economic development, which could then be transferred to individuals or corporations for ‘privatised use’. The developers of large tourism projects were also given tax and investment incentives (ibid: 155).

The official focus on ‘megadevelopment’, in Cartier’s words, resulted in the destruction of Melaka’s original harbour and waterfront – arguably its historic raison-d’être – to be replaced by a large swathe of reclaimed land at Mahkota Melaka and Taman Melaka Raya on which have been constructed high rise buildings, hotels, offices, apartments, shopping malls, and a sea world amusement park (2001: 201). Significant parts of the waterfront are now taken up with large shopping complexes: the Dataran Pahlawan Megamall and the Mahkota Parade; there is the enormous ‘Eye on Malaysia’ viewing wheel with 42 gondolas situated in a large leisure park at the mouth of the Melaka River, and in nearby Bandar Hilir the 80-metre Menara Taming Sari, ‘the first revolving gyro tower in Malaysia’ (Tourism Malaysia, 2009a: 10).

The reclamation work continues and has had serious consequences for the ancient Portuguese community and its sea-based livelihood in that its coastal location has been transformed into an inland one and their culture marginalised (Fernandis, 2004; Sarkissian, 2000). But these transformations demonstrate the tensions to which I have already referred: according to Cartier parts of Melaka’s heritage have effectively been destroyed and the reclamation and urban development have compromised any attempt ‘to advance an authentic tourism imaging strategy based on the historic port’ (2001: 201). It was also one of the main reasons why earlier applications to include Melaka on the UNESCO WHS list were rejected (see below). Cartier concludes her analysis of large-scale capital investment projects in Malaysia by drawing attention to the crucial role that tourism plays ‘in the larger development process’, and in this environment ‘the conservation status of historic landscapes limits their development potential and, in the era of megadevelopment projects, marginalises their significance in the state’s tourism profile’ (1998a: 171).

Yet the tension between conservation and development is particularly acute in Melaka. Rightly or wrongly it was a prevailing view in the state government and among responsible academic advisors that one way to overcome the constraints on development in the historic urban core was to reclaim land and take the pressure off what is now the UNESCO WHS. Some 30 years ago Hamzah Sendut argued that it would not be feasible to redevelop ‘the historical parts of the city’ and instead ‘[p]lanned development of the waterfront should be used to create a new urban core which would absorb much of the burden of urban growth’ (1983: 487). When he wrote his paper reclamation work was already under way. Hamzah concluded that the objective ‘would be to create a balanced and harmonious growth between the old and new parts of the city’ (ibid). In the context of Melaka’s economic development needs, the policy to modernise and bring commercial, retail and leisure activities onto reclaimed land makes sense, but it still has an impact on the historic core of Melaka, as Cartier has explained, in that it has broken the connection between the heart of old Melaka and the sea and harbour. It has also had an enormous visual impact when viewed from the top of St Paul’s Hill. The heritage area has become an enclave surrounded to a significant degree by high-rise buildings. The Lonely Planet guide remarks that ‘Despite an abundance of historical monuments, many locals argue that the city’s distinctive heritage is under threat from modernisation’ (Richmond, 2004: 211). More than this ‘The historic waterfront retreated so far inland...that it endangered the traditional livelihood of the Portuguese fishing community’ (ibid) (see below).

We can therefore begin to identify the beginnings of a serious attempt to promote heritage tourism in the 1980s. Nevertheless, emphasis in the 1980s was on large leisure projects (in Cartier’s words ‘megadevelopment’) designed to increase substantially the flow of tourists into the state, many of whom would then usually visit the heritage areas for a day or stay overnight. Visitor arrivals have mushroomed since the mid-1990s. Maeda gives a figure for 1995 of 1,329,334 arrivals. The tourism statistics for Melaka indicate that by 2001 there were 2.5 million arrivals, in 2005 this had almost doubled to 4.6 million. By 2009 there were 8.9million visitors, 2011 saw 12.5 million visitors and in 2012 another increase to 13.7 million arrivals (asmaliana.com; various years). This is a huge number of tourists to absorb. In 1995 about half the visitors were Malaysians, almost 17% from Singapore, 7% from Taiwan, 5.5% from mainland China, 5.4% from Japan and 4.5% from Hong Kong (Maeda, 1998: 18). In 2012 the importance of China as a source of tourists had increased appreciably to 18.6%, with Singapore at 16.6%, Indonesia 14.7%, Taiwan 10.1% and Hong Kong 6.2% (asmaliana, com). In other words the majority of the foreign visitors were ethnic Chinese. The average length of stay was 1.3 nights in 1995 and increased to 2.25 nights in 2012 (ibid) and visitors usually travelled from Kuala Lumpur or Singapore on a day trip or staying for one night. Melaka was therefore seen as a ‘transition point’ between the capital and Singapore and as a major attraction for Chinese, who aside from the modern tourist facilities, golf courses, and other leisure attractions, came to Melaka presumably to gaze upon southern Chinese heritage in old Melaka (ibid).

There is no doubt that tourist information has been improved for Melaka. The tourism information services have produced a range of informative cards on heritage and other leisure sites in the state. Each card is underlined with ‘Melaka World Heritage City UNESCO’ and the nationally promoted slogan ‘Visit Historic Melaka Means Visit Malaysia’. The Conservation Management Plan made a particular point of emphasising the importance of information provision in the context of the development of cultural and heritage tourism, through the establishment of district- and community-based interpretative centres which would include mosques, temples and hotels and would charge an entrance fee (Malaysian State Party, 2008). There does not seem to have been much progress in this area. Another is tour-guided heritage trails; there is certainly evidence of heritage walks in the historic centre, but there has also been criticism in some tourist surveys of the quality of the tour guides in Melaka. The Lonely Planet guide provides a walking tour through Chinatown and it seems that a significant number of Western visitors use this rather than a tour guide (Richmond et al, 2004: 218-221). It is more likely that Asian tourists will visit with the aid of a guide. There is also the Jonker Walk project which comprises a street market on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights when the area is closed to traffic; it seems to have brought some life to the town centre, but there has also been criticism from some local residents that it is intrusive and noisy and that traffic restrictions and increased rents have driven long-established traders and artisans out of business (ibid: 220).

The Tourist Information Centre has a range of leaflets and cards four tourists, but what seems to be missing is a consolidated, comprehensive and reader-friendly guide to the heritage site; either a handy pocket-sized guide to the main sites or a more detailed and considered explanation of why Melaka is a UNESCO site and what it is in the historic urban centre that the casual visitor should endeavour to see. There are the books by Bonny Wee (2009) and Paddy Schubert and others (2004), but these are really not suitable for an informed tourist market. It would appear that most foreign tourists who search for information on Melaka still resort to such trusted travel guides as Lonely Planet.

Yet what seems to me to be a major consideration for the heritage of Melaka is the constant engagement between those who wish to modernise and promote economic growth and large-scale tourism and those who wish to protect and conserve the legacy of the past. The same struggles and tensions are apparent in Penang. The modern, vibrant atmosphere of the urban area of Melaka is evoked in the high rise developments which can be seen from the top of St Paul’s Hill and which have taken place on the reclaimed land stretching along the waterfront and inland from the mouth of the Melaka River. These are also located within walking distance of the old British open area (*padang*), now taken over by a nightly ‘Light and Sound Show’ which focuses on Melakan history and the achievement of Malayan independence. There are also high-rise developments on the other side of the river beyond the Chinese district. In an important sense these developments put in question the authenticity which UNESCO seeks in its inscription of sites. The new build which dominates the skyline was one of the main reasons for the earlier UNESCO rejection of Melaka’s submission. The expansion of these modern leisure facilities continued during the time that Malaysia was preparing its joint submission with Penang and awaiting the evaluation and decision from ICOMOS. In addition to the major shopping malls of Mahkota Parade, Hang Tuah Mall, Plaza Melaka Raya and Pasar Raya, there are many high-rise hotels including the Century Mahkota, Equatorial, Golden Legacy, Seri Costa, as well as office accommodation, apartments and condominiums. In other parts of Melaka there are other high-rise developments including the City Bayview Hotel and the Renaissance.

In order to gauge more recent reactions to Melaka as a tourist site we conducted a survey of 104 tourist visitors (54 foreign and 50 Malaysian visitors), administered over two weekends (27-30 August and 3-6 September 2010) with the assistance of a team from Universiti Putra Malaysia. The questions focused on whether or not tourists had knowledge of Melaka as a World Heritage Site before their arrival, whether this influenced their decision to visit the town, and their reactions to the site and the heritage properties they had seen. There were also questions relating to the characteristics of the tourists (age, gender, educational level), length of stay, accommodation used, and other activities pursued there. A very good range of foreign nationalities were questioned, though there tended to be a focus on younger age groups and those from a university and/or professional background; some of those questioned were students who were spending a study period in Malaysia or Singapore. The nationalities comprised British (8), Thai (7), German (7), Dutch (4), Chinese (4), Indonesian (3), Canadian (2), French (2), Maldivian (2), Polish (2), Singaporean (2), American (1), Australian (1), Bangladeshi (1), Belgian (1), Egyptian (1), Finnish (1), Hungarian (1), Indian (1), Iranian (1), Italian (1), and Japanese (1). Most of the respondents were between 18 and 35 years of age; there were 26 males and 28 females, the majority had or were following tertiary education courses. There were 26 respondents who did not know that Melaka was a UNESCO World Heritage Site; 28 did know; of those who did, some had already visited other UNESCO sites in the region, including Ayutthaya, Angkor, Luang Prabang, George Town, Hoi An, My Son and Halang Bay.

Information about the site was usually gathered by word of mouth from friends or family, the internet, and importantly from travel guide books, particularly Lonely Planet in which Melaka is described in superlative terms: ‘one of Malaysia’s premier destinations’; its ‘unique personality draws from its rare compendium of Peranakan shophouses, Portuguese and Dutch architecture, Victorian vestiges, Buddhist, Taoist and Indian temples and Islamic mosques’; ‘food lovers can sample some of Malaysia’s best cuisine here’; ‘the cultural mosaic that makes Melaka such an intriguing port’ (Richmond et al, 2004: 213-214). Melaka was primarily seen as a historic and interesting place to visit and a stopping off point on what Lonely Planet styles as part of ‘the grand tour’ (with Kuala Lumpur and Singapore as the Peninsular Malaysian end points) (ibid: 17). Melaka’s proximity to Singapore was sometimes given as the main reason for visiting the site.

Most respondents were visiting Melaka for the first time and were not travelling as part of a tour or package with their own tour guide. The length of stay was between one and four days, and though some visitors were staying in good quality local hotels, most of them opted for guest houses and home stays. Their overall reactions to the site were overwhelmingly positive; usually responding that Melaka met their expectations or exceeded them and remarking on the historic atmosphere of the place, its culture, the quality of the restoration and conservation work, the interesting architecture and narrow streets, the friendliness of the people, and the good food and shopping. An earlier survey by Universiti Teknologi Malaysia undertaken in 2000 found a similar positive reaction to the facilities and attractions, and the importance of Melaka’s history and architecture (cited in JICA, 2002). In our survey some tourists also liked the fact that the site was relatively small and that sightseeing was manageable on foot or by trishaw. When asked what improvements might be made or what they disliked about their visit, a significant number indicated that there was too much traffic in the centre of the site, it was too crowded, and there was an interesting comment on the lack of guidance and information in the local tourist office, the distance of the sea from the historic centre of Melaka, the high rise buildings around the site and the ferris wheel, litter, vacant buildings, the absence of bazaars with local products, the low quality of the souvenirs, and the need for more festivals and ‘living’ culture.

There were some interesting differences between the responses of the foreign visitors and Malaysians. Only six of the 50 Malaysian respondents did not know that Melaka was a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Most had also visited the site more than once and Melaka was seen as a place for a day-trip, weekend or vacation. Invariably Malaysians referred to the important position of Melaka in Malaysian history and in national heritage terms rather than as a multicultural site; visitors emphasised the importance of not forgetting their history and the need to get to know more about it. Clearly the official emphasis on the central position of Melaka in the formation and development of Malay culture and identity and on Melaka as a site of cultural development, encounters and exchange had also been conveyed to Malaysians through the school curriculum, history textbooks, and in the national media, newspapers and television. Some of the young Malaysians had visited Melaka on a school trip or had been there to undertake a study project. As well as gazing on heritage, including A Famosa, the colonial buildings, shop houses and the Melaka River, when asked about the reasons for visiting, a large number of respondents referred to their love of good Nonya food, the importance of shopping, visiting family and friends, relaxing and having fun. Obviously many more Malaysians stay with friends and relatives, but a good number also booked into hotels on weekend packages. Length of stay was usually not more than four days, and more often one or two nights or a day trip.

As with the foreign visitors the reactions to the site were primarily positive and most Malaysians indicated that there had been improvements in the maintenance and renovation of buildings, the urban infrastructure and in the development of modern facilities including shopping. There seemed to be fewer issues for Malaysians in the development of high rise buildings around the heritage site. Nevertheless, as with the foreign visitors, there were complaints about the intrusiveness of the traffic and the fact that the centre of the town was very crowded in the narrow streets. Because more Malaysians visit Melaka using their own transport there were also remarks about traffic jams and requests for more parking areas; for those staying outside Melaka town and wanting to visit the heritage site there were comments on the lack of good public transport and access to taxis. Interestingly several of the respondents complained that Melaka was too hot and there were not enough shady places and shelters in the town to rest out of the direct sunlight. Some Malaysians also remarked on the lack of signage and information for tourists in both English and Malay.

Importantly, the responses of over 100 tourists suggest that overall Melaka has provided them with a positive experience. It appears that those responsible for managing the site are getting a number of things right. Clearly the majority of visitors, especially Malaysians know about Melaka’s UNESCO status and attach importance to the heritage value of the site. However, one major issue raised by many of the visitors is the problem of traffic which threatens to choke the site and it does intrude into the enjoyment and experience of the site.

Overall Melaka and George Town to a much greater and more serious degree than the sites in Thailand and the Philippines are threatened by all kinds of development pressures from tourism and from government economic policies to promote growth and encourage both domestic and international tourism.

**The Philippines**

For itslong history of colonial contact, the large number of important colonial buildings remaining, particularly churches and monastic institutions, and its diverse range of landscapes from marine reefs to stunning coastal scenery, broad agricultural plains and mountainous interiors the Philippines has surprisingly few UNESCO inscribed sites. The Philippines was the first Southeast Asian country to sign the UNESCO Convention in 1985, but it has only five World eritage Sites Heritage Sites; three are cultural (two of these emerged from the Spanish colonial period [Baroque Churches and Vigan], and only one from the interior tribal populations [the Ifugao rice terraces]), and two are natural sites. But the underlying potential of the Philippines in heritage terms is evidenced by the relatively large number of sites – 29 in all – on the Tentative List. Only Indonesia comes anywhere near this number with 26 sites on its provisional list. Of those on the Tentative List the Philippines has nominated five more Baroque churches: San Mattias Isabela, San Isidro Lazi, San Pedro Apostol, Immaculada Conception Guiuan, and Patricinio de Maria, Boljoon, Cebu; and it has also listed Jesuit churches.

The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) has listed 36 churches as National Cultural Treasures and in need of protection and restoration, plus the four WHS churches, and a further 22 as National Historical Landmarks. Along with additional Baroque churches and Jesuit churches the Philippines has also nominated on its Tentative List some of the best examples of Spanish fortifications, and the magnificent late nineteenth century Basilica of San Sebastian in Quiapo, Manila; it is under the ecclesiastical authority of the Order of the Augustinian Recollects. San Sebastian was placed on the National Historical Landmark List by Presidential Decree and it is also on a national heritage in danger list because of the damage to the structure from rusting and air pollution. It is the only all-steel prefabricated church in the whole of Asia (the structure was manufactured in Brussels and assembled in Manila). The NCCA, founded in 1992, oversees these ecclesiastical buildings as a policy-making and funding body for culture and the arts under the Ministry of Culture; it also delegates responsibilities to the National Museum (NM) and the National Historic Commission of the Philippines (NHCP).

The rather modest number of fully inscribed World Heritage Sites probably reflects in part the long history of political instability in the Philippines, its poor post-war economic record and widespread urban and rural poverty which have not generated sufficient funds for restoration and conservation work, and the country’s lack of commitment (until recently) to its heritage. As Akpedonu has said ‘The Philippines still has a relatively rich and diverse architectural heritage from the Spanish-American colonial period and the immediate post-war years. It is a unique blend of Malay, Chinese, and Spanish building traditions with US-American overlays and influences from Mexico and Japan’ (2012:1). However, the development of a hybrid architecture from these cross-cultural encounters to produce this valuable and unique architectural tradition ‘is little known’ both within and beyond the Philippines. The outstanding example of this form of architecture is the ancestral house (*bahay na bato*) which in urban areas was usually found in residential and commercial complexes arranged in a rectangular gridiron pattern of narrow streets and opening out on to a central focus, the town square (*plaza*) with its municipal and religious buildings; the houses are built of stone using terra cotta as well on the ground floor, with a wooden first floor gallery, shells for windows and openings *(kapis*), and with steep, tiled Chinese-style roofing (and see Zialcita and Tinio, 1980).

Akpedonu then explains that the consequences of this lack of knowledge of the historical legacy are severe in that ‘the social, political and environmental conditions for preserving this unique heritage are suffering from a general lack of appreciation, political apathy and disinterest, and an absence of visionary planning and imagination, which result in decades-long neglect and decay’ (ibid). Examples of the serious neglect of heritage are the many fine former residential-merchant houses in the district of San Nicolas in Manila across the Pasig River from Intramuros which were progressively incorporated into densely populated, multi-occupancy slum and squatter areas, and are now in a serious state of decay and dilapidation. This is not to present a negative evaluation of the consequences of poverty but rather to demonstrate the substantial problems which the country has experienced in recording, researching and maintaining its valuable built forms in an unfavourable economic climate.

What perhaps also compounds the lack of interest in cultural tourism in particular in the Philippines, but also helps explain this apathy is the very modest level of international tourism there in comparison with other parts of Southeast Asia. In 2012 Malaysia recorded annual visitor arrivals at just over 25 million, though this is inflated by short-stay visitors from Singapore and Brunei Darussalam (UNWTO, 2013). In Thailand annual numbers exceeded 22 million (Oxford Business Group, 2013). In the Philippines international tourists only amounted to 4.3 million in 2012 (Philstar, 2013). Singapore and Indonesia record visitors well above this and even Vietnam has exceeded the Philippines as a tourist destination in terms of visitor arrivals, and Cambodia and Laos as small countries and late-starters in international tourism are not far behind the Philippines with such premier attractions as Angkor and Luang Prabang. The interesting feature of Philippine tourism is that by far the most important markets are in East and Southeast Asia; South Korea, Japan, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia are the main source areas, though the USA and Australia are also important, with smaller numbers from Canada, the UK, and Germany. The main attractions are not heritage sites, other than Intramuros in Manila, which includes San Agustin and the Manila Cathedral. Instead East Asians and others head for Cebu, Camarines, and in Manila, Binondo and Makati City, and they go for beach holidays, diving, spa and health-related vacations, food, shopping and the night-life.

Another problem which the Philippines faces in the tourism industry is competition from other higher profile destinations in the region located on the major airline hubs and tourist circuits and interconnected in user-friendly and easy to book tourist packages (Singapore, Penang/Kuala Lumpur/Melaka, Yogyakarta/Bali, Bangkok/Chiang Mai/Phuket, Angkor/Siem Reap, Luang Prabang/Vientiane, Hanoi/Ho Chi Minh City/Hué and Hoi An). It also lacks the high profile historical indigenous sites like Angkor, Ayutthaya, Borobudur and Hué, and in comparison with other Southeast Asian destinations the country’s promotional strategies are generally poorly administered. There is also a perception among international tourists from outside Asia that as a Hispanised and Americanised Roman Catholic country the Philippines is not sufficiently Asian; it is too westernised and overwhelmingly capitalist. And indeed Filipinos themselves until recently and in reaction to their colonial legacy did not really appreciate their own heritage which was seen as the product of a Hispanised ‘mongrel’ culture (Zialcita, 2005: 3). Nevertheless, as Zialcita has argued persuasively the lowland Christian Filipinos actively indigenised Spanish and Spanish-American culture and they express ‘continuity with major patterns in early Austronesian culture’; he suggests that his fellow citizens should not be so negative and dismissive of their interaction and encounter with the West and the unique hybrid culture which emerged from it (ibid: 21).

Heritage sites in Manila and particularly in Intramuros also suffered severe and widespread damage and destruction during the Japanese occupation and the American re-occupation compounded by subsequent urban decay and pollution. As a country comprising numerous islands and with tourist and heritage sites scattered and difficult to access, the facilities and infrastructure for international tourism to move tourists around easily, efficiently and cheaply are also inadequate in comparison with the road and airline systems which operate in countries like Thailand and Malaysia; the political instability of the 1980s also discouraged tourists at a time when other parts of the region were expanding and consolidating their position in the international tourist marketplace. Indeed, much of the literature on early tourism development in the Philippines has focused on the ways in which tourism was used for political purposes, particularly by the Marcos regime, and how those politically charged policies went awry with regime change and ‘people power’ and the tourism industry suffered accordingly (see, for example, Richter, 1980, 1989, 2001).

***Heritage Assets***

***Baroque Churches***

Undoubtedly the Baroque Churches of the Philippines, inscribed by UNESCO in 1993 are among the most important of Philippine heritage assets (much of this information was collected during interviews by Victor King with church representatives in Manila and with reference to UNESCO websites). But the four Baroque Augustinian churches and associated ecclesiastical buildings are, with the exception of San Agustin in Intramuros, distant from the main tourist circuits. They are primarily examples of living cultural heritage and are actively used as religious centres by the Philippine community (and see Layug, 2007). Only San Agustin, because of its location within Intramuros in the capital attracts considerable attention from international tourists. In line with what Zialcita argues on behalf of a positive hybridisation process in the colonial Philippines, the churches also demonstrate a unique architectural style, responding to the local environment and the fact that the Philippines lies in an earthquake and typhoon zone, and giving expression to a reinterpretation of European Baroque by Chinese and local Philippine craftsmen.

However, as already mentioned the churches are in regular use. For their day-to-day management, maintenance and conservation, they are also subject to the jurisdiction of the Bishops Conference of the Philippines which argues that the priority of the churches must be their religious mission in the context of the guiding interests of the Catholic Orders. For the purposes of declaring many of the churches as national landmarks and of inscribing four churches as UNESCO WHS a Memorandum of Agreement was reached between the NCCA and the Bishops Conference, with the individual dioceses and the Vatican, to enable the Commission to be consulted; the NCCA also has influence when it funds conservation and maintenance work, but wherever possible the ecclesiastical orders strive to maintain and demonstrate their independence in managing their estates as their private property.

With regard to the soundness and the structure of the buildings there have been various problems with air pollution (from traffic) and urban development and re-development in the vicinity of San Agustin, Manila. The church is the most popular venue in Manila for weddings and the pressure and wear-and-tear on the site and its fabric are intense throughout the year, combined with the effects of a humid tropical climate; constant maintenance and repair work is required. In the case of San Agustin in Paoay vibrations from heavy traffic which was passing close to the church have caused damage to the fabric (traffic has been re-routed and a task force formed to undertake necessary restoration work). Cracking of the fabric of the church of Nueva Senora, Santa Maria in Ilocos Sur has been caused by the church’s location on a hillside which is subject to poor drainage and erosion (retaining walls have been built to prevent further movement). In the case of Santo Tomas, Iloilo, Panay, the church has been subject to inappropriate extensions and building in the grounds which are out of keeping with the church style, period and architecture.

But overall it would appear that the churches are fine examples of a living cultural heritage and one which generally fulfils UNESCO’s requirements as well as performing a vital religious role in the lives of their parishioners. They are used and enjoyed by the local populace. Generally they are not the subject of the tourist gaze to any significant extent, indeed the ecclesiastical authorities do not collect tourist visitor statistics; nor do they do much in the way of planning for public use and monitoring that use. Nevertheless, the churches are not on an endangered list, and insofar as the funds allow (and these are often inadequate) restoration and conservation work is undertaken.

***Puerto Princesca Subterranean River National Park***

Much of the material for this section has been taken from the report produced by one of our research assistants, Johanna Fross (2013), who undertook field research in Palawan in the summer of 2012; I also took a day-trip to the site in February 2012. Formerly referred to as St Paul’s Subterranean River it has subsequently been re-named, following the adoption of the management role of the park by the Puerto Princesca City Council and then UNESCO inscription in 1999, as the Puerto-Princesca Subterranean River National Park. The park features a spectacular and complex limestone karst landscape with a long underground river whose primary distinguishing feature is that it emerges directly into the sea, and its lower portion is subject to tidal influences; roughly 8.2 kilometres of its length are navigable. The area also represents a significant habitat for biodiversity conservation. The site contains a full 'mountain-to-sea' ecosystem and has some of the most important forests in Asia. The cave complex containing the underground river is the home of colonies of bats and swiftlets.

One of the reasons that the site has not been exploited up to now to the extent that it might have been, given its uniqueness and biological importance, is that it lies at a considerable distance from the main population centres of Luzon and particularly Manila, some 580 kilometres away. There are four ferries per week, but there are also daily flights which take about one hour. From Puerto Princesca the park is about 50 kilometres by road, some of the later stages of which are over rather roughly surfaced and dirt roads.

There are also entrance fees and controlled access to the caves because visitors are usually transported by a motorised catamaran (*banca*) across the bay from the fishing village of Sabang to a reception area where boats under the control of local boatmen and guides then take small numbers of passengers (6-8 per boat) some way along the river for a 45-minute boat trip. In bad weather, high water level and rough seas the river is not accessible. A visit to the cave and river is usually booked in advance through tour agents, especially for a one-day package from Puerto Princesca. For the more energetic and adventurous visitor a forest walk to the river is about five kilometres, but most visitors go by water across the bay. Sabang as the main service and tourist centre also has good beaches and a range of accommodation from up-market hotel resorts to beach chalets (where back-packers and young adventure travellers usually stay).

Until relatively recently the Puerto Princesca site had a measure of protection because of lack of accessibility and it was not known widely; Palawan more generally was known as a ‘responsible [ecotourist] destination’ and one which received relatively manageable numbers of visitors (see for example Gray, 2008). However, vigorous promotion campaigns by the Puerto Princesca City Council under the charismatic and energetic Mayor Edward S. Hagendorn to secure the inclusion of the park as one of the New 7 Wonders of Nature in early 2012, and the increase in organised package tours to the site have resulted in a dramatic increase in visitors. This development has begun to lead to questions about what kind of ecotourism the municipal authorities and tour agencies in Palawan are promoting and organising.

In this connection a rather more sympathetic and formal planning view of the achievements and shortcomings of ecotourist policies and activities in Palawan has been provided by Andrade Salazar, though she does not provide that much detail on the subterranean river site (2008; and see Austin and Eder, 2007). On the other hand, Fross, in her evaluation of the Puerto Princesca WHS, is considerably more critical. She argues that the indigenous population in the park area – the Tagbanua – have not benefited from the designation of the region around the river (and its subsequent extension) as a national park. Indeed, Dressler, Kull and Meredith note that ‘Swidden [agriculture] was criminalized and livelihood projects folded’ (2006: 806). As with examples of other heritage sites to which I have referred earlier including Borobudur and Angkor local populations residing in and/or around the property appear not to have benefited much if at all from this status.

Moreover, Fross indicates that the carrying capacity of the subterranean river already appears to have been exceeded. Estimates vary, but Andrade Salazar indicates a daily carryng capacity of 400 visitors, which she says had been exceeded by 2006 (2008: 40-41). Whilst Fross and others point to an upper limit of about 500 per day, but this too had also been exceeded during the past few years, and some estimates were as high as 900 to 1,000, and on occasion up to 1,500, with estimates of 500,000 visitors annually in 2011; there are predictions of upwards of 2 million tourists visiting the subterranean river by 2016, if something is not done to curb the increase. On this basis Fross says on the basis of her research in 2012 ‘Not without reason is Palawan often referred to as the Last Frontier. But now with the most recent development in regards to the Underground River, it is safe to assume that this status can no longer be maintained, especially not in Sabang where a population of circa 900 is faced with more than 1,000 tourists on a daily basis’ (2013: 41).

In this connection Andrade Salazar points to another dimension of this process of change and commoditisation. Relatively small numbers of formerly fishing and trading people in what was the relatively small and remote fishing village of Sabang, housing less than 200 households are being transformed into a wage-earning proletariat of service personnel, cleaners, boatmen and guides dependent on the vagaries of the tourism industry. In some respects the employment-generating capacity of tourism development in out-of-the-way places should be commended; but it does have a potential downside if the fortunes of the industry decline. It is also often the case, as it is in Sabang, that the more lucrative jobs and the entrepreneurial activities associated with tourism are dominated by outsiders whilst the local populace take the menial, lower-paid occupations.

The subterranean river WHS also demonstrates a classic case, as does other sites which we have examined, of contests and conflicts over who or which body can exert control or influence over the revenue, resources and assets of a particular property. UNESCO status tends to exacerbate this environment of competition because global recognition also enhances the value and marketability of a site and the respective statuses and political clout of those who manage and administer it. A detailed examination of these engagements and the process of marginalisation of the indigenous Tagbanua has been undertaken by Dressler, in his consideration of the constraining effects which state-generated conservation policies have on the resource use and livelihoods of rural communities (2005).

In a subsequent paper Dressler, Kull and Meredith also evaluate the argument that decentralisation of management and control and devolved governance with respect to natural landscapes, national parks and other natural resources can help to support the maintenance of biodiversity and the conservation of natural spaces and, through delegating stewardship roles over resources and resource use and gaining local support for conservation initiatives, decentralisation can also assist in poverty reduction and in promoting sustainable ecological development (2006: 789-816). However, in the case of the Puerto Princesca Subterranean River National Park they found, in an examination of the history of the development of the national park and its management ‘contests in power’ between the national body responsible for the oversight and administration of natural resources, in this case the National Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and the municipal authorities in Palawan (the City Government of Puerto Princesca); the latter through the political skills and networks of Mayor Hagendorn won the contest for control. In this arena of conflict and tension and the emphasis on political brinkmanship - who wins control rather than who is best equipped to realise the objectives of conservation and how best to accomplish these - Dressler, Kull and Meredith conclude that in the case of the subterranean river decentralisation ‘does not necessarily lead to greater efficiency, equity and sustainability in the management of resources’ (ibid: 811). Instead they found that in the context of processes of decentralisation, the local political elite emerged as dominant, ethnic divisions between local and immigrant communities were exacerbated, and indigenous people were increasingly marginalised and their livelihoods undermined (ibid). Members of the local political elite in Puerto Princesca have also been buying up real estate in Sabang in the expectation of making a large profit from the expanding tourism industry there.

It is clear that if the river and the national park continue to receive increasing numbers of tourists (and these are primarily relatively well-to-do domestic visitors from the urban Philippines, particularly Manila, who come on short-stay visits) then the fragile ecosystem of the river and caves will be endangered. There are already concerns over the disturbance which larger numbers of boat-trips along the river will cause to the bat and swiftlet colonies, and the pollution and disturbance to marine populations caused by an increasing number of motor-boat trips across the bay from Sabang to the subterranean river. Sabang too is already exhibiting the early signs of the pressures generated by mass tourism, an altogether familiar scenario to other previously remote, tranquil and delicately balanced ecosystems.

***Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park***

The Tubbataha Reef Marine Park, a UNESCO WHS which covers 130,028 hectares of the central Sulu Sea, including the North and South Reefs, is a unique marine resource. It is protected all-year round by a ranger station because of its importance as an example of a pristine atoll reef with a very high density of marine species (see Subade, 2007 on the economic value of marine biodiversity). It is reputed to be one of the best diving sites in the world along with Palau and the Maldives because it provides a spectacular 100-m perpendicular wall, extensive lagoons and two coral islands. Unlike the Subterranean River the Reef Marine Park is even more remote; it has no suitable landing points, and it is only visited by experienced divers who are prepared to meet the expense of the long 12-hour sea journey from Puerto Princesca and to pay for the cost of their board on the boat during their diving sessions; this is the only available accommodation during the diving sessions because there is no suitable dry land for permanent settlement.

Given the difficulties of diving there and that only experienced divers are permitted to dive, the number of visitors is relatively small. Bookings have to be made well in advance and the diving season is relatively short (usually from March-April through to June) because of weather and sea conditions. Only designated and licensed boats are allowed to undertake the journey to the Reef Marine Park. Therefore visitor numbers are limited; roughly 1,500 divers go to the park during the short diving season and they pay an entrance fee. This is low volume specialist tourism, and does not appear to place any unmanageable pressures on the reefs, and given the environmental constraints, difficulties and expense of access, and the specialist skills that are needed to take advantage of the reefs, then it is unlikely that difficulties generated by increasing visitor numbers will increase in the foreseeable future. The main threats seem to be generated by illegal fishing, but there is no readily available data on the extent of this practice, and whether or not the park rangers are managing to control it. If it is endangering the unique biodiversity of the park then clearly the number of rangers and patrols have to be increased, and the park management authorities have to step up their monitoring processes.

***Other Philippine Sites***

The sites which we have examined obviously present a very varied picture of success and shortcomings, but overall they are not faring too badly. Puerto Princesca gives some cause for concern; Tubbataha and the Baroque churches appear to be coping relatively well with their international status. The remaining two UNESCO sites – the Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras and Vigan Town – similarly present a rather mixed set of achievements and problems. The Ifugao landscape is one of great beauty and a testament to the creative genius, energy and commitment of a remote hill tribe population. The lfugao Terraces Commission was a Presidential Commission mandated to preserve the Rice Terraces and was set up in February 1994. At present, they are under the management of the Provincial Government of Ifugao and the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA). A Rice Terraces Master Plan comprehensively covers management, conservation and socio-economic issues.

However, after seven years of inscription as a WHS from 1995 the site was placed on the World Heritage in Danger list in 2002 because of the threats posed by tourism, ironically the kind of supposedly low volume sustainable tourism which goes under the name of ecotourism and agri-tourism. It should be noted that the rice terraces have not as yet been subject to mass tourism because of the difficulty of access (visitors endure an 8- to12-hour road journey from Manila, by bus or hired vehicle, on tortuous roads rising to 3-4,000 feet above sea-level). Visiting the Ifugao areas still tends to be a touristic project for adventure and back-packing tourists and much of the accommodation in the region is still relatively basic. But it is now firmly on the tourist map as a UNESCO WHS, and, other formerly remote places like the Toraja Highlands in Sulawesi, which started their tourist life very much in the same way as the Ifugao region, with only modest numbers of enterprising tourists, then expanded exponentially into an enormously successful mass tourism site which has subsequently placed all kinds of pressures on Toraja communities and culture, as well as opening up, it has to be said, economic and political opportunities for some enterprising Toraja (Adams, 2006). Does the Toraja experience point to a likely future for the Ifugao?

The Ifugao handicraft and particularly the wood carving industry was also using increasing amounts of timber which resulted in the felling of trees in the watershed areas necessary for the protection of the rice terraces from erosion. The initial success of the tourism industry, though still modest, also encouraged the Ifugao to sell their land for commercial and residential purposes and for the building of guest-houses and other visitor accommodation on former rice land. Young people too began moving into tourism-related industries and thereby reducing the numbers available for the active agricultural labour force and the work required to farm and maintain the rice terraces. Tourism accommodation expanded rapidly in Banaue town, the main district service and market centre, which in turn required an increase in water supplies which then deprived the rice terraces of sufficient supplies to maintain the delicate and harmonious cultural landscape that had been created and sustained over some 2,000 years. The terraces require a considerable level of labour input to maintain the environmental equilibrium, but the loss of labour to agriculture and more erratic changes to weather patterns in recent years (with more extended dry periods and periods of heavy rain which cause massive erosion and landslides) have also had a dramatic effect on the Ifugao ecosystem.

Fortunately through the enormous efforts which the authorities responsible for the rice terraces have contributed as well as the work of NGOs committed to preserving the terraces as an important Philippine legacy, UNESCO removed the site from its danger list in 2012. This represents a considerable triumph for those bodies in the Philippines responsible for the maintenance and conservation of its heritage. UNESCO also funded a land use survey and a GIS programme to map changing land use and to enable sensible restrictions to be imposed on proposals to convert agricultural land to other uses, including tourism development. This in turn helped support the formulation of a management strategy for the future protection and maintenance of the rice terraces which satisfied the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and its Committee. Yet again this Philippine site appears to have been saved from some of the worst excesses of mass tourism for the time being because it is not easily accessible and it has not, as yet at least, been brought into the international tourist circuit in any substantial way. Clearly the progress of the management plan needs very close monitoring over the next few years to establish whether or not it is working in the way envisaged.

Finally, we should make a brief mention of the Historic Town of Vigan and its ‘Mestizo District’ which in most respects has been a success in UNESCO terms due again in no small part to its remoteness. Vigan does not have an airport of its own and the nearest landing place is Laoag City; currently Laoag enjoys only three flights a week from Manila which is 200 kilometres away. In order to transfer to Vigan from Laoag visitors then have to take an 80 kilometre, one-and-a-half to two-hour hour bus drive. There are now tourist packages available from Manila by air and road which include Vigan, but this is hardly approaching a volume of visitors which would endanger Vigan’s heritage.

What seems to me important about Vigan, is that it is located firmly within the UNESCO perspective on the importance of cross-cultural encounters and exchange and on productive commercial interconnections between West and East. From the time that the Portuguese and Spanish opened up trade with Asia, followed by the Dutch, British and French, and Portugal in particular from the sixteenth century began to establish strategic commercial and military footholds on the sea routes between Europe and Asia, a series of unique, multicultural and hybrid port-centres emerged. These stretch from the western coasts of India to southern China and they are all inscribed by UNESCO as WHS (they comprise the port settlements of Goa [India], Galle [Sri Lanka], Melaka [Malaysia], Hoi An [Vietnam], and Macau [Macau SAR, PRC] which were incorporated primarily into the Portuguese sea-borne empire; in addition in the Spanish trans-Pacific arena Vigan in the northern Philippines (along with Manila) provided a head link between Spanish American and East Asian trade, and in the Straits of Malacca (along with Melaka) the British colonial creation of George Town, Penang, served as an exchange and stopping off point on the India-China trade routes. What is more the UNESCO inscription of George Town and Melaka as ‘Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca’ keeps open the potential future inscription of sites along the Straits in Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. It is unlikely that what is left of the historic core of Singapore, although historically an important part of this network would be included, given the major loss of its heritage buildings but some of the other sites do have potential for inclusion.

In his well executed comparative paper on Vigan and San Nicholas, Akpedonu demonstrates that the relative success of Vigan has been due in no small part to the energy and enthusiasm of two local heritage advocacy groups (the ‘Save Vigan Ancestral Houses Association, Inc [SVAHAI) and the Kalipunan ng mga Asosasyon para sa Ikauunlad ng Vigan at Kapaligiran Foundation [KaiVigan]), well organised and led and supported in turn by the municipal government. These organisations, supported by academics and other experts, served to raise awareness of the importance of Vigan’s heritage through conferences, seminars, media campaigns, publications, documentation, research and cultural mapping, and festivals. Conservation work also began more than two decades before UNESCO inscription in 1999 (2012: 4). Vigan was listed for protection and conservation under the Cultural Properties Preservation and Protection Act 1974 and further strengthened with a Presidential Commission for the Restoration, Conservation and Preservation of Vigan in 1996. Following inscription a fully protected historic core area was established with a surrounding buffer zon.. Monitoring and the coordination of protection and conservation are undertaken by the Vigan Heritage Commission (which receives funding through the NCCA and was established in 1996 shortly before UNESCO inscription); it works closely with the municipal government and the provincial government of Ilocos Norte which own public buildings. The majority of the buildings in Vigan’s historic core are privately owned residential and business properties. The Roman Catholic Diocese also owns protected ecclesiastical properties. Therefore, the importance of establishing good, positive relations with private landlords and ensuring that they support the heritage initiatives has been crucial in the success of Vigan.

It is fortunate that most of the town’s nineteenth-century colonial streetscapes remain ‘largely intact’ which is unusual in the Philippines where much of the pre-1900 Spanish era domestic dwellings, both in urban and rural areas, ‘have been lost to wars, earthquakes, fires, natural decay, and, above all, development pressure’ (Akpedonu, 2012: 7). Some 40 years ago the San Nicolas district in Manila had more ancestral dwellings dating from the nineteenth century than the whole of Vigan put together but since then it has lost around two-thirds of its colonial architecture and much of the rest has ‘degenerated into a slum, with many of its heritage buildings either vacant and abandoned, or hopelessly overcrowded. Most buildings are in a deplorable state of disrepair and neglect… (ibid: 10). San Nicolas houses are either boarded-up and barricaded, or in advanced stages of decay’ (ibid: 12).

In stark contrast in Vigan on the other hand there has been a continuous process of restoration of buildings so that to-date almost 70 per cent of the houses there are in a good or very good condition, and where these are not used for residential purposes they have been re-adapted and re-used as museums, small hotels, shops and restaurants (ibid). There has also been a revival of local handicrafts to service the tourist industry (pottery, stoneware and weaving) and new small-scale production units have sprung up (in furniture-making, antique reproduction and souvenir manufacture) (ibid: 18).

What seems to have been a major factor in the regeneration of Vigan is heritage and cultural tourism development, and, like some of the sites in Thailand which we have already examined, the major interest comes from short-stay and weekend middle class domestic tourists. Another important element in the progress of tourism in Vigan was that there were no viable alternative forms of livelihood for local inhabitants nor were there strong pressures from the commercial sector to redevelop the town for other purposes. There was also strong support for Vigan from the Ilocano-born President Marcos and his wife Imelda in the 1970s and 1980s in that they sought to encourage a renaissance of ‘Hispanic-colonial’ culture which was to be based on the heritage of Vigan in the northern Ilocos seen as ‘the cultural heartland’ of the Ilocanos (ibid: 20). In this regard Vigan came to serve as a symbol of the ‘national’ colonial heritage of the Philippines and was used as a heritage model for the cultural policies of the Marcos regime and in their plans to develop tourism and present the positive face of the Philippines to the outside world.

Despite these successes Akpedonu outlines a range of problems which Vigan still faces, including air pollution, noise emissions and vibrations from traffic, some inappropriate repair and restoration work, and the need for restoration of the remaining heritage properties and, though the administration and management of Vigan’s heritage has been relatively successful, he suggests that there continues to be communication issues between the various organisations which have responsibility for the site, inconsistent implementation of regulations and guidelines, lack of adequate funds for conservation of significant buildings, and ‘still a high degree of ignorance by various sectors and stakeholders… [who]….. lack sensitivity, good taste and imagination’ (ibid: 35).

**Conclusion**

I commenced this paper by asking whether the competing interests, understandings and agendas of various stakeholders in the national protection and promotion of world heritage are being resolved, or indeed are capable of being resolved. Various of the case studies have revealed domestic (largely middle class) tourism, the cultural and religious needs of local populations, urbanisation pressures and the demands of development to be significant factors in intensifying the tension between the mobilisation and promotion of heritage assets and their protection and conservation as UNESCO World Heritage Sites (at least several of those under consideration here). As such our programme of research, which is still on-going, points to areas that hitherto have been neglected in mainstream heritage tourism discourse, particularly the rise of Asian tourism in Asia (see, for example, Winter, Teo and Chang, 2009b). Thus, the expectation that globally designated sites are arenas for the international tourist gaze has to be heavily qualified, particularly in the three Thai cases of Sukhothai, Ayutthaya and Khao Yai, in the cases of the Baroque Churches, Vigan and Puerto Princesca in the Philippines, and even to some extent in Melaka and George Town in Malaysia; this local, domestic or Asian dimension has implications for the ways in which we conceptualise tourism encounters and impacts in relation to heritage.

This study has also revealed in the case of Thailand, the vital importance of Bangkok as the country’s dominant metropolis, and extended metropolitanisation as an underlying economic, physical and cultural process, as a source of tourists and as a major influence on the use and development of these sites and spaces (particularly Ayutthaya and Khao Yai). The close proximity of Melaka to the extended urban area of Kuala Lumpur and the Klang Valley also generates a significant level of domestic tourism and weekend visits to Melaka (though there the site is also locked into international tourist circuits as well, as is Penang), and, though sites in the Philippines are scattered and some relatively difficult of access, the increase of tourism at Puerto Princesca and Vigan is in part due to middle class domestic tourists who come from the greater Manila area. We have already argued in the Thai case that the ways in which the appreciation, use and construction of heritage there is intertwined with the materialisation of a Thai middle class is an important theme that arguably has resonance in other parts of Southeast Asia (King and Parnwell, 2011). However, more specifically in Thailand the growth and spatial spread of middle class tourists and excursionists, and their consumption of cultural and natural heritage sites can, I believe, be interpreted as being linked to a search not only for an authentic Thai identity rooted in a past which is given expression in monumental ruins (confirmed as authentic by an international heritage body) but also a lost rural/natural Thailand. This is less evident in our other cases, but the national historical symbolisation of Melaka (primarily for Muslim Malays, but by extension the Malaysian nation as a whole) has had a crucial effect on the landscape of that historic site. And in the Philippines, though the relationship between WHS and national identity-building is not strong, the historic site of Vigan does perform, though at a more modest level, the national symbolisation which Melaka, Ayutthaya and Sukhothai perform in the Malaysia and Thai cases respectively. Let us now look a little more closely at the three cases separately by way of conclusion.

The rapid growth of domestic tourism in Thailand, and its steady inclusion of heritage sites as destinations for day trips, weekend breaks and, less frequently, longer stays (the average stay by domestic tourists to all three of the sites under study here is less than two days: [www2.tat.or.th](http://www.tat.gov.th)), has significant and distinctive implications for the management of these sites. Our preliminary observations have also revealed significant variations in management issues and responses across the three sites. Ayutthaya is the most ‘exposed’ site not only to tourism pressures but also the encroachment of urban settlement and the seepage of vendors and others keen to capitalise on the site’s economic potential. There is very real tension between the municipal authorities and the site managers in terms not only of their respective visions for the site’s future development but also responsibility for and the modalities of site management today. Khao Yai is partly protected by its status as a National Park, but has been subject to a burgeoning leisure sector development around the park perimeter which, on the one hand, has dramatically increased the numbers of people visiting the vicinity of the park on a regular basis, but also, paradoxically, keeps people entertained without the felt need to enter the park during each visit to the area. Sukhothai, as a less frequented heritage space, is arguably more manageable, but there has been criticism that the site is being turned into ‘a Buddhist Disneyland’. Yet in UNESCO terms it does seem to continue to embrace ‘timelessness’.

There are thus significant management challenges which require a nuanced and contextualised understanding of process, preference and impact. We are not convinced that current management practice is sufficiently informed by such an understanding. Very often, management approaches are guided by global ‘synoptic’ practices and standards, and are still heavily geared towards international tourists (who are the minority in all three sites). But the way these sites are seen and used varies considerably between foreign and domestic tourists (see also Evrard and Prasit, 2009a, 2009b). International tourists usually see them as global and exotic ‘must sees’, their status and authenticity authorised by international conservation agencies, whereas domestic tourists see them as sites of leisure to be spent with family and friends as well as vital elements of national status and identity and (in the case of Khao Yai) as a medium to recapture or recover (for urban middle class Thais) a lost rural or natural idyll. Ayutthaya and Sukhothai are also active religious and sacred sites and serve as a focus for Buddhist pilgrimage. Given the proximity of local urban populations and the ease with which these sites can be accessed, visits to them are often more numerous and frequent which in turn has implications for the intensity of visitor pressures and the ways in which higher levels of use can be managed and controlled.

International heritage bodies focus on the protection and conservation of ‘authentic’ representations of human achievements and natural evolution, whereas national governments deploy these sites for national political purposes and to generate tourist revenue. Thus an immediate policy recommendation that emerges from the Thai case is that UNESCO must recognise these sites as ‘living’ cultural and ‘natural’ landscapes and that any management plans must incorporate domestic tourism, local perceptions, and the involvement of local communities (see also Hitchcock, King and Parnwell, 2010). This in turn might encourage those who promote tourism to change the way in which they present these sites to the wider world.

A final point on the Thai case needs to be emphasised with regard to the preoccupations and perspectives of heritage tourism studies. Given the importance of these global sites in a national context and in relation to domestic tourism in Thailand they comprise vitally important venues for enabling us to move beyond the continuing guiding principles in tourism studies of ‘Anglo-Western centrism’ (Winter, Teo and Chang, 2009a:18) and in so doing ‘to disturb the ethnocentric foundations of the field, which emerge from the widely held assumption that tourists come from the West and that “the modern tourism industry” is essentially Western in its origins’ (Winter, 2009: 318). As Teo has recently observed we must beware ‘the dominance of Western knowledges and practices in tourism studies’ and address the widely held assumptions that there are certain ‘universalisms’ in the characteristics and motivations of tourists which in fact have been derived from Western experiences (2009: 35). Intriguingly, and in the case of Thailand, it is in those very sites which appear to be the most global that we might find that which is the most local.

In the Malaysian case, and specifically with regard to Melaka and its position in national ideological and identity formation, we can see that there has been a noticeable shift in emphasis during the last decade in the ways in which the site is presented and promoted by government agencies in the tourism and related literature. Up to the 1990s there was an official preoccupation with the importance of the Malay-Muslim contribution to the site and its place within Malaysian national historiography, illustrated in the failure to give due credit to the multicultural character of Melaka in an earlier submission to UNESCO for WHS status. Since the late 1990s, however, in the process of applying for UNESCO listing, along with George Town, and in securing inscription in 2008, the emphasis for both ‘historic cities’ has been on cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism, and on the bringing together of communities from across Asia and from Europe. This is a much more straightforward principle to demonstrate in the streetscapes and history of George Town. Nevertheless, in the St Paul’s Hill civic zone area of Melaka, public agencies, particularly those responsible for the large number of state-funded museums and the associated museum displays and exhibitions, still tend to promote a Malay-dominated communalism and the importance of Malay culture and Islam in Malaysian history. It has been left primarily to private entrepreneurs in the commercial-residential core of Melaka to present the Straits Chinese (*peranakan*) contribution to the site’s history through such enterprises as the Baba Nyonya Heritage Museum and Malaqa House Museum. A related question is: how does this emphasis in what one might term state-directed and -funded museums meet the interests and needs of visitors, many of whom are ethnic Chinese from Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia and further afield from mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan?

A major concern for UNESCO must be that places like Melaka (and we have seen this in the case of Ayutthaya as well) are struggling to cope with the pressures of visitor numbers and the official thrust to promote economic growth seen most directly in the large-scale, high rise developments on reclaimed land around St Paul’s Hill. These major and intrusive developments are acting to change the ambience and landscape of the sites. Already in the case of Melaka the outlook from St Paul’s Hill shows a modern urban, high rise vista with no view of the coast line and sea which gave this harbour state its historical rationale. The further pressures generated by traffic which runs through the heart of the site, roadside parking in the historic core and the sheer volume of visitors at weekends also reduce the experience of walking and seeing the heritage buildings in relative safety and ease.

In the case of the Philippines, the UNESCO sites demonstrate a rather mixed set of findings in relation to what is required of a globally important site. Importantly the sites are relatively remote and scattered, a geographical fact which serves to reduce the pressure on them. There is not as yet a large scale international tourism industry and international tourists do not go in any numbers to the main heritage sites other than to San Agustin in Intramuros. Small numbers find their way to Vigan and until the transport infrastructure is improved from Manila to the northern Ilocos region then visitor numbers are unlikely to increase rapidly. The other Baroque churches are also off the beaten track. Adventure tourists and backpackers do find their way to the Ifugao rice terraces and to the Puerto Princesca Subterranean River National Park, but again not in large numbers. However, the warning signs are there that the Puerto Princesca national park has begun to exceed its carrying capacity and the municipal authorities and UNESCO must address these problems before they become too severe. The main visitors to these sites are invariably domestic tourists, and many of these, like visitors to the main heritage sites in Thailand from the Bangkok region, are well-to-do middle class Filipinos from the greater Manila area. They usually visit the sites, particularly Vigan and the Subterranean River on short, often weekend packages of one or two nights. In the case of Vigan a flight has to be arranged to Laoag, the main urban centre in Ilocos Norte and then a day-long bus tour to Vigan or an overnight stay; visits to the coastal area of Pagudpud is also often included in these packages along with visits to heritage sites in Laoag City itself. With regard to Tubbataha it is well protected with very modest visitor numbers at a restricted time of the year for the diving season, though the main threat to marine life is from illegal fishing.

Overall then tourism pressures are much less in the Philippines than in other parts of Southeast Asia. Sites do not play such a large political and symbolic role in the Philippines (though Vigan is a partial exception here) as they do elsewhere (for example in Melaka, Angkor, and Ayutthaya). Major sites are not indigenous but Spanish- and Chinese- influenced, though we must qualify this notion of an externally-derived culture in appreciating the uniquely hybrid character of lowland Christian Philippine culture. Having said this additional major cultural and heritage sites on the Philippines Tentative List are Spanish-derived: the Jesuit churches (1993); the extension to the Baroque churches with five more added (2006); the Basilica of San Sebastian (2006); and Spanish fortifications (2006); In this regard the Philippine government wants to expand tourism and its heritage assets will obviously play a part in this strategy.

One very important finding overall in this cross-national research programme is that the international or global dimension of UNESCO World Heritage Sites, in that they are selected on the basis of their ‘universal human value’ and they become foci of interest and concern outside a given nation-state, must be qualified by the importance of the national symbolic dimension and the role these sites are assigned in the construction of the national imaginary. Perhaps most importantly many of the sites, and especially the cultural, historic and religious sites, are visited by local tourists in ever increasing numbers. More research needs to be undertaken on the views, interests and habits of this important category of visitors to enable a better understanding of how the sites are being used, developed and presented and how they are perceived and interpreted. For too long the international dimension of world heritage has been emphasised at the expense of the local, domestic or indigenous context of these sites.

**Appendix 1**

**UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Tentative Lists for Southeast Asia**

**Philippines (1985) 29 sites**

**Lao PDR (1987) 2 sites**

**Thailand (1987) 4 sites**

**Viet Nam (1987) 7 sites**

**Malaysia (1988) 2 sites**

**Indonesia (1989) 26 sites**

**Cambodia (1991) 9 sites**

**Myanmar (1994) 8 sites**

**Singapore (2012) 1 site**

**Brunei Darussalam (2011) has no tentative sites**

**Philippines (1985)**

**29 Tentative List site; Last Revision: 20/12/2009**

[**Agusan Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5023/)

[**Angono Triglyphs (15/08/1993)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/519/)

[**Apo Reef Natural Park (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5033/)

[**Baroque Churches of the Philippines (Extension) (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/3860/)

[**Batanes Protected landscapes and seascapes (15/08/1993)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/521/)

[**Butuan Archeological Sites (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/2071/)

[**Chocolate Hills Natural Monument (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5024/)

[**Coron Island Natural Biotic Area (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5035/)

[**El Nido-Taytay Managed Resource Protected Area (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5034/)

[**Jesuit Churches of the Philippines (15/08/1993)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/514/)

[**Kabayan Mummy Burial Caves (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/2070/)

[**Ligawasan Marsh (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5025/)

[**Mount Apo Natural Park (21/12/2009)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5485/)

[**Mount Hamiguitan Range Wildlife Sanctuary (21/12/2009)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5487/)

[**Mt. Iglit-Baco National Park (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5036/)

[**Mt. Malindang Range Natural Park (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5029/)

[**Mt. Matutum Protected Landscape (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5028/)

[**Mt. Pulag National Park (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5030/)

[**Neolithic Shell Midden Sites in Lal-lo and Gattaran Municipalities (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5019/)

[**Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park and outlying areas inclusive of the buffer zone (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5037/)

[**Paleolithic Archaeological Sites in Cagayan Valley (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/2069/)

[**Panglao Island, Bohol (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5027/)

[**Petroglyphs and Petrographs of the Philippines (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5018/)

[**San Sebastian Church (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/518/)

[**Spanish Colonial Fortifications of the Philippines (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/520/)

[**Taal Volcano Protected landscape, Batangas (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5026/)

[**The Maranao Settlement of Tugaya (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5017/)

[**The Tabon Cave Complex and all of Lipuun (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1860/)

[**Turtle Islands Wildlife Sanctuary (16/05/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5032/)

**Lao PDR (1987)**

**2 Tentative List sites; **Last Revision:**** **25/03/1992**

[**Sites Mégalithiques de la province de Xieng Khouang (25/03/1992)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/390/)

[**That Luang de Vientiane (25/03/1992)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/391/)

**Thailand (1987)**

**4 Tentative List sites; **Last Revision:** 28/08/2012**

[**Kaeng Krachan Forest Complex (KKFC) (07/02/2011)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5593/)

[**Phimai, its Cultural Route and the Associated Temples of Phanomroong and Muangtam (01/04/2004)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1919/)

[**Phuphrabat Historical Park (01/04/2004)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1920/)

[**Wat Phra Mahathat Woramahawihan, Nakhon Si Thammarat (28/08/2012)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5752/)

**Viet Nam (1987)**

**7 Tentative List sites**; ****Last Revision:**** **30/09/2011**

[**Ba Be Lake (15/11/1997)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/957/)

[**Cat Ba Archipelago (30/09/2011)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5638/)

[**Cat Tien National Park (21/06/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5070/)

[**Con Moong Cave (21/06/2006)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5072/)

[**Huong Son Complex of Natural Beauty and Historical Monuments (15/07/1991)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/960/)

[**The Area of Old Carved Stone in Sapa (15/11/1997)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/959/)

[**Trang An Scenic Landscape Complex (30/09/2011)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5637/)

**Malaysia (1988)**

**2 Tentative List sites**; **Last Revision:** **04/01/2010**

[**Lanjak Entimau Wildlife Sanctuary (LEWS) and Batang Ai National Park (BANP) (23/06/2004)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1988/)

[**The Taman Negara National Park of Peninsular Malaysia (25/06/2004)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1921/)

**Indonesia (1989)**

**26 Tentative List sites**; **Last Revision:** **06/10/2009**

[**Banda Islands (07/02/2005)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/2004/)

[**Banten Ancient City (19/10/1995)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/286/)

[**Bawomataluo Site (06/10/2009)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5463/)

[**Belgica Fort (19/10/1995)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/297/)

[**Besakih (19/10/1995)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/296/)

[**Betung Kerihun National Park (Transborder Rainforest Heritage of Borneo) (02/02/2004)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/1871/)

[**Bunaken National Park (07/02/2005)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/2002/)

[**Derawan Islands (07/02/2005)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/2007/)

[**Elephant Cave (19/10/1995)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/299/)

[**Great Mosque of Demak (19/10/1995)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/289/)

[**Gunongan Historical Park (19/10/1995)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/300/)

[**Muara Takus Compound Site (06/10/2009)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5464/)

[**Muarajambi Temple Compound (06/10/2009)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5465/)

[**Ngada traditional house and megalithic complex (19/10/1995)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/293/)

[**Penataran Hindu Temple Complex (19/10/1995)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/294/)

[**Prehistoric Cave Sites in Maros-Pangkep (06/10/2009)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5467/)

[**Pulau Penyengat Palace Complex (19/10/1995)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/298/)

[**Raja Ampat Islands (07/02/2005)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/2003/)

[**Ratu Boko Temple Complex (19/10/1995)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/287/)

[**Sukuh Hindu Temple (19/10/1995)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/295/)

[**Taka Bonerate National Park (07/02/2005)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/2005/)

[**Tana Toraja Traditional Settlement (06/10/2009)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5462/)

[**Trowulan - Former Capital City of Majapahit Kingdom (06/10/2009)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5466/)

[**Wakatobi National Park (07/02/2005)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/2006/)

[**Waruga Burial Complex (19/10/1995)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/292/)

[**Yogyakarta Palace Complex (19/10/1995)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/291/)

**Cambodia (1991)**

**9 Tentative List sites**; **Last Revision:** **01/09/1992**

[**Ensemble de Banteay Chmar (01/09/1992)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/68/)

[**Ensemble de Banteay Prei Nokor (01/09/1992)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/69/)

[**Ensemble de Beng Mealea (01/09/1992)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/66/)

[**Ensemble du Prah Khan de Kompong Svay (01/09/1992)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/67/)

[**Groupe de Sambor Prei Kuk (01/09/1992)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/61/)

[**Le site de Koh Ker (01/09/1992)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/62/)

[**Site d'Angkor Borei et Phnom Da (01/09/1992)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/64/)

[**Site d'Oudong (01/09/1992)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/65/)

[**Site des Kulen (01/09/1992)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/63/)

**Myanmar (1994)**

**8 Tentative List sites**; **Last Revision: 04/10/1996**

[**Ancient cities of Upper Myanmar: Innwa, Amarapura, Sagaing, Mingun, Mandalay (04/10/1996)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/823/)

[**Badah-lin and associated caves (04/10/1996)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/822/)

[**Bagan Archaeological Area and Monuments (04/10/1996)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/819/)

[**Inle Lake (04/10/1996)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/825/)

[**Mon cities: Bago, Hanthawaddy (04/10/1996)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/826/)

[**Myauk-U Archaeological Area and Monuments (04/10/1996)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/824/)

[**Pyu Cities: Beikthano-Myo, Halin, Tharay-Khit-taya (Sri Ksetra) (04/10/1996)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/820/)

[**Wooden Monasteries of Konbaung Period: Ohn Don, Sala, Pakhangyi, Pakhannge, Legaing, Sagu, Shwe-Kyaung (Mandalay) (04/10/1996)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/821/)

**Singapore (2012)**

**1 Tentative List site; Last Revision: 07/12/2012**

[**Singapore Botanic Gardens (07/12/2012)**](http://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5786/)

**Appendix 2**

**UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage (http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/)**

**Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity**

**Philippines**

**Hudhud chants of the Ifugao (2008)**

**Darangen epic of the Maranao people of Lake Lanao (2008)**

**Viet Nam**

**Nha Nhac, Vietnamese Court Music (2008)**

**The space of gong culture (2008)**

**Quan Ho Bac Ninh folk songs (2009)**

**Gong festival of Phu Dong and Soc temples (2010)**

**Malaysia**

**Mak Yong theatre**

**Indonesia**

**Wayang puppet theatre (2008)**

**Indonesian kris (2008)**

**Indonesian batik (2009)**

**Indonesian angklung (2010)**

**Cambodia**

**Sbek Thom, Khmer shadow theatre (2008)**

**Royal ballet of Cambodia (2008)**

**List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding**

**Viet Nam**

**Xoan singing of Phu Tho province (2011)**

**Vietnam Ca tru singing (2011)**

**Worship of Hung kings in Phu Tho (2012)**

**Indonesia**

**Saman dance (2011)**

**Noken multifunctional knotted or woven bag, handcraft of the people of Papua (2012)**

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