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FOCUS TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT

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FOCUS TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT

The current ASEAS issue presents critical discussions on the topic of tourism and development in Southeast Asia. Tourism in the region has caused increasing socioeconomic inequality and vast disruptions to local ecosystems, societies, and cultures, above all through its rapid expansion that often exceeds local carrying capacity limits. This is often supported through injections of capital by external funding bodies with little local initiative. At the same time, there appears to be an increasing awareness in Southeast Asian tourism that the once 'toured' need to experience greater levels of decision-making and power in order for tourism to work as an effective catalyst for development. Researching tourism in Southeast Asia is no longer limited to understanding its impacts as well as local responses and mitigation strategies, but now also focuses on finding practical ways for how tourism can serve as an engine for development. This issue explores a variety of concerns connected to tourism as a tool for development by discussing social marketing in Northern Vietnam, impacts of a mega event in Eastern Indonesia, host-guest encounters in community-based tourism in Northern Thailand, and commodification and politicization of heritage in the context of tourism in Hanoi, Vietnam.

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Claudia Dolezal & Alexander Trupp

▸ Dolezal, C., & Trupp, A. (2015). Tourism and development in Southeast Asia. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies, 8*(2), 117-124.

Over the last decades, Southeast Asia has experienced a rapid growth in international tourist arrivals from 21.2 million in 1990 to 96.7 million in 2014 (UNWTO, 2015a, p. 4). Tourism is no longer only regarded as a mere income generator, creator of jobs, or socio-cultural phenomenon, but also serves as a tool to foster beneficial and locally driven development in all its dimensions (Scheyvens, 2002). Recent years have shown a steady increase in tourism being used as a tool for development and poverty alleviation in the world's less developed countries (Darma Putra & Hitchcock, 2012; Holden, 2013; Novelli, 2015). Organizations such as the World Bank, UN agencies, NGOs, and governments put tourism high up on the agenda to achieve objectives of livelihood diversification, community empowerment, poverty alleviation, and development (Christie et al., 2013; Spenceley & Meyer, 2012; UNWTO, 2013). Understandings of development have significantly changed over the years, moving beyond ideas of economic growth towards the inclusion of social and environmental aspects. As part of the post-2015 agenda, development focuses on the eradication of poverty and hunger as well as on health, education, gender equality, sanitation, clean energy, and economic growth (UN, 2015). It further includes action against climate change, responsible consumption and production, the reduction of inequalities, and the conservation of the environment (UN, 2015). The UN includes tourism as a key activity to contribute to the achievement of its former Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the newly implemented Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), thus contributing to tourism being "firmly positioned in the post-2015 development agenda" (UNWTO, 2015b, p. 2).

With broader shifts in development paradigms from top-down and externally-driven development to alternative, participatory, and 'homegrown' development (Potter et al., 2008), tourism in the developing world has equally experienced significant changes (Telfer & Sharpley, 2008). The alternative development paradigm prevalent in the 1980s, putting emphasis on local participation, people, and bottom-up development (Chambers, 1983), created the grounds for the emergence of alternative forms of tourism including ecotourism, sustainable tourism, pro-poor tourism, and community-based tourism (CBT) – all of which ultimately aim at generating more beneficial development for local populations (Reid, 2003).

The rise of small-scale participatory tourism initiatives – with the larger aim of increasing developmental benefits from tourism – was also fostered through negative socioeconomic and ecological impacts of mass tourism in Southeast Asia. These include the unequal distribution of economic benefits from tourism

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or the overexploitation of natural resources for uncontrolled tourism resorts such as in Pattaya, Thailand, or Kuta in Bali, Indonesia. While Harrison (2015) recently stated that "alternative tourism will never replace mass tourism" (p. 53), one can at the same time observe a growing interest in sustainable forms of tourism in Southeast Asia. In countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia, for instance, CBT is used as an alternative tourism strategy to mass tourism, making room for local ownership and fostering sustainability and cross-cultural understanding (Boonratana, 2010; Dolezal, 2014; REST, 2013). In the Lao PDR, ecotourism and CBT have officially played an important role in national tourism planning as the local government announced its plan to become a "world renowned destination specializing in forms of sustainable tourism" (Lao National Tourism Administration, 2004, p. 6).

There appears to be an increasing awareness in Southeast Asian tourism that the once 'toured' need to experience greater levels of decision-making and power in order for tourism to work as an effective catalyst for development. As a consequence, tourism in Southeast Asia has experienced a stronger focus on development aspects, both within academia and in practice. Researching tourism in the developing world is no longer limited to understanding its impacts as well as local responses and mitigation strategies, but actually focuses on finding practical ways for how tourism can serve as an engine for development.

Nevertheless, tourism for development experiences regular criticism. One of these criticisms is that alternative or sustainable forms of tourism are often vaguely defined, referring "to anything which is not mass tourism" (Harrison, 2015, p. 64). In fact, alternative forms of tourism are often condemned for being too small-scale, for leading to tokenistic rather than real participation, and for increasing local inequalities (Goodwin, 2009; Tosun, 2005). In addition, tourism often increases pressure on natural resources in localities characterized by scarcity. For example, Cole (2012) illustrated this issue in regards to water equity and tourism in Bali, Indonesia. For ecotourism in Indonesia more generally, Erb (2001) has demonstrated that the environment is perceived as a resource to be exploited, even though the kind of tourism under study was aimed at sustainable development. In addition to environmental impacts that compromise sustainability in Southeast Asia (Parnwell, 2009), tourism leads to changing socio-cultural dynamics, including transformations in gender relations (Chan, 2009), cultural commodification (Cole, 2008; Trupp, 2011), and the use of heritage for economic and political ends (Hitchcock, King, & Parnwell, 2010).

Despite these negative consequences, residents' agency in tourism and development is increasingly acknowledged, leading to a shift from simplistic binary divisions of power relations between tourists and residents, towards more nuanced analyses of tourism. Picard's (1990, 1996) work on tourism in Bali, for instance, has demonstrated that instead of destroying Balinese culture, tourism became a part of it and created a "touristic culture" (Picard, 1990, p. 42), which, in turn, reinforced Balinese cultural identity. Dolezal's research on CBT in Bali further reveals that residents empower themselves by playing with notions of authenticity to attract tourists and eventually be part of the global tourism market. Trupp (2015) shows how ethnic minority street vendors in Thailand's urban tourist areas mobilize their social and cultural capital and become successful micro entrepreneurs. These examples lead us to think of tourism not as an external force impacting upon societies but as an internal dynamic, with residents constituting agents rather than taking passive roles in the tourism en-

counter. It is therefore key to acknowledge and understand residents' agency as well as local factors that constitute structural constraints in those places where tourism serves as an engine for development.

An increasing number of studies put local political contexts into the center of their analysis, investigating how tourism can and must be in line with wider national policies in order to ensure developmental success (Muangasame & McKercher, 2015). Policy makers and tourism developers in Southeast Asia (and elsewhere) view tourism as a way of increasing foreign investment and economic growth (Harrison, 2015). At the same time, Richter (2009) suggests that "governments can and must do more to make opportunities for their own people to travel and have recreation" (p. 145). Fostering domestic and cross-border tourism in Southeast Asia is one of the strategies to increase the local benefits from tourism, particularly when taking into consideration the increasing spending power of some Southeast Asian economies (King, 2015; Winter, 2009). Domestic tourism not only stimulates local economies through increased tax revenue but also avoids the use of long-haul flights, ultimately enabling tourism to follow principles of sustainability. Between 2003 and 2011, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) provided USD 58.7 million in the form of loans and grant assistance for the development of the tourism industry in the Greater Mekong Sub Region (ADB, 2012, p. 11). However, the positive impacts of such investments for local people also need to be questioned, as the ADB's program in the region features "a strong favour of neoliberalism", a focus on a mere increase of tourist numbers through cross-border travel, integration of national markets, and development of the private sector (Harrison, 2015, p. 62).

Despite the positive impacts of tourism on residents and their livelihoods, it remains questionable to what extent tourism can really contribute to development in all its dimensions. A study by Novelli and Hellwig (2011) on the perceived contribution of tourism to the MDGs shows that tourism largely neglects health issues, such as prevalent diseases (e.g. HIV and malaria), child mortality, and women's health. More effort therefore needs to come from those agents who specifically aim to tackle these aspects of development, as well as from the tourism industry itself, in order for tourism to cast wider health benefits. Partnerships with development agencies and NGOs not directly related to tourism are a way forward for tourism to yield wider developmental benefits (Saarinen, Rogerson, & Manwa, 2013). This proves crucial not only in practice but also in academia, where multi- and interdisciplinary studies are increasingly supported (Hitchcock et al., 2009).

By bringing together experts from a variety of backgrounds, this special issue contributes to the understanding of tourism's dynamics in Southeast Asia. It addresses a range of concerns connected to tourism as a tool for development by drawing on case studies from Thailand, Vietnam, and Indonesia.

V. Dao Truong and Michael Hall start the discussion on tourism and development by focusing on social marketing and its potential for poverty alleviation. By drawing on a case study of Sapa town in the northern highlands of Vietnam, their article discusses residents' perception of poverty and its causes to subsequently explore whether social marketing could be a potential solution. The authors argue for an increased use of social marketing as a tool that could potentially empower residents and bring their oftentimes marginalized voices to the attention of decision-makers.

Maribeth Erb contributes with an ethnographic study of tourism in Nusa Teng-

gara Timur province by investigating 'Sail Komodo' – a marine tourism event aimed at boosting tourist numbers and raising local standards of living in eastern Indonesia. The author reveals the contradictory nature of tourism as a tool for development, illustrated by examples such as the displacement of tourists at the event through government officials' attendance and the lacking positive local impact that was initially promised. By analyzing tourism through the lens of a local event, Erb ultimately illustrates how tourism is conceptualized as "the reason to offer development programs, instead of seeing tourism itself as a pathway to development" (Erb, 2015, p. 159)

Claudia Dolezal shifts the discussion in another direction by offering an analysis of CBT in Northern Thailand, moving away from the oftentimes problematic nature of CBT and towards investigating the tourism encounter as a potential space for change. By drawing on MacCannell's work on the tourism encounter and Said's *Orientalism* in relation to tourism, her contribution questions the theoretical grounding that has long influenced investigations of social interactions in tourism. She argues that new forms of tourism such as CBT can make room for more beneficial resident-tourist relationships. As a consequence, some of the theories that have influenced our thinking of the tourism encounter need to be adapted or reconsidered in light of newer, more beneficial forms of tourism. CBT therefore is not only a tool for residents to empower themselves in inventing and managing their own tourism product in order to reap the economic benefits of tourism, but at the same time can lead to deeper and more meaningful relationships between residents and tourists.

Huong T. Bui and Timothy J. Lee's case study of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long in Hanoi, Vietnam, investigates the processes of turning heritage resources into tourism products. The authors pay particular attention to the relationship between heritage, identity, and tourism by investigating the process of commodification and politicization of UNESCO World Heritage in Vietnam. Rather than being demand-driven in its nature, Bui and Lee argue that the interpretation and presentation of heritage at the Citadel is governed by an ideological doctrine. Based on the generated insights, the authors ultimately offer recommendations for the management of heritage in Vietnam's tourism industry.

In the section 'Research Workshop', Felix M. Bergmeister offers insights into his ongoing PhD project, investigating the construction and negotiation of "tourism imaginaries" (Salazar, 2012) in popular guidebooks and independent travel-blogs. In doing so, he analyses power relations as part of cultural representation in Southeast Asian tourism, thereby unraveling dominant Western discourses. At the same time, his research reveals insights into the possibilities that new media offers for representation, being more experience-based and forming ideas about Southeast Asian countries in new and very particular ways.

'In Dialogue' features an interview by Christina Vogler with Nancy Lindley, head of the *Chiang Mai Expats Club* and coordinator of *Lanna Care Net*, a network providing assistance for elderly foreigners settling down in Thailand. The interview offers insights into the expats community, the challenges that retirees from abroad are facing in Chiang Mai, and the system of care for elderly foreigners. The contribution thus blurs the boundaries between tourism and migration and discusses what happens when tourists become residents in the places they visit.

This special issue of the Austrian Journal for South-East Asian Studies therefore

constitutes a contribution to the wider debate on tourism and development by revealing new insights into the dynamics of tourism in Southeast Asia. Based on case studies conducted in Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam, this collection of papers highlights the importance of a local voice in development intervention to ensure developmental success. It elaborates some of the positive impacts that tourism can create in rural areas, while also uncovering a number of local paradoxes. At the same time, this issue revealed the need for further research that specifically focuses on best practice examples and draws on local expertise in order to maximize the benefits of tourism in the post-2015 era.

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Exploring the Poverty Reduction Potential of Social Marketing in Tourism Development

V. Dao Truong & C. Michael Hall

▸ Truong, V. D., & Hall, C. M. (2015). Exploring the poverty reduction potential of social marketing in tourism development. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, *8*(2), 125-142.

Although social marketing has been demonstrated to be an effective tool of behavior change in a variety of contexts, its poverty reduction potential in tourism development has captured limited research attention. This paper explores the potential contribution of social marketing to tourism-related poverty alleviation in Sapa, Vietnam. It does so by creating an understanding of how local residents perceive poverty, then exploring whether social marketing could be a potential solution in the case of Sapa. Through participant observations and semi-structured interviews, this study reveals that local people perceive poverty as a lack of rice and/or income and ascribe it to both internal and external factors. Local women often follow tourists to sell handicrafts, causing discomfort for tourists and driving them away from certain destinations. Insufficient capital and farming land are also identified as a critical barrier to poverty reduction. This study argues that by understanding the poor people's perspectives on poverty, we can identify meaningful approaches to poverty alleviation. Thereby, social marketing can be one of the tools to bring the marginalized voice of poor people to the attention of decision-makers.

Keywords: Behavior Change; Poverty Alleviation; Social Marketing; Sustainable Tourism; Vietnam

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INTRODUCTION

Social marketing is the use of marketing methods to bring about voluntary behavioral change in a target audience in order to achieve a public good. Although perhaps most widely recognized in public health, since the term was first used by Kotler and Zaltman (1971), its applicability has been explored in areas such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, nutrition, physical activity, substance abuse, tobacco, recycling, consumption reduction, and environmental conservation (Andreasen, 2002, 2006; Hastings, 2007; Lee & Miller, 2012; McKenzie-Mohr, Schultz, Lee, & Kotler, 2012; Truong, 2014; Truong, Garry, & Hall, 2014). Recent debates have highlighted the need for the field to embrace a wider range of areas (Truong, Dang, Hall, & Dong, 2015), including a growing interest in social marketing in tourism (Hall, 2014, 2016; Musgrave & Henderson, 2015; Truong & Hall, 2013, 2015). Nevertheless, despite the small but significant engagement of marketing researchers with development studies and poverty alleviation issues (Kilbourne, 2004; Mittelstaedt, Kilbourne, & Mittelstaedt, 2006), little research has investigated the potential contribution of social marketing to poverty alleviation in tourism development (Hall, 2014; Truong, 2015; Truong & Hall, 2013; Truong,

Hall, & Garry, 2014). This paper examines the poverty reduction potential of social marketing in tourism development, taking the town of Sapa, Vietnam, a destination with a substantial level of poverty (Sapa District People's Committee [SPC], 2009), as a case study. By examining how residents understand the causes of poverty, this paper suggests that the views of poor people need to be better considered in using tourism as a means of poverty alleviation. They are the ones, who, from a social marketing perspective, are the target audience for agency interventions, which ultimately enable more appropriate approaches to poverty alleviation. The article first reviews the relevant literature on social marketing to create an understanding of the concept. Next, it offers a brief description of the case study area and methods before presenting the main findings. The paper then suggests potential social marketing interventions and their implications before concluding.

SOCIAL MARKETING AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION

Marketing is usually perceived as vital for firm or place based promotion in tourism, rather than as a means to alleviate poverty. However, its domain has long-since broadened from its economic focus. Kotler and Levy (1969) influentially suggested that the marketing concept conveys two different meanings. First, as the received view of marketing, it is associated with selling, distributing, influencing, and persuading. Secondly, and more pertinently for the present paper, marketing is connected to serving and satisfying people's needs and enriching people's lives through better promotion of arts, cultural, educational and health services, and effective natural resource utilization. Marketing is therefore inherently concerned with non-business interests and assisting organizations and communities in satisfying societal needs.

Although it has seen only limited recognition in the wider development literature (e.g. Desai & Potter, 2008), the relationship between marketing and development has been examined in a number of studies (Duhaime, McTavish, & Ross, 1985; Hosley & Wee, 1988; Kilbourne, 2004). There are two main perspectives on the role of marketing in development. The first one focuses on economic development (Klein, 1985), especially distribution channels. The second one, which forms the focus of the present paper, is the long recognized role of marketing in linking social and economic goals, especially with respect to poverty reduction (Lavidge, 1970; Lazer, 1996).

Over 50 years ago, Lavidge (1970) argued that marketing had more roles than only facilitating consumer desire, including facilitating the drive for social justice by, for instance, discouraging harmful activities; and helping counter or mitigate the negative consequences of unsustainable social and environmental practices (Hall, 2016). Marketing is concerned with the struggle of poor people for subsistence – because it is impossible to satisfy people's other needs if they suffer from hunger and starvation – and can be used to promote social and cultural services to enable people to develop their potential. Finally, it encourages the adoption of new behaviors and approaches to protect and improve well-being at *micro* (individual), *meso* (community) and *macro* (society) levels (Hall, 2013; Truong & Hall, 2013).

The exchanges on which marketing is focused are an essential *social* activity that go beyond monetary exchange (Bagozzi, 1975). Therefore, it is inappropriate to solely define marketing in terms of the economic ends of buying, selling, and distributing

goods and services (Lazer & Kelley, 1973). Although commercial and social marketing have developed parallel to each other (Andreasen, 2012), examples of public good initiatives that marketing contributes to include: institutional change (Savitt, 1988), conservation (Hall, 2014; Truong, Willemsen, Dang, Nguyen, & Hall, 2016), poverty reduction (Lavidge, 1970; Lazer, 1996), improved health behaviors (Hastings, 2007), anti-corruption (Hosley & Wee, 1988), sustainable behaviors (McKenzie-Mohr, 1994, 2011; Musgrave & Henderson, 2015), and quality-of-life and well-being (Andreasen, 2006; Ger, 1992).

Research suggests that since the late 1960s elements of social marketing have been used in public health initiatives and interventions in developing countries (Hastings, 2007; MacFadyen, Stead, & Hastings, 1999; Truong, 2014), and have helped promote a range of programs, including distributing contraceptives and treated mosquito nets to at-risk people, as well as targeting a range of HIV/AIDS and sanitation programs. Such programs often positively changed the behavior of the target audience, which was important for improving living conditions and community development, and although not specifically aimed at poverty alleviation they positively affected the poverty situation of the target market (Kotler & Lee, 2009). For example, social marketing programs aimed at family planning were implemented in India, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam, where contraceptives were offered at a low price and education and mass communication components were developed to encourage local people to reduce birth rates as a means to alleviate poverty (MacFadyen, 1999).

Other programs also utilized social marketing techniques although they did not label themselves in social marketing terms. One of the best known examples is the Grameen Bank's adoption of a marketing approach to poverty alleviation in Bangladesh where microloans were provided to the bottom 25% lowest income earners of the population, consisting mainly of women (Alwitt, 1995; Yunus, 2007). A marketing mix was used including target segmentation, product development, positioning, relationship marketing, and word-of-mouth communication (Dholakia & Dholakia, 2001). Although loans did not guarantee success, it did contribute to poverty-escaping behavior given that local households gained income from developing their own micro businesses (Yunus, 2007). At the *upstream* level (institutional change), the Bank urged policy-makers to enlarge the narrow profit maximization approach to achieve social benefits (and still contribute to profits). Although not always successful in lifting people out of poverty (Karnani, 2007), the Grameen Bank experience has influenced development agencies and financial institutions to adopt an approach that is influenced by social marketing and target audience oriented (Koku, 2009; Lee & Miller, 2012).

A key element that social marketing brings to poverty alleviation strategies is the need to understand the target audience in order to increase the likelihood of successful behavioral change by appropriately shaping the intervention. A social marketing approach is different from pro-poor tourism (PPT) or other development initiatives because of its much stronger focus on the targeting and design of interventions to specific audiences and helping to articulate the voice of the poor (Annis, 1991; Rangan & McCaffrey, 2004). Poor people are often excluded from the planning stages of social and economic projects that are meant to benefit them, while donor's needs tend to take precedence (Annis, 1991; Rangan & McCaffrey, 2004; Truong et al., 2014).

Therefore, the adoption of social marketing practices can (1) help empower the poor by incorporating their voice in the early stage of a project and (2) improve the likelihood of the success of any policy intervention by ensuring that the intervention appropriately fits the needs and attributes of the targeted group (the audience or segment in social marketing terms). Six criteria also act as benchmarks for social marketing interventions (Andreasen, 2002; Truong & Hall, 2013):

- Behavior change goal(s): Programs consider behavioral change as an objective and a primary outcome indicator;
- Audience research and segmentation: Programs are designed based on understanding of audience needs and wants. Formative research is conducted to achieve this target. Program interventions are pre-tested. The audience is divided into homogenous segments;
- Social marketing mix: Programs use the set of four Ps in the traditional marketing mix (Product, Price, Place, Promotion). Other Ps may include People and Policy;
- Exchange: Something of value is offered to the audience to motivate behavioral change. It may be tangible (e.g. financial incentives) or intangible (e.g. emotional satisfaction);
- Upstream targeting: Programs seek to influence other people relating to the target audience (e.g. local authorities, professional organizations, policymakers); and
- Competing behaviors: Competing behaviors are considered by program interventions. They may be internal (e.g. the target audience's current behavior) and/or external (e.g. ineffective policies). Strategies are developed to eliminate or minimize these factors.

Arguably one of the most distinguishing features of a social marketing approach is the attention given to market segmentation and target audience research so that the social marketing mix is clearly designed to provide a clear and workable exchange proposition that will potentially succeed with the audience (Hall, 2014). However, even though many tourism projects, including with respect to PPT, utilize marketing principles in either whole or part to achieve social and behavioral change (Truong & Hall, 2013), surprisingly the explicit connection between tourism and social marketing has been little addressed (Hall, 2014; Truong & Hall, 2013, 2015; Truong et al., 2014).

While there is increased interest in the role and responsibility of national governments as well as international development agencies in poverty alleviation (Hill & Adrangi, 1999), Kotler, Roberto, and Leisner (2006) argue that poverty remains in part because some people tend to maintain "poverty-staying behavior" (p. 235). For example, a survey of poor people in Pakistan revealed that in attempting to engage in income-generating activities the local poor tend to choose a low-risk and low-income option rather than a higher-risk but higher-income one. The low-risk and low-income activity is considered a form of poverty-staying behavior (Kotler et al., 2006, p. 235). Expanding on this, Kotler and Lee (2009) place poverty at the center of social marketing efforts and adopt a conventional marketing approach to poverty al-

leviation, from situation analysis, target segmentation, goals and objectives setting to implementation, evaluation and monitoring. Thereby, various dimensions of poverty (e.g. socio-economic, environmental) are examined, also including health, education, and family planning issues. Most importantly, Kotler and Lee (2009) regard poor people as needing to be active participants in identifying and solving their own problems. While this paper does not share the notion that individuals are fully responsible for their own condition, instead emphasizing the importance of structural and institutional reasons for poverty, it does support the notion that poor people should be active participants in the development and implementation of poverty reduction interventions, including in tourism (Hall, 2014). In order to do so, it is important to first of all understand how residents perceive the causes of poverty and see whether social marketing could be a potential contributor to poverty alleviation. The next section describes the case study area for this research.

CASE STUDY AREA

Covering an area of 68,329 ha, Sapa is located in the mountainous province of Lao Cai and is about 400 km from Vietnam's capital of Hanoi. Administratively, Sapa consists of Sapa town and 17 communes with a total population of 53,549 inhabitants (General Statistics Office of Vietnam [GSOV], 2010). Each commune has a people's committee and a people's council that control several villages. Besides the national majority of Kinh (Vietnamese) people that account for 17.9% of population, Sapa is home to several ethnic minority groups: H'Mong (51.7%), Red Dzao (23%), Tay (4.7%), Dzay (1.4%), Xa Pho (1.1%), and other ethnic groups (0.2%) (SPC, 2009).

The regional economy has undergone substantial change, with the contribution of agro-forestry and fishing to Sapa's economy decreasing from 44.68% in 2000 to 29.83% in 2010, while that of tourism and services increased from 48.86% to 58.68% in the same period. Although Sapa's household poverty rate decreased from 48.7% (2005) to 26.91% (2009), the national poverty rate is 9.6%, where poor people are defined as those who earn less than VND (Vietnamese Dong) 500,000 (USD 23.8) and 400,000 (USD 19) per month in urban and rural areas, respectively (GSOV, 2012).

Tourism started in Sapa in the 1900s when the French developed the area as a hill station (Michaud & Turner, 2006). A sanatorium was completed in 1913 to house military officers and foreigners and a tourist office was opened in 1917. Privately owned villas and hotels were built in Sapa between 1920 and 1940. During the French War (1945-1954), the area was severely damaged (Vu & Sato, 2010) and in 1990, a railway network was built to connect Sapa with Hanoi and other provinces. In 2012, Sapa attracted 610,000 tourist arrivals, a tenfold increase as compared to 60,000 tourist arrivals in 2002 (Truong et al., 2014).

Since 1993, when Sapa was reopened to tourists, tourism has been an important sector in the local economy and a means of poverty alleviation (SPC, 2009). It has attracted substantial funding from international NGOs and development agencies (Truong & Hall, 2013). Different approaches have been adopted in development projects such as awareness raising, capacity building, stakeholder partnership, and skills training. None of these NGOs and development agencies labeled their projects in social marketing terms, although some elements of social marketing were used in

project design and implementation (Truong & Hall, 2013). However, only limited attention was given to the aspirations and expectations of the locals, particularly the poor (Truong et al., 2014).

METHOD

The research upon which this paper is based examines residents' understanding of the causes of poverty to consequently investigate the potential that social marketing bears for poverty reduction in the context of tourism. An important element was identifying what the target audience for poverty reduction interventions perceived as the cause of their poverty and how they understood the role of tourism as a reduction measure. A phenomenological approach was adopted that focuses on the lived experiences of members of the study communities in order to allow local people to voice their opinions of poverty and alleviation barriers (Holden, Sonne, & Novelli, 2011; Szarycz, 2009). Research data was collected from August to November 2012. Most fieldwork was conducted in Sapa town and three communes (Lao Chai, Ta Van, Ta Phin) where tourism is more developed than in other communes in the region (Truong et al., 2014). They are also among the poorest communes in Sapa (SPC, 2009). The researchers conducted 47 semi-structured interviews with 47 local people in Vietnamese lasting 25-45 minutes and five interviews with development consultants in English language lasting 40-60 minutes). Notes were also taken from conversations with foreign tourists. Initially, interviews were carried out with members of the local Women's Union because they clearly understood local living conditions and were gatekeepers to local networks. A local guide was also hired throughout the fieldwork. Field notes were taken and used to enrich interview and observation data.

Some interviewees were chosen because their incomes were below the official national poverty lines (GSOV, 2012), while others were selected with the help of a member of the local Women's Union and these were not necessarily poor in economic terms. There were two main reasons for this purposive selection. First, local people might hold different views of poverty as compared to researchers and policy-makers (Holden et al., 2011). Second, other factors such as health, education, and social service access should also be considered in identifying people that official definitions of poverty may not capture (Truong et al., 2014). The key themes identified include local people's interpretation of poverty and poverty causes, experiences in tourism, and perception of the barriers to poverty alleviation. These themes are discussed below.

FINDINGS

Interviewees' Profiles

Of the 47 interviewees, 36 were female ranging from 15 to 71 years old and 11 were male from 13 to 71 years old. Local women were a majority in the interview sample because they are often family heads and are thus sensitive to financial matters and the living conditions of their families. The average age of interviewees was 36 years (female interviewees: 37; males: 31). In terms of ethnicity, 20 respondents were H'Mong, 18 Red Dzao, six Kinh who constitute the Vietnamese mainstream society, and three

are Dzay. Eleven people were based in Ta Van, ten in Ta Phin, six in Lao Chai, five in Sapa town, and 15 in other communes. All quotes are anonymized. Locals' perception of poverty is presented first before the causes of poverty are analyzed and the findings are put into relation with social marketing.

Local Perception of the Nature of Poverty

A large majority of interviewees indicated that growing rice is their main occupation and generates most income. Some also grow corn and medicinal fruit (which is grown under forest trees and exported to China). The perception of poverty is closely related to the amount of rice produced per year. When asked what poverty means to residents, most of the interviewees said it meant not producing enough rice to feed their families:

> I think poverty means having a lack of rice. I do not know the poverty criteria that are applied by the local authority. (Linh, Ta Van commune)

Some respondents indicated that poverty is associated with a lack of income. To them, although they may have enough rice to feed their families, they are poor if they have no money to meet their daily needs. In addition, residents also distinguish hunger from poverty. If they do not have enough rice to feed their families, they suffer hunger. They consider themselves poor if they produce enough rice but have no money to buy vegetables and meat:

> People here think of poverty as not having enough rice… My family has enough rice for the whole year but we still consider ourselves poor. If we do not have enough rice to eat, we call ourselves hunger sufferers. (Pham, Ta Van commune)

The perception of poverty also varies by education level. Younger and more educated respondents (i.e. who receive formal schooling) have more holistic perceptions of poverty:

> Poverty is identified by the farming land area, the number of people in a family and total incomes. In general, many factors can be used to define poor families. (Do, Sapa town, university graduate)

However, such holistic views are atypical. Most local people frame poverty as something integral to their lives, i.e. rice to feed families. None of those interviewed understands the poverty criteria that are applied by Sapa's authority, nor does s/he have any idea about the poverty levels established by the Vietnamese government. While this may be attributed to education levels, it also suggests that government views of poverty are significantly different from those of poor people. Criticism of official definitions neither denies the hardships from which local people suffer nor undermines efforts to estimate the number of poor people. Rather, it emphasizes that poor people have their own meanings of poverty. This suggests that in order to develop meaningful interventions for the target audience (e.g. social marketing

initiatives) and therefore increase likelihood of success, poverty measures must start from a local understanding of poverty and its causes.

Local Perception of Poverty Causes

In explaining the causes of poverty, some interviewees attributed poverty to environmental factors, with limited arable land and bad weather frequently cited. Some blamed social causes for poverty, including overpopulation, lack of education, and hesitance to change. Others ascribed poverty to both external and internal causes.

Farming conditions are cited as the most important cause of poverty. The mountainous rice fields can accommodate only one annual crop (April-October). In addition, a shortage of water for the uphill terraced fields is a regular occurrence in the dry season. Traditionally, local people used to marry very young and have large families. This practice is still common among some H'Mong people (Kim, Ta Van commune). The issue in terms of rice production is that land is distributed equally as it is passed down the generations, and the resulting ever-smaller land parcels produce less rice. Some respondents also attributed poverty to location, increased commodity prices, and ineffective government assistance that did not necessarily reach the poorest households (Hoa, Ta Van commune; Kim, Ta Van commune).

Local people's hesitance to adopt new practices may be because they tend to trust people whom they "admire", instead of government officials (My, Ta Van commune). However, Shu (Sapa town) suggested that "the problem lies in government officials (the majority Kinh) explaining nothing to local people, who are culturally different". If this suggestion holds, it means that the Vietnamese government's approach to poverty alleviation, and even potentially those of some NGOs, may not have fully considered the different cultural contexts of people in Sapa and the relationships between them. This situation is likely also exacerbated by the many local people engaged in subsistence lifestyles. For example, although the Vietnamese government offers free education for ethnic minority children, local parents often keep their children working in rice fields or selling handicrafts instead of sending them to school. To other respondents, local people are poor because they are "lazy" (Hang, Sapa town), lack business knowledge (Shan, Lao Chai commune), are not educated (Lam, San Xa Ho commune), do not save money (Chien, Sapa town), or simply lack access to information (Peter, development agency, Sapa town). Some of these causes are also perceived to be barriers to local people participating in tourism.

Local People's Experiences With Tourism

Although tourism is promoted as an economic development and poverty alleviation tool in Sapa, the main beneficiaries of tourism are perceived to be private sector hotels and tour operators, often run by the majority Kinh people:

> Business owners are only concerned about their own interests. Most of them are Kinh people. Ethnic minorities can only sell handicrafts. (Do, Sapa town)

> Eight out of ten tourism businesses here are run by people coming from other areas. The other two are run by locals. However, they are all Kinh people. Private businesses only care about their own interests. (Tam, hotel staff, Sapa town)

Local ethnic minorities often lack the knowledge, skills, and capital needed to participate in tourism. Language is also a barrier because most of the respondents can only speak their own language and basic Vietnamese. Some can speak basic English, but writing skills are limited. In contrast, the majority of Kinh people are generally better educated with the knowledge, skills, funds, and networks to run tourism businesses. Since local ethnic minorities have little alternative livelihoods outside of the main rice crop, most of them are informally involved in tourism by following foreign tourists to sell handicrafts. Upon arriving at Sapa Square, Sapa Market, or at village entrances, tourists are approached by local women who introduce themselves and follow them on their treks, asking them to buy handicrafts. When local women are asked why they follow tourists, a common response is that it is because they are poor with much free time after the rice crop harvest and need money to buy food and fertilizer (Thanh, Lao Chai commune).

Selling handicrafts in the streets does not generate a stable income and there are long periods when sellers make no business at all. In addition, the work is tiring because the seller women often follow tourists on 20-24 km treks. Some local women know that tourists are not happy being followed (Tan and May, Thanh Kim commune) and others believe that some tourists may feel curious at first, but then are not comfortable once they realize local women are following them (Lam, San Xa Ho commune).

As a consequence, Sapa's authorities have attempted to stop local women from following tourists by allocating specific spaces in Sapa Market and Sapa Square for handicraft sellers. To get a space in the market, interested people need to register at a local office, while in the square, all sellers can sell their products. A Code of Conduct team was formed to oversee handicraft sellers and fine sellers if caught selling handicrafts in the streets. However, the number of street vendors did not decrease, with some women complaining that they could not get a space to sell their products (Tan and May, Thanh Kim commune). After all, most spaces in the market are occupied by Kinh people and only some spaces on the second floor are allocated to ethnic minorities. At the same time, the Square is an unroofed outdoor space, where handicraft sellers cannot do business on sunny or rainy days. This suggests that the options offered by Sapa's authority are less beneficial than following tourists to sell handicrafts (Do, Sapa town). However, the economic benefits for handicraft sellers are also doubtful, with some interviewees stating that many seller women do not want to stay in the market and square because they can sell more handicrafts by following tourists (Do, Sapa town).

Some development agencies (e.g. SNV Netherlands Development Agency) have worked with Sapa's authority to reduce the number of handicraft sellers. A community market was built in Ta Phin, where local women could sell handicrafts. However, the market was small, did not have enough spaces for all sellers and was inappropriately located. Those who did not get a space kept following tourists and sold more handicrafts. Other markets built in Lao Chai and Ta Van were also abandoned

because they were not well located. Attempts to develop communal entrance tickets to villages have also not benefited the poor. The ticketing offices are small posts established at the entrance of such villages as Cat Cat and Ta Phin and the fees are supposed to be used for community development. However, a widespread perception among local people is that the fees have primarily benefited village chiefs and/or commune leaders: "They [local authorities] keep saying that the ticket fees belong to the villagers but I have seen nothing" (Lien, San Xa Ho commune; Su, Ta Van commune). As such, the failure of the local authority and development agencies to stop local women from following tourists can be attributed both to the economically less attractive alternatives offered and the longstanding business practices of local women.

Perceived Barriers to Poverty Alleviation Through Tourism

When respondents were asked about the main barriers they face in moving out of poverty, insufficient capital was most frequently cited, followed by limited farming land. These barriers were also mentioned by the consultants of development agencies in Sapa (Peter, development agency, Sapa town). A large majority of residents in Sapa wish to participate in tourism, often as homestay owners, tour guides, and handicraft sellers as a means to move out of poverty. After all, local people view tourism as one of the few, if not the only, remaining income generator, although they are aware that in many cases tourism does not necessarily alleviate poverty. Nevertheless, a large majority of ethnic minority women in Sapa are only able to participate in tourism informally, by following tourists to sell handicrafts. Reasons for this are firstly that they are unable to get formal tourism jobs such as working in hotels and travel agencies. Secondly, the alternatives offered by Sapa's authority (e.g. market spaces) are not adequate for all sellers and are economically less beneficial than following tourists. Many local women are used to this selling practice, some of whom have over ten years of experience. However, this way of selling has resulted in tourists' discomfort as discussed above.

Although it is a focal point for government and many NGOs, tourism is not necessarily the only way to lift poor people out of poverty in Sapa. Indeed, one tourism consultant stated, "We need to agree that tourism is one alternative livelihood option only" (Quang, tourism consultant, Hanoi). Instead, making more forest land available for farming could be an appropriate measure and a way of reducing the number of handicraft sellers. As the above consultant described, "If farmers are deprived of land, then they lose their most powerful weapon". If given more land, local people could grow more rice and medicinal fruit and thereby earn an income by providing some locally produced food to tourism businesses. However, increased land in the forest and/or income earned from agriculture or tourism does not necessarily translate into poverty alleviation if the population keeps growing or if income is not invested in longer-term developments.

Use of Social Marketing for Poverty Alleviation Through Tourism

Although not aware of social marketing, project managers and consultants may have already utilized several or all elements of this concept (Truong & Hall, 2013), also in

the case of Sapa. Indeed, one of the local tourism consultants stated,

> As practitioners, we do not pay substantial attention to the theoretical aspects of social marketing. I think it is a new concept. However, I want to emphasize that it is very likely tourism practitioners have already used the tools of social marketing, although they are not aware of the concept. (Quang, tourism consultant, Hanoi)

Quang went on to elaborate the tools used in projects in which he has been involved:

> Our project tools have been used to influence a variety of audiences, including host communities, schools, communal authority, and even the National Administration of Tourism. Differing interventions are made on different audience segments. For example, policy changes are advocated at management bodies, while responsible travel clubs are established to target businesses and tourists. Environmental awareness programmes, extra-curricular activities, and contests are organized at school level. Performing competitions are also held as we realize that local ethnic minorities have a keen passion for performances. Additionally, training sessions and study tours are also provided. (Quang, tourism consultant, Hanoi).

The tools described above appear to match the elements of the social marketing benchmarks previously discussed. This reinforces the argument that social marketing as an approach seems to have been applied in some tourism projects but is not labeled specifically as social marketing.

However, it needs to be noted that the majority of the tourism consultants interviewed have never heard about the concept of social marketing:

> I have no idea about social marketing. I think social marketing consists of all marketing activities undertaken to benefit all segments in society. (Thang, tourism consultant, Hanoi)

> I am not aware of the social marketing concept. I heard about it but I do not really know about it. I think it involves the use of social media technologies and so on. (Michael, tourism consultant, Hanoi)

The above comments clearly raise questions about the potential contribution of social marketing to development. As noted above, a key element of social marketing is to provide something of interest to the target audience ("exchange", tangible and/or intangible). Target audience research helps identify what the exchange might be that leads to the adoption of new practices. Importantly, exchange does not just refer to an exchange in monetary terms. Although tangible benefits (e.g. money) may have direct behavior impacts, intangible benefits (e.g. community pride, sense of ownership) may generate long-term outcomes (Hall, 2014; Truong & Hall, 2013). Ultimately, the perceived benefits of any new behavior must outweigh the perceived costs in order for people to try it.

Therefore, focus may be put on (Hall, 2014, p. 75):

- Increasing and highlighting the benefits to the target audience
- Decreasing or de-emphasizing the barriers to the adoption of new behaviors
- Changing the product, place, price or promotion to meet the exchange

A social marketing approach assists in framing development issues differently. For example, several previous interventions trying to provide women in Sapa with alternative venues for the selling of handicrafts have failed, as discussed earlier. Therefore, a social marketing approach, which attaches particular importance to understanding the target audience, may provide new insights on how best to help alleviate poverty.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research showed that local people in Sapa, of whom a majority are rice farmers, perceive poverty mainly as a lack of rice. Some consider themselves as poor although they may produce enough rice but do not have sufficient money to meet their daily needs. Multiple views of poverty were found, particularly among the educated that combine several factors in defining poverty (e.g. land area, family size). The most critical barrier to poverty alleviation in Sapa is the lack of capital and farming land. Offering the local poor preferential loans and access to secure land tenure therefore appears to be the most appropriate exchange to reduce the number of handicraft sellers.

Although Sapa's authority and NGOs have embraced tourism as a poverty alleviation tool, poor people have no access to reap benefits from tourism. The aspirations and expectations of the local poor in relation to tourism have been considered only to a limited extent by either the local authority or project organizations. Social marketing can address this issue given its focus on the target audience in designing and implementing any behavioral change intervention (Hall, 2014; Truong & Hall, 2013). Furthermore, without such research, the barriers to improve well-being are often not recognized. Again, it is social marketing's strong focus on the target audience that differentiates it from other participatory approaches as discussed earlier in this paper (Hall, 2014).

This study revealed that most local women are involved in tourism informally, following tourists to sell handicrafts, which causes discomfort on the tourists' side. Although efforts have been made by Sapa's authority and development agencies to manage the situation, the issue remains. When development agencies have sought to bring about behavioral change, appropriate research has not been undertaken to understand local people's needs (e.g. for more farming land), including cultural differences. As a consequence, the interventions have not been designed effectively. Local people have not been asked previously about reasons for their behavior (e.g. why they keep following tourists) and what they could do to improve their well-being. This is arguably one of the main contributions that a social marketing approach can bring to poverty alleviation strategies. It is significant not just for 'downstream' social marketing that focuses on the target audience but also 'upstream' social marketing that influences institutional perspectives (Hall, 2014). This approach also goes beyond many PPT and sustainable marketing practices (Hall, 2013; Raymond & Hall, 2008).

Nevertheless, even with a focus on a target audience, the capacity of social marketing to encourage social and economic change in tourism development is limited. The most critical structural barrier to poverty alleviation in Sapa is a lack of farming land and capital. However, even here a social marketing approach can help reveal the behavioral changes that can occur once structural conditions, often related to well-intended regulatory and policy measures, are changed (Hall, 2013). There is a need for authorities to view farming land and practices as part of long-term poverty reduction measures. An integrated approach to poverty reduction that incorporates local as well as agency perspectives is therefore required. Such an approach would combine an appropriate downstream focus on behavioral change with an upstream emphasis on changing institutional practices and structures.

This research suggests that the experience of the Bangladeshi Grameen Bank (Yunus, 2007) may offer some important learning points for the implementation of a social marketing program in Sapa (Table 1). It is recommended that, at the *downstream* level, a community microloan scheme would be an appropriate development. A community fund may also be established where the communal entrance fees are retained. Groups of four to five local poor households each (headed by women) are formed (*target audience*) and provided with preferential loans (*exchange*). Group members may be empowered to manage the loans without having to pay an interest rate. Given preferential (non-interest) loans, it is likely that the burden of interest and hence the barrier to borrowing loans is waived. The provided loans should be adequate to establish a micro business (e.g. a handicraft shop) or purchase building material (e.g. for a homestay). Given their participation in community activities, members of the local Women's Union may assist in disseminating information, motivating poor families, promoting local cultural values, and monitoring the effective use of the given loans. The desired outcome is a reduction in the number of handicraft sellers in the streets (*behavior change as the objective of the program*). However, such measures should not occur in isolation and the development of a new land policy is essential. Similarly, loans may impoverish poor people if they are not effectively invested or if they are invested in homestay or handicraft business but do not generate profits due to limited tourists. This argument suggests that social marketing interventions should be made for encouraging the private sector in Sapa to support poor people by recommending guests to stay overnight in local homestays and by training homestay owners in skills connected to hosting tourists, thereby bridging the divide between profit making and poverty alleviation.

At the upstream level, the government of Vietnam may facilitate favorable conditions for the recruitment of poor people by tourism businesses. For example, incentives (e.g. partial tax exemption) can support businesses that employ and provide vocational training to poor people. In addition, some provisions may be added to national tourism legislation that encourage tourism businesses to provide equal employment, income, and promotion opportunities to poor ethnic minorities. These measures would be particularly significant given that Vietnam's Tourism Law already advocates tourism development that helps improve the living conditions of poor people in areas with socio-economic difficulties (Truong, 2013).

Program Element	Description
Behavior change goal	Encouraging local women to stop following tourists to sell handicrafts.
Target audience	Poor people in Lao Chai, Ta Van, Ta Phin, and Sapa town who lack capital and land.
Exchange	(a) Microloans for buying wood and building material (homestays), opening handicraft shops or other small businesses. (b) Farming land for growing rice and medicinal fruit.
Marketing Mix	(a) Product: Microloans, farming land. (b) Price: Loans are interest-free (or otherwise a token interest rate may apply) (see (e)). (c) Promotion: Information is disseminated by members of the local Women's Union, local elders, and village chiefs. These people may be trained to work effectively with poor people. Other mediums may also be used such as brochures and flyers. (d) Place: Lao Chai, Ta Van, Ta Phin, and Sapa town, where a microloan scheme and/or community fund is established. (e) Collateral requirements: Groups of poor households are formed, which are headed by women. These women supervise the effective use of the loans. Loan recipients may be required to be committed to reducing birth rates and sending children to school. They may also need to be committed to protecting the land allocated to them. (f) Process: A simple loan application process with minimal paperwork is used.
Upstream Targeting	(a) Communal authorities, village chiefs, and Women's Union participate in assisting poor people. (b) Local tourism businesses are encouraged to provide employment and/or income opportunities to poor people. (c) National government: Advocacies may be undertaken to promote changes in relevant land and/or forest policies. Changes in the *Tourism Law* may also be required to provide incentives to businesses that offer employment and income to poor people. (d) Other stakeholders such as foreign NGOs may participate in working with the GOV and making program activities recognized and supported by the GOV.
Competition	Local people are used to following tourists; tension between tourism growth, poverty alleviation, and sustainable development.

Table 1. Summary of a proposed social marketing program for Sapa (own compilation).

CONCLUSION

This research has explored the poverty reduction potential of social marketing in the tourist town of Sapa, Vietnam. Through participant observations and semi-structured interviews with local poor people, this study has shown that poverty tends to be interpreted relatively differently and is attributed to both internal and external causes. Although tourism may be a potential contributor to poverty alleviation in Sapa, the potential to distribute benefits has been substantially reduced by barriers to business development and employment. The wealthier members of society and tour

operators are perceived as the main beneficiaries of tourism. Local women often follow tourists to sell handicrafts, resulting in discomfort on tourists' side and conflict amongst community members. The most critical barriers preventing participation include insufficient knowledge, skills, work experience, and funds, and poor foreign language proficiency. Overall, limited capital and farming land is the most important obstacle to poverty alleviation. A well-developed social marketing approach that focuses on the needs of the target audience would allow this audience to have a voice in change processes, much more than in the context of PPT. Indeed, an appropriately structured social marketing approach will not only seek to ask what kind of tourism places want to pursue, but ultimately, whether they wish to introduce tourism at all (Hall, 2007). There is possibly no better way to establish meaningful approaches to poverty alleviation than to understand the locally poor, and to do so by raising important questions as well as allowing them to voice their opinions. It is at this point that social marketing holds great potential given its focus on gaining insights into the target audience and their behaviors. Strong social marketing helps identify the poor amongst all community members, assists in understanding their needs and wants, and ultimately helps bring their marginalized voices to the attention of those making policies and decisions that affect their lives. While this paper has shown that social marketing can be a useful tool in addressing poverty reduction through tourism, more research is required that specifically focuses on social marketing initiatives and their results in practice.

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Sailing to Komodo: Contradictions of Tourism and Development in Eastern Indonesia

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Tourism is often pinpointed as a sector of growth for countries in the developing world, and this perspective has been readily accepted in Indonesia. Government officials in poorer sections of the country, such as Nusa Tenggara Timur province (NTT) in eastern Indonesia, have high hopes for the role that tourism can play in developing these poorer regions. This is not surprising, given the increasing renown of the Komodo National Park, just west of the island of Flores, where the world famous Komodo dragons reside. However, how exactly tourism is supposed to raise the standard of living and aid in development in NTT province is often unclear. In this paper I want to critically look at ideas about tourism and development in NTT, by focusing on the 'Sail Komodo' yacht rally, a major tourism event that took place from August to September 2013. Sail Komodo was as a marine tourism event expected to boost tourist numbers, lift the standard of living of people in this province and lower poverty levels. I critically analyze this event within the context of a 'mega event', and show how the contradictory ideas about how the event was meant to lead to prosperity for the poor can indicate the sometimes misguided relationship posited between tourism and development.

Keywords: Development; Indonesia; Mega Events; Sail Komodo; Tourism

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TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT: INTRODUCING A COMMON DILEMMA

> Tourists come from the outside to see the exotic: from the inside tourism is viewed as modernization. (Bruner, 1995, p. 224)

> Rather than viewing tourism simply as an industry aligned to neo-liberal thinking, tourism [should be] perceived as a powerful social force that needs to be better understood in order to connect it more effectively to development agendas that go beyond purely economic considerations. (Spenceley & Meyer, 2012, p. 301)

The contradictory expectations of tourism in the developing world were summed up succinctly by Edward Bruner (1995), when he articulated the different hopes tourists and locals have of the touristic encounter, particularly in regards to issues of modernization or development. While the tourist desires to meet an unchanging, timeless community, embodying values thought to have disappeared in the modern world, locals see tourism as the opportunity to em-

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brace that which embodies the 'modern' and to begin to enjoy the fruits of development. This misfit of desires points to the rather ambiguous associations and expectations of what the relationship between tourism and development should be and may even lead, partially because of these conflicts of expectations, to underdevelopment (Cole, 2008, p. 215; Wood, 1979).

In their book on the ethics of tourism development in the developing world, Smith and Duffy (2003) also underscore the ambiguities associated with modernization and tourism as a form of development. Modernization is supposed to break with tradition, and yet traditional ways of life have increasingly become objects to be viewed and consumed within the expanding tourism industry (Smith & Duffy, 2003, p. 2). Telfer and Sharpley (2008) further point out how tourism and development must be increasingly understood as posing a dilemma, for while tourism is widely believed to bring economic benefits for poor communities, such as employment, increased income, and diversification of the economy, the reality is that tourism benefits are very often enjoyed by a local elite and global corporations, rather than by the poor. Meanwhile, this also results in considerable environmental and social costs to the local communities that tourism is supposed to benefit.

In this sense it can be understood why Smith and Duffy (2003) argue that the ambiguity and contradictory relationship between tourism and development is an ethical issue. This results from the way various neo-liberal strategies translate development into a focus on ways of generating capital. The irony, Smith and Duffy (2003) suggest, is that regarding tourism as primarily a form of economic development and pinpointing, therefore, tourism as a way of generating money, negates the kinds of values which a holiday is normally thought to embody (such as appreciating beauty, relaxation, friendship, and so forth) (p. 162). The emphasis on money also means that the benefits to communities can easily be hijacked by others. Financial gain as the main thrust of tourism developments is often at the expense of other types of benefits, other types of values, and other types of development, which might be pursued through tourism (Smith & Duffy, 2003, pp. 8-9). Prioritizing money may also undermine attempts to develop a community sustainably, and reverse the more normal 'means-ends' relationship. Money becomes the end, not the means to an end, and what normally are the ends – relationships with people, places, things – become the means to get money (Smith & Duffy, 2003, p. 162). In this sense, scholars argue that the focus on purely economic concerns must be replaced with deeper understandings of the possibility for tourism to contribute to human development, to "fulfil ... human values and human needs" (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006, p. 1205), and for tourism as "a powerful social force" (Spenceley & Meyer, 2012, p. 301).

In her work on tourism policy-making in Southeast Asia, Richter (1993) suggests that many of the negative results of relying on tourism as a pathway to development in the developing world have been due to a prevailing government attitude that tourism needs simply to be promoted, or "boosted" (p. 184), and there is frequently no thought about its need to be regulated. The impact of tourism in Southeast Asia was not only immense, but often disturbing, while 21st century tourism planning continues to be mostly focused on following tourist tastes (Richter, 2009, p. 140) rather than on how tourism can lead to benefits for communities. There is also a tendency to favor the growth of elite tourism, which results in considerable foreign exchange

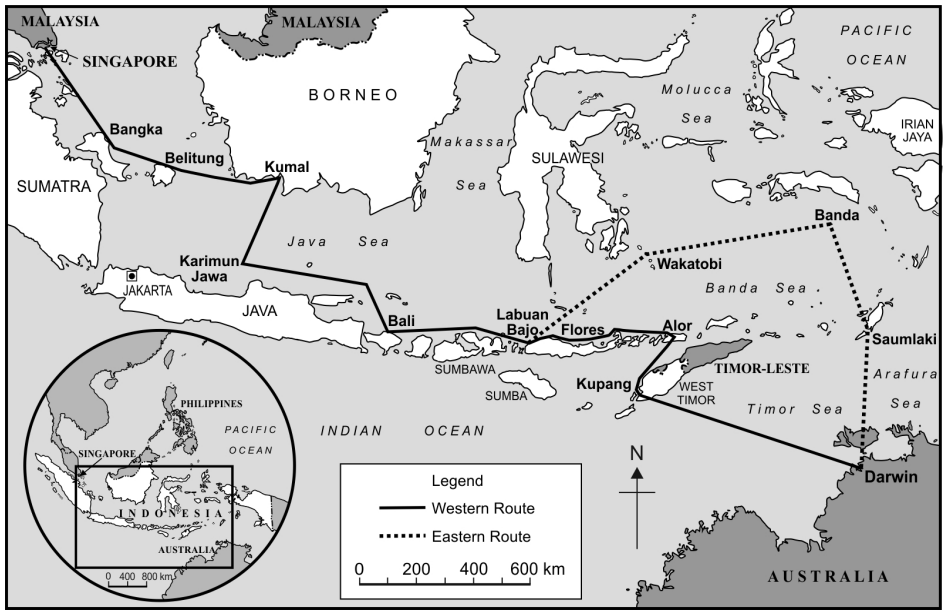

Figure 1. The 'Sail Komodo' routes
(map redrawn by Mrs. Lee Li Kheng, based on original from Sail Komodo Festival 2013, retrieved from http://www.travelfoodfashion.com/sail-komodo-2013-festival/#).

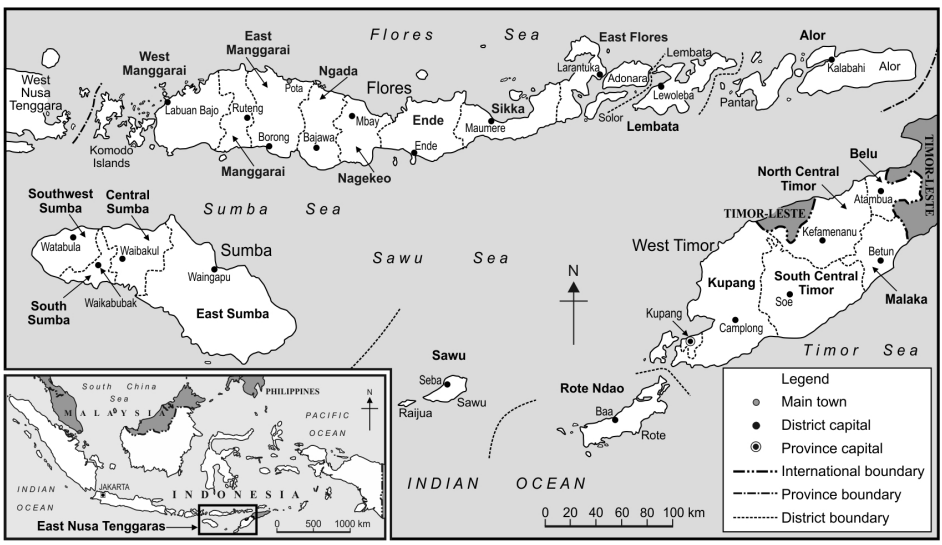

Figure 2. NTT province (map drawn by Mrs Lee Li Kheng).

leakage and encourages high economic dependency (Richter, 2009; Wood, 1979). This has meant that the type of tourism that could potentially benefit the development needs of poorer communities, such as budget or backpacker tourism, is neither promoted nor encouraged (Cole, 2008; Erb, 2000; Hampton, 1998; Richter, 1993;

Scheyvens, 2002). Additionally, non-decisions in regards to regulating tourism have led to serious problems such as exploitative sex tourism, human trafficking, and the uncontrolled spread of diseases (Richter, 2009, pp. 139, 141-144).

These earlier studies of tourism and development in the developing world, and specifically in Southeast Asia, indicate that the promised benefits of tourism as a development strategy often do not emerge. This is because the way tourism is meant to result in development is often poorly planned and misconceptualized. In this paper, I attempt to cast a closer look into such misconceptions by revisiting a recent event in eastern Indonesia initially touted as an example of how tourism would lead to development for poorer and relatively neglected regions.

This major event, covering three months in the summer of 2013 (from July to September) was called 'Sail Komodo' (Figure 1), and was the 13th in the 'Sail Indonesia' series – an annual yacht rally starting from Darwin, Australia, on the fourth Saturday of July and entering eastern Indonesia via Kupang, the capital of East Nusa Tenggara province (*Nusa Tenggara Timur*, NTT).[1] Sail Komodo reached its climax in the town of Labuan Bajo, on the western end of Flores Island – the major gateway to the Komodo National Park, which is the main tourist attraction in NTT province (Figure 2). The Komodo National Park has been increasing in popularity internationally, partly due to the frequent featuring of its star attraction – the huge lizard known as the 'Komodo dragon' – in documentaries and horror films.[2] In recent years the park has also become a sought out destination among domestic tourists in Indonesia, mainly because of its choice in 2011 as one of the New Seven Wonders of the natural world.[3] I will examine the Sail Komodo event within the context of its promotion as a 'mega-event' in the eastern province of NTT, and as an event that was not only expected to result in a significant rise in tourist arrivals for this rather remote part of Indonesia, but that was also promised to be a way to bring economic benefits to the local communities of a province known as one of the poorest in Indonesia. I use this case study to highlight a number of issues about tourism development in NTT province, more specifically in the western part of Flores: (1) the lack of proper understanding about how tourism can benefit local communities, (2) the lack of planning and regulations in regards to tourism developments, and (3) the contradictory results that misconceptualizations about tourism and development can bring. Although my focus is on a specific remote place in Indonesia, the issues raised in this case are more broadly part of the "imaginaries" of tourism. The concept of imaginaries has shown that ideas about what tourism might be for tourists, communities, businesses, and nation states, is circulated and adapted in different places in different ways (Salazar, 2012; Salazar & Graburn, 2014). The suggestion here is that imaginaries are not necessarily

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1 For more information on Sail Indonesia, visit the organisation's website: http://www.sailindonesia.net/rally/organisers.php.

2 As Timothy Barnard (2009) suggests, the exoticizing of the Komodo dragon has happened continuously since colonial times.

3 The New Seven Wonders were set up by the Swiss Canadian Bernard Weber to stimulate conservation of cultural and natural sites across the world in the new millennium (World of New Seven Wonders, n.d.). Voting happened through websites and short cell phone messages over a period of 4 years. A lot of social media attention was given to the voting process in Indonesia, stirring a lot of national attention to visit the site, which had previously been of little interest to domestic tourists.

always connected to images of people and places, but also to hoped-for-dreams of what tourism might bring: prosperity, greater understanding of the world, positive relations with foreigners, and so forth (Cole, 2008). Thus, through an examination of Sail Komodo, I intend to highlight some of the ambiguities associated with tourism and development, focusing on the various ways that people imagine tourism to lead to development, as opposed to what the realities of tourism as a form of development actually are.

EXAMINING INDONESIAN TOURISM: MEGA EVENTS AND SAIL INDONESIA

> Tourism must be the leading sector and the engine of economic development in NTT … Our target for the number of tourist arrivals to NTT … in 2013 … can increase to 1 million because of Sail Komodo. (Abraham Klakik, Chief of Tourism and Creative Development, Nusa Tenggara Timur province, "NTT Natural Wonders to Boost Economic Development", 2012)

Like many other developing countries, Indonesia has been pursuing a policy to develop the tourism industry over the past five decades as a means to earn foreign exchange and create employment. However, despite its many attractions, both natural and cultural, Indonesia has never been particularly successful in fulfilling its potential of attracting large numbers of foreign tourists, particularly in comparison to neighboring countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand. While Singapore had 15 million visitors in 2013, and Thailand and Malaysia over 25 million each, Indonesia's foreign visitor numbers totaled only 8.8 million (ASEAN, 2015). Promoting tourism had actually been a consideration as early as colonial times (Picard, 1993, p. 75). After independence, however, the political regime – at that time rather anti-West – did not seek tourism as an economic growth strategy until the time of the New Order regime (1965-1998), headed by Suharto. The New Order was extremely anti-communist, though still initially wary of the contaminating values of the West, which might be brought in through tourism (Henderson, 2010, p. 8). With World Bank encouragement (Wood, 1979, p. 277), tourism was made an object of development planning in the late 1960s. Tourism arrivals increased from roughly 6,000 visitors in 1960, to almost 130,000 in 1970 (Wood, 1979, p. 276), and then to over half a million in 1980 (Booth, 1990, p. 47; Gunawan, 1997, p. 149). In the mid-1980s "diminishing endowments of natural resources, especially oil and gas" (Gunawan, 1999, p. 148) led the government of Indonesia to begin to rely more on tourism as a source of foreign exchange earnings (Booth, 1990; Picard, 1993, p. 80) and hence certain policy decisions were made to encourage tourism, including visa-free travel for key tourist markets, and landing rights for foreign airlines in several major points of entry (Booth, 1990, p. 48). In the 1990s, tourism was identified as a "prime mover" of regional economic development (Sofield, 1995, p. 691), and the target of 4.5 million foreign visitors by 1998, was easily reached before 1996, when Indonesia enjoyed over 5 million visitors (Hampton, 1998, p. 643). This was just before the economic crisis hit Asia in 1997, significantly impacting tourism throughout Asia (Cochrane, 2009, p. 256; Gunawan, 1999, p. 149). Indonesia was particularly affected given that the economic crisis in the country was quickly followed by multiple political crises: protests that led to the fall

of the Suharto regime, violence targeted against Chinese Indonesians, and religious and ethnic conflicts that spread to various regions of Indonesia up to the early 21st century. The attack on the World Trade Centre in New York in 2001, the terrorist bombings in Bali and Jakarta in 2002, 2003, and 2005, the spread and fear of SARS in 2003, and the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004 continued to affect tourist arrivals negatively. Nevertheless, Cole (2008) reminds us that the overall impact at the national level was minimal, since visitor arrival figures remained stable during that time at between 4.75 and 5 million (p. 56).

The relative stability in visitor numbers for the nation as a whole, however, needs to be compared with the more devastating effect of these various disasters on the more remote areas of Indonesia, such as NTT province, which easily saw a decline of over 50% in visitor numbers over that same time period (Cole, 2008, p. 56). It was not until 2009 that the visitor figures for the Komodo National Park, the premiere destination in NTT, and to some extent a benchmark of the tourism recovery of the province, exceeded those of 1996 (see Figure 3). As Cole (2008) points out, generalizations made by some observers about tourism to Indonesia cannot be applied to NTT, which has had a very different profile of visitors than many other parts of Indonesia (p. 43). For example, in other places, domestic tourists may contribute the largest share of visitors (such as to Toraja in Sulawesi, see Adams, 1998), and generally, visitors from other countries in Asia make up a large percentage of foreign visitors to Indonesia. Neither of these is true for Flores, where Europeans and Australians are by far the largest percentage of visitors (Cole, 2008, p. 43; Erb, 2009). One of the reasons why the recovery in tourism numbers took so long in eastern Indonesia was the change to the visa policy in 2003, in which the free two month tourist pass introduced in the 1980s was replaced by a one month non-renewable visa on arrival (VOA) at the cost of USD 25. The policy affected non-Southeast Asian foreign tourists most dramatically.[4] Cole (2008) argues that the policy was perceived as a "dramatic u-turn" in the country's tourism history, and a clear indicator of misconception of the ways that tourism, particularly backpacker tourism, can benefit poorer communities (p. 45). Backpackers were the most common visitors to NTT in the 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s, but the amount of time necessary to travel to provinces where air travel was limited and the quality of roads poor meant that once the visa time was cut, visits were cut dramatically as well.

The annual Sail Indonesia yacht rally is an event worth investigating against the background of the government's concerns over tourism decline and the desire to find triggers for tourism growth. It is also an event that is interesting to examine against the perceived class issue that underlies the prejudice against backpacker/budget tourism. The sailors who own the yachts that enter eastern Indonesia every year from Darwin are perceived by the government to be an 'elite' class of tourist. As such, they are desirable, despite the fact that their numbers are exceptionally small, particularly in comparison to the young backpacker travelers who make up the bulk of visitors to the more remote regions of Indonesia.

Starting in 2001, the Sail Indonesia annual event has grown from less than 20 yachts in 2001 to more than 100 yachts per year, in more recent years. The Sail In-

4 Most members of ASEAN still received short stay visa free visits.

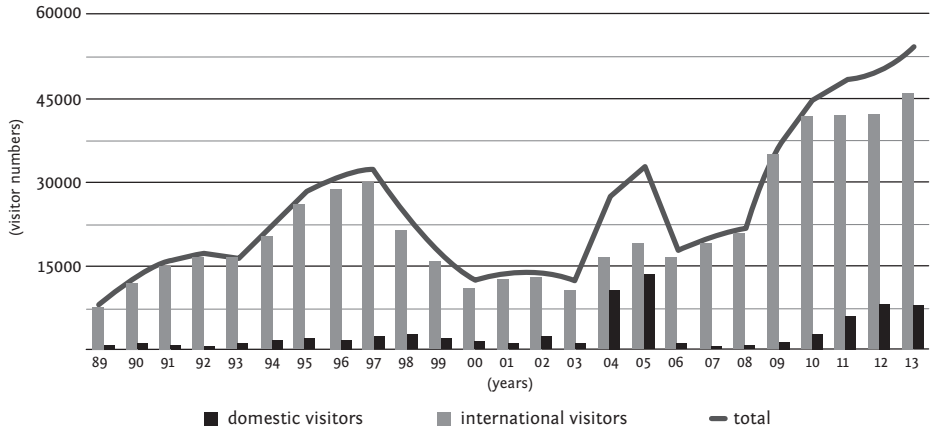

Figure 3. International and domestic visitors to Komodo National Park (1989-2013) (Labuan Bajo Tourism Board, 2014).

donesia organization proudly proclaimed that since 2001 there have been almost 1000 yachts that have participated in this event ("Links to Stories", 2015). One of the organization's aims is the exploration of remote places in Indonesia that lie off the beaten tourist track ("Sail Indonesia History", 2015). Over the years, local governments throughout eastern Indonesia have enthusiastically given their support, seeing this event as an opportunity to showcase their cultural and natural resources to this mobile tourist population. After 2009, the central government became actively involved in organizing these annual marine events in eastern Indonesia, as a way of siphoning money into the selected provinces for various infrastructural development projects to support tourism.

The governor of NTT proposed to host a Sail Indonesia event in February 2011 ("Menangkap Peluang Emas", 2014). At the time the Komodo National Park – considered the 'jewel' of NTT tourism – was a finalist in the competition to be one of the New Seven Wonders of the World, which it eventually won in November 2011. The central government agreed to this proposal and promised IDR 3.7 trillion (approximately USD 250 million) to the province of NTT for various infrastructural improvements in order to prepare for the event. As noted above, the hopes of the provincial tourism board were that the numbers of visitors to the province would increase substantially because of the Sail Komodo event, and that the event would raise the prospects for tourism to become a leading sector in NTT, and at the same time lifting the living standard and lowering poverty levels.

It is an interesting puzzle why Sail Komodo, and Sail Indonesia in general, was designated as an important catalyst for tourism developments, given the extremely small numbers of foreign sailors actually entering Indonesia for this event. Why should this annual event, which over 14 years had seen less than 1000 participants, be the focus of such attention and hope for the development of Indonesian tourism? What does the attention this event has received from the central government tell us about the Indonesian government's understanding of tourism, and the role of tour-

ism for local development? What does it tell us about the perceived role the government should play in this regard?

One way of framing an answer to these questions is to look at the event as a mega event. Mega events are a type of special events that are appealing because of their "innate uniqueness ..., which differentiates them from fixed attractions, and their 'ambience', which elevates them above ordinary life" (Getz, 1989, p. 125). Mega events are special events of international renown that are expected to raise the profile of the host city and thus are considered a significant tourism asset (Bramwell, 1997, p. 168). In his speech at the conference on *The Impact of Mega events* in Östersund, Donald Getz gave a detailed description of mega events as:

> planned occurrences of limited duration which have an extraordinary impact on the host area in terms of one or more of the following: tourist volumes; visitor expenditures; publicity leading to a heightened awareness and a more positive image; related infrastructural and organizational developments which substantially increase the destination's capacity and attractiveness. (Fayos-Sola, 1997, p. 242)

This definition of mega events appears to be part of the imaginary of the meaning a huge event would have for an area. Although mega events are widely perceived and promoted as a means of urban regeneration and development, job creation, and a major boost to the host economy, many critics have questioned these promised impacts (among others Baade & Mathiesen, 2004; Lee & Taylor, 2005; Pillay & Bass, 2008). Various issues have been assessed, including the huge expenses that are incurred, which may ultimately result in losses for the host cities; the substitution of gains in the event location for losses to other locations in the region; and the question of public expenditure reductions in other areas, taking away government spending on matters that might be more beneficial to the region overall (Baade & Mathiesen, 2004, pp. 345-346). These are issues that also surfaced in the assessment of the impact of Sail Komodo on the NTT province. Although the event was miniscule in comparison to the mega events analyzed in the literature, it was clearly framed by the central and provincial government promoters as having the kind of potential benefits outlined above by Getz. It was imagined that Sail Komodo would bring many tourists to NTT who would spend a lot of money and boost the incomes of local communities. It was imagined that the legacy of the event would be both a "heightened awareness" (to repeat Getz' words) of the beauty and potential of the province's attractions, as well as improved infrastructure that would support the imagined future increase in tourists, stimulated by the event.

METHODOLOGY: A BRIEF NOTE

My analysis in this paper is informed by many years of familiarity with western Flores, starting first in the 1980s during my PhD research on ritual and myth, and continuing in the 1990s on history and the revival of tradition. This research eventually led me to take an interest in tourism. I have been following tourism developments in western Flores since the mid 1990s, with almost annual visits of a month or so. However, I

did not have the opportunity to be present in NTT for the opening ceremony of Sail Komodo in the provincial capital Kupang in July, 2013, or the closing ceremony in Labuan Bajo, in September, 2013. My understanding of the events of Sail Komodo are based on interviews and conversations that I had with people before the event in July and September, 2012, May-June 2013, and after the event in April-May 2014. I also accessed multiple postings either from online newspapers (such as *Kompas*, *Flores Bangkit*, *Flores Pos*, *Pos Kupang*), or from Youtube and Facebook sites, from both event visitors and governmental sources, in order to get an idea of the (changing) assessments of observers and key policy makers as to the meaning and impact of the event, as well as a visual account of the events associated with Sail Komodo. My analysis consists of interpretations of the material derived from my own interviews, as well as interviews published in newspapers and internet sources. This analysis is informed by experiences of other tourism events that I have attended in western Flores over the years, as well as numerous interviews and conversations with local community members, people in the tourist industry, NGO representatives, and government officials. Therefore, before analyzing the Sail Komodo event, I will provide some more background on tourism developments in western Flores, and examine how tourism events have been incorporated in tourism promotion in western Flores and how they have been understood within the local context. A look at some of these earlier events will shed some light on the underlying contradictory ideas and misconceptions that I believe are held in western Flores about tourism as a source of profit and development.

TOURISM EVENTS, TOURISM PROMOTION, AND UNDERSTANDINGS OF TOURISM IN WESTERN FLORES

> Let us hope that every cent that drops from the hands of tourists will fall into the pockets of people here in Labuan Bajo. (Provincial Head of Tourism Board in a speech at a tourism festival held in Labuan Bajo, July 16, 2004)

In the 1990s, the booming tourism in Indonesia was particularly obvious in the town of Labuan Bajo, in the district of Manggarai on the west coast of Flores – still a small town when I first visited in 1983. By 1996, when I visited the government tourism board to ask about tourism developments, the town had a hustle and bustle that was very different from the previous decade. The tourism officials recounted that tourism had taken off in 1989, when unprecedented numbers began to visit, and in the next several years the few small hotels and homestays available could not handle the numbers that began swamping the town. Investors from other islands in Indonesia were beginning to see the tourism potential of Labuan Bajo and land was becoming an attractive commodity. For example, one savvy hotel owner from Bali, who was also head of the tourism association of eastern Indonesia at that time, had bought numerous parcels of land from anyone who was willing to sell throughout the town and surrounding coastal areas. From 1990 to 1995, according to the tourist board calculations, there was an 18% increase of visitors on average every year (see Figure 3). Most tourists that passed through Labuan Bajo at that time were there to visit the Komodo National Park; they would later go east and visit "traditional" villages in cen-

tral Flores (Cole, 2008) and from there to eastern Flores to see the three colored lakes of Kelimutu. They were, as mentioned earlier, mostly backpackers or young budget travelers, though there were a few small guided tour groups shepherded by bus across Flores, and also some small cruise ships that held up to 20 passengers and stopped in several places in Flores.

Komodo Island and other islands known to be habitats for the giant lizards had been already a nature reserve during the colonial era. In 1980, Komodo and some of the neighboring islands were designated as a national park, and in 1991, the park became a World Heritage site. In 1995, *The Nature Conservancy* (TNC) – a large international environmental organization – began to assist the park authorities in monitoring the park, and recommended the expansion of the park's boundaries to include marine areas and promote eco and dive tourism as a means of conservation. TNC designed a 25-year management plan that revised the zoning and resource use regulations in the park (Borchers, 2008, p. 276; Gustave & Borchers, 2007). Their monitoring was successful in curtailing dynamite and cyanide fishing practices blamed mostly on communities outside the park, but also produced resentment among local communities, especially when a number of fishermen on several occasions were shot for purportedly fishing illegally (Erb, 2012).

This tourism boom of the 1990s was cut short not only by the dramatic events mentioned above, but also by the already mentioned Asian financial crisis and the fall of Suharto, which led to violent conflicts and major political changes in Indonesia in the late 1990s (Kingsbury & Aveling, 2003; Kingsbury & Budiman, 2001). The tumultuousness of this 'reform' era, and the other catastrophic events mentioned above, led to drastic drops in tourism numbers in Labuan Bajo, the Komodo National Park, and throughout the province of NTT. Major plans were formulated for political decentralization and regional autonomy, which were to be the major motors for democratization and political transition, as well as economic transformations in the regions outside of Java (Aspinall & Fealy, 2003; Erb, Sulistiyanto, & Faucher, 2005; Schulte-Nordholt & Abdullah, 2002). In the beginning of the 21st century, with the hope for major changes and a revival of the devastated economy, the word 'investor' had taken on a 'golden glow'. It was at this time that Sail Indonesia was inaugurated and was seen as a means of attracting foreign investment to Indonesia. In this sense, it is possible to see the blurring of the categories of 'tourist' and 'investor' taking shape in the Indonesian imagination. Tourist has usually meant 'foreigner' (Erb, 2000), and foreigners as investors were increasingly seen and promoted as the way out of the crisis situations that were plaguing the Indonesian economy at the time.

In 2000, I was present in Labuan Bajo when tourism board officials from the province called a meeting with the district tourism board to discuss ways to better promote tourism in western Flores. They suggested creating a permanent calendar of tourism events to be published on their website so that tourists could plan their journeys around these events. Were there no traditional ritual events, they asked, which could be scheduled every year at the same time among the Manggaraian people, the majority ethnic group living in the district? This suggestion to standardize cultural events for tourism promotion was a new idea for the local tourism board, and the staff pondered the difficulties associated with doing this.[5] While in Bali standardized

5 See Yamashita (1994) on the inclusion of Toraja funerals in the Indonesian calendar of events as a form

cultural performance schedules and calendars of events were regularly publicized, in NTT this was not yet a common way of planning tourism promotion. If tourists happened to be around when the new agricultural year's ritual events were taking place, for example, where the famous Manggaraian whip games called *caci* were played, then they were welcome to attend. There were also some cultural groups that would perform these whip games for a price if a tour group desired to see a display, but a regular calendar of events was still unimaginable in the context of Flores.

However, the idea of staging a big tourist event in order to bring more tourists to Flores was an idea that began to stir among government planners out of necessity. With tourist visits so low, the head of the Manggarai district asked for ideas to attract the tourists back to Flores. One entrepreneur, a *hajji* originally from the island of Lombok, suggested a multiple day event with sporting and cultural activities, called 'Komodo Flores Big Promo Year 2000'. The big draw would be a prize of IDR 100 million (at the time around USD 10,000) for the winner of a cross-country race. Since the government did not have that much money for a prize, the *hajji* devised a scheme whereby no one could actually win the prize.[6] However, despite advertisements in Lombok and Bali, the cross-country race with its grand prize only attracted two tourists, and the low level of tourist attendance for the whole three-day event led to the government officials not taking the affair seriously. Programs had been distributed, but locations kept changing, and everything started late because they hoped more tourists would attend. Even though the event was promoted specifically to boost tourism, no one involved in most of the organization or announcing of various activities, spoke English. When the rules were read for the race, or the prizes distributed at the last days' gala dinner, no one was designated to tell the two tourists involved what was going on. It appeared that though the local government really wanted to do something to attract tourists, they were not so sure how to go about it (Erb, 2005).

In 2003, the district of Manggarai split into two – a move that was fuelled by the belief that a separate district of West Manggarai, with Labuan Bajo as its capital, would have great potential to develop through tourism. Subsequently, every year a cultural festival was held to celebrate the anniversary of the new district as one attempt to fulfill the wishes of the provincial government to have a regularly scheduled event. On the first anniversary in 2004, the head of the provincial tourism board attended and gave his motivational speech (partially quoted above), encouraging locals in Labuan Bajo to go forward with tourism as a development strategy. However, how locals were to persuade tourists to let money 'drop' from their pockets was not well identified. The festival itself was seen as a tourism promotion strategy where local cultural or art groups would showcase various traditional ritual performances, yet the audiences over the first several years were almost exclusively locals. Information about the festivals was never successfully conveyed to tourists who were in town. The festivals were located at places not easily accessible to them, and information promoting the events at hotels was always written in Indonesian. So these tourism

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of "manipulating tradition" (p. 80); and Cole (2008) who notes that "fixing dates" is a form of commodification of ceremonies (p. 205), and also may cause social conflict (pp. 236-238).

6 The prize was not given to the person who finished first, but would only be given to the person who finished the race in the exact amount of time, to the second, which was determined beforehand and sealed up in a coconut.

cultural festivals ended up being mostly cultural festivals put on by Florenese for themselves. In 2005, West Manggaraians elected their first definitive head of the new district. His support for uplifting tourism as the leading sector of the West Manggarai economy was ostensibly evident in his signing of the agreement for a Collaborative Management of the Komodo National Park, set up to test out new strategies for privatization of tourism and for funding the management of the park (Cochrane, 2013, p. 134). The collaboration was between the Komodo National Park Authority, the local government, and a Joint Venture company, Putri Naga Komodo. It was run by TNC and the Bali based businessman who had bought up so much land in the area in the early 1990s (Cochrane, 2013; Erb, 2012). There was considerable resentment at the forming of this joint venture. Many locals in the tourism industry wondered why outsiders were the ones awarded the concession to manage the park. There were also many who had protested against the TNC presence in the park, and had hoped for their withdrawal in co-management of the park after human rights abuse charges were brought up against them (see Erb, 2012). In 2006, the same district head also invited another international NGO, Swiss Contact, into Labuan Bajo to aid in planning for the better management of tourism in the region. Although ostensibly supporting pro-poor tourism[7], Swiss Contact's approach was very much pro-business, and after a few years of their assessments and recommendations for the improvement of tourism management in Labuan Bajo, big investors from Bali and Jakarta felt more confident to begin operations in western Flores and the first starred hotels started to appear outside of town (Erb, 2012). Not long after this, foreign investors also began to move into the town and the neighboring islands in much greater numbers (Erb, 2013).

Although the district head appeared to support tourism developments, in 2008, he allocated a concession for gold exploration to a Chinese mining company, just outside of Labuan Bajo, right next to a small hotel resort and not far from the borders of the national park. The company began to drill for gold, and the drilling disturbed several small hotels in the vicinity. Those working in tourism and conservation staged massive protests against the gold exploration, and fears grew about what kind of contamination and toxicity would seep into the park waters, if the company subsequently expanded their operations and actually began to mine for gold. Within the following year and a half, this first district head was voted out of office, due to the massive unpopularity of his policies that appeared to not only misunderstand how to support community based tourism, but also appeared to be against the development of tourism and conservation in the national park (Erb, 2011, 2012).

Subsequent years continued to see more and more foreign investors moving into the tourism arena of Labuan Bajo and local communities uncertain of how to profit from tourism. Local NGOs have attempted to start programs to engage people in production activities that would help them to benefit from tourism. The failure of these projects was especially acute in the area of agricultural produce; at least 80%

7 Pro-poor tourism is an idea that is supported by many development agencies, governments, and tourism organizations, as the use of tourism to reduce poverty in the developing world. It has come under much criticism, since though pro-poor tourism is considered to be any tourism that benefits the poor, it is often the wealthy who benefit (see for example Scheyvens, 2009, p. 193). This appears to be the case with the Swiss Contact's programs as well.

of Florenese are farmers, but the produce to support the hotels and restaurants in Labuan Bajo have been continuously brought in from neighboring islands. Local residents in Labuan Bajo, some of whom had land to farm, repeatedly complain about their inability to raise vegetables and fruit trees for produce. Livestock, particularly cows, allocated by a central government program to support livestock raising for export, roam unchecked into farmers' fields. Since most of the cows are the property not of poor farmers, but government civil servants who refuse to pen them in, their rummaging for fodder keeps destroying the kitchen gardens and other plots of land dedicated to fruits and vegetables. For the farmers located further away from Labuan Bajo, where livestock destruction is not a problem, the cost of transporting fruits and vegetables from some of these more distant villages into Labuan Bajo is much higher than the cost of bringing them over by ferry from other islands. Buses charge the price of one passenger for every large sack of produce conveyed to the town. Conversely, farmers on neighboring islands can transport their produce free of charge on the ferry. Sunspirit, a local NGO, showed through their study (Dale, 2013, p. 139) that the failure of local agricultural production for tourism is a structural problem, not a problem of the unwillingness of farmers to produce for the markets of Labuan Bajo. However, the local government has not attended to either of these constraining conditions that keep local farmers from benefitting from selling their produce to the tourist market in Labuan Bajo.

Indeed, the continued misunderstanding of this problem is well encapsulated by the comment reputedly made by the governor of NTT in late April 2014: "Now that Sail Komodo is over, I am hoping that I will not hear any more about vegetables being imported from Bima, eggs being imported from Bima, meat being imported from Bima". The governor believed that Sail Komodo itself would somehow make imported produce no longer necessary, when in fact nothing done during Sail Komodo had focused on the underlying structural problems.

SAIL KOMODO: DEVELOPING TOURISM THROUGH A NATIONAL LEVEL EVENT

> Is it possible that NTT will lose its title as a poor province after the prestigious Sail Komodo 2013 event? Let's wait and see. (Rahalaka, 2013)

As I have shown in the previous section, people in western Flores have had different ideas over the years about how to profit from tourism and how to 'attract' tourists through various events. The events, successful or not, however, never seemed to solve the problem of how local communities could actually develop through tourism. What was true at the local level in Flores seemed to be also true at the national level. In 2009, when the central government started to coordinate national level marine events with the Sail Indonesia yacht rallies, they imagined and promoted these events as catalysts of tourism development. Through these marine events the central government began to inject funds into the poorer eastern Indonesian provinces for infrastructural developments that would support tourism.

When I first heard about Sail Komodo in 2012, I was very perplexed over how people in Labuan Bajo perceived this event as contributing to development and to tourism in western Flores. People talked about a number of sailing boats that were

to travel around the region, and this was imagined as a huge tourism event. Plans appeared to be all focused on the reception of the president in Labuan Bajo in the middle of September, but it was unclear to me how the travels of these sailing boats and the plans for a gala closing ceremony were supposed to develop tourism, or lead to benefits for the local economy. The large budget allocated for the closing event was accompanied by money to prepare the infrastructure in West Manggarai: the construction of an international quality hospital, the building of good roads to all of the tourist destinations in the district, and the rebuilding of the airport terminal.

Despite the central government's apparent emphasis on Sail Indonesia as a means to make infrastructural improvements to support tourism, at the provincial and district levels it was not entirely understood this way. Since the event was depicted as a tourist event, the hopes were built up that it would be the tourist visits during Sail Komodo that would launch economic improvement and become evidence of the positive effect of tourism on development. In this respect, the build up by the government of what Sail Komodo would actually mean, and what its effect on tourism in NTT was likely to be, was way out of proportion to the reality. To me, as in the cases of tourism events discussed in the previous section, this indicates the lack of understanding, particularly on the part of local government officials both at the provincial and district level, as to what role a tourism event plays in local development and in the creation of benefits from tourism for local communities. For example, the head of the provincial tourism board enthusiastically announced in July 2013, at the time of the Sail Komodo preparations, that "130 countries had already signed up to join the Sail Komodo" ("Sail Komodo: Sudah 130 Negara", 2013). By announcing the number of countries, instead of the number of the participants, the tourism head gave the impression that a massive amount of participants was likely to come. At the same time, the notion that the participants were 'countries', instead of individuals, gave a highly inflated idea of what the scale of the event actually would be, or ever had been. One month later, the tourism board head corrected this information and reported that the number of participants were only 73, and that they originated from 18 different countries, a much more modest statement about the likely size of the event ("Peserta Sail Komodo, 2013").[8]

The expectation that Sail Komodo would somehow directly benefit local communities was expressed in April 2013 by the district secretary of East Manggarai, who announced to *Flores Bangkit* reporters that "we welcome Sail Komodo as an event that will bring profit to our people" ("Sekda Matim", 2013), suggesting the local villagers would be able to sell their agricultural products, as well as their handicrafts, to the visiting sailors. The same view was expressed by the head of the tourism board in Central Manggarai district, but rather reversed. He expressed his disappointment that the schedule of places which participants were due to visit did not include any of the tourist sites in his district. "This means", he told reporters, "there will be no direct benefit to the people of Manggarai from the Sail Komodo event. Since they are

8 The actual figures of participants fluctuated depending on who was reporting and when the report was made. The numbers provided by Sail Indonesia for the event were those I mentioned earlier: 106 participants from 26 countries. The discrepancy may have been due to the numbers of boats arriving at various locations, and especially the numbers that actually entered Indonesia via Kupang for the opening ceremony.

not coming to Manggarai, there will be no effect on the hotels, restaurants, souvenir sellers or tourism sites that are in this district" ("Sail Komodo Tak Ada Untungnya", 2013). Later in August 2013, after Sail Komodo was already underway and quite a few places in NTT had already been visited by some sailors from the rally, the expectations of how the event was supposed to benefit local communities began to be dashed. The head of the destination section of the Provincial Tourism Board in Kupang proclaimed that "the economic impact of Sail Komodo towards the communities in the regions has been very small" ("Kecil Dampak", 2013). The few sailors that appeared at the local ports were only buying food and drinks; very few were buying locally made products, even though at every location where the different boats pulled into port locals presented their crafts in expectation of a sale. However, the destination head qualified his disappointment by the hope that "someday" the local people would benefit from tourism; these sailors would return to their countries reporting about the potential of tourism in NTT, and more tourists would come later. Thus, the impressions of how Sail Komodo would benefit local communities in NTT, as opposed to the reality, points to the misconceptualization of how tourism would bring development to local communities.

After the event, in the following year when I visited Labuan Bajo, the cynicism about Sail Komodo had grown palpable. Tales circulated of disorganization and the total lack of attention to those who were supposed to be the focus of the event – the Sail Indonesia yachtsmen and other tourists visiting Labuan Bajo. According to critics, ambassadors from various nations had been added at the last minute to the government guest list, while all of the rooms in the starred hotels in Labuan Bajo had already been booked for months. In order to make room for the ambassadors, all bookings were cancelled, and other visitors shifted to smaller places way out of town. The town was full of government officials and military, and any tourists who arrived in Labuan Bajo during the event could find no rooms and were forced to sleep at hotel reception areas, if they chose to stay in the town. At the Swiss Contact office, I was told that the government paid no attention to the sailors, who were the ostensible focus of the Sail Indonesia rally, and only the Swiss Contact staff went out to greet them when they arrived. As the major ceremony approached, the harbor was so full of navy ships and so noisy and intimidating, that the sailors left for Bali before the arrival of the president and the grand closing ceremony.

Other more serious reasons for peoples' negative assessments of the event surfaced. They referred to Sail Komodo as an "event to steal public funds", or "a ceremony to use up money", and there were many accusations of corruption, especially towards the central government elite. Right after the final ceremony in mid-September 2013, a group of civil society organizations in Labuan Bajo demanded an immediate audit of the budget for Sail Komodo ("Koalisi Masyarakat", 2013), since none of the programs funded by Sail Komodo money had actually been finished and much of the IDR 3 trillion were yet to be accounted for. In Labuan Bajo, not only was the hospital still not built, but accusations were being made of the misappropriation of funds on various projects, such as water treatment and storage networks, and the money to renovate the houses of local residents (Mammilianus, 2013; "Mantan Kadis", 2014). Local government office heads were being accused of misusing funds for the various programs they were supposed to facilitate during Sail Komodo. Some people said it

was the central government's unrealistic demand to fulfill targets that forced these officials to finish the projects, even if they were not in the allocated places or for the designated people.[9] Some contractors were also not paid back the money that they used for projects, leaving one man, for example, no alternative but to run from his creditors. People interpreted this as evidence that the central government elite were using Sail Komodo to steal money for themselves, and setting up others to take the blame for the corruption. In this way, for many at the local level, Sail Komodo had become *Sial Komodo* (in English "unfortunate Komodo").

One conversation I had with a hotel owner brought into focus the disorganized way the local West Manggarai government had handled Sail Komodo, but also, in his opinion, some surprising benefits of the event. He owns one of the most popular hotels in Labuan Bajo and has often been the target of envy from local competitors, as well as government officials. His hotel consists of bungalows built on the side of a hill. His difficulties with the government began about five years ago, when they refused to let him build a small café at the top of the hill where his bungalows were located, arguing it would impede the view of the passing vehicles. Since they forbade him to build a café (which would need a different building license), he built more bungalows instead and had apparently angered the government. His tussle with the government continued until 2013, when he received a notification from the local government that he would have to close his hotel, on a date that was two months before the final ceremony of Sail Komodo. This was despite the fact that the government had been worried for well over a year about accommodating the numerous visitors expected for the final ceremony. The hotel owner pointed out this flawed logic to the tourism board officials, and they intervened on his behalf with the appropriate government offices. However, despite the reprieve granted, he told me in May 2013 that he was fed up with being constantly harassed by the government and that right after Sail Komodo, in September, he would close his hotel. In May 2014, however, I found his hotel still open. Sail Komodo itself, he told me, had made him change his mind. It was evident to him that it was not the government or the foreign investors that kept things running during Sail Komodo, but instead the local people of western Flores. Hundreds of *nasi bungkus* (packets of rice with meat and vegetables) were prepared each day by the *rakyat kecil* (the little people) to feed all the different visitors who were staying in Labuan Bajo at the time. It was not the big restaurants run by foreigners, but the local, poor residents who had done their part to show their hospitality and make the event a 'success'. The hotel owner thus said he had come to realize that it was these average people that made up the economy of Labuan Bajo, not the big investors. Sail Komodo had made him realize that he need no longer be afraid of the government and their threats; they actually did not have much power, he said, instead the power was with the people. As a local he had decided that he still wanted to remain part of the tourism industry, having faith that it was the locals who were the basis of the economy and that locals would eventually find their way to participate in tourism developments that would benefit them.

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9 This was the case for the head of the department of social welfare, who could not find enough houses to renovate in the designated area, and so used the money to renovate houses elsewhere. He was accused of misappropriating funds and died of a heart attack before he could be brought up on charges.

CONCLUSION: TOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT

How is tourism expected to lead to development? Mega events like Sail Komodo, are imagined as catalysts for employment, investment, tourist expenditure, and a way to put a particular place 'on the map', so that a 'legacy' is formed, and tourists will be attracted in greater numbers. This certainly was part of the imaginary of the Sail Komodo event in East Nusa Tenggara province. Arrivals to the province were expected to substantially increase and poor communities were expected to directly benefit from these visitors. However, Sail Komodo, as so many other mega events, did not fulfill the expected imaginings. Some of the issues raised by Baade and Mathiesen (2004, pp. 345-346) can be discerned, with some adjustment for the context, in what happened during and after Sail Komodo. Particularly in Labuan Bajo, tourists themselves were actually displaced by the Sail Komodo final ceremony (the pinnacle of the mega-event) because of the numbers of central and provincial government politicians and officials who attended the ceremony, resulting in a type of "substitution of gains" (Baade and Mathiesen 2004, p. 345). The hotels were full, but not with foreign tourists. The government spending on tourist infrastructure for Sail Komodo, and public expenditure reduction on other matters, was another critical issue. Apart from accusations of corruption (and incompletion of projects), people queried why only infrastructure that would be used by tourists was prioritized – a new airport, which only the wealthy would use, and roads to designated tourist attractions, instead of much needed roads into more remote villages.

In this paper I have illustrated that there has long been a misconception about how tourism can lead to benefit for local communities in western Flores. Is simply the presence of tourists enough to guarantee that "money will fall from their pockets"? Cole (2008, p. 106) talks of how the NTT provincial government provided several homestays in one traditional village in Central Flores, to act as a model for other villages to follow, so that they could profit from tourism. However, she also argues that no discussion was held with the people in the village to explain what the homestays were, no training given as to how to manage them, and no linkages made with tour operators so guests would be directed there. Ultimately, the villagers ended up using the houses themselves, and they were never used as tourist accommodation. Interacting and communicating with tourists, and hence benefiting from tourism, is a far more complex matter than simply dropping infrastructure into a village or a town. In the case of Sail Komodo, and Sail Indonesia in general, it similarly appears that the Indonesian government has conceptualized tourism as the reason to offer development programs, instead of seeing tourism itself as a pathway to development. This is one reading of the Sail Indonesia endeavors – a way to channel money into the more remote regions to build infrastructure for tourists, but without actually showing the people how to benefit from tourism.

The emphasis of these types of government programs – allocating huge amounts of money for development – appears to emphasize that tourism developments are simply receiving financial gain. Money is needed to develop, so that money can be regained. Returning to Smith and Duffy's (2003) argument, money becomes the 'end', not the means to an end (p. 162). The actual dynamics of working with tourists, of communicating with them, and of understanding what they are looking for, seems to

be lost in all of the tourism events that have been planned in the province of NTT. In the crudest way, the idea that "money will fall from the pockets of tourists" appears to encourage people to imagine it as an easy way to make money, without clearly thinking through what needs to be done to 'make' this money. Investors have thus been sought by local governments, sometimes without consideration as to how different investments – a tourism concession in a national park and a gold mine on its periphery – might clash with one another. Money is the sole aim, without much thought on how to regulate these investments. Money also has become the main end for local residents in western Flores, who have increasingly sold their land, which had multiplied in value, especially since Komodo became one of the New Seven Wonders. This has become a concern of many NGOs, although the government does not yet see this as a potential problem, nor has there been any move to regulate land sales. Thus, in NTT the same critical remarks hold true that were made about tourism developments more generally in Indonesia and elsewhere in Southeast Asia several decades ago by Wood (1979) and Richter (1993), as a type of "dilemma" (Telfer & Sharpley, 2008, p. xiii), benefiting more the elite and outside players, with considerable leakage of economic benefits and the growth of dependency. Since 2008, outside actors have started to swarm into western Flores and use the open arms of the western Flores local governments towards tourism investment to open businesses and buy up land. What appears, in the long run, to be the only direct way that people in western Flores have been able to profit from tourism development is through selling their land – a problem that has emerged globally with the liberalization of land markets intended to support efficiency and investment (Zoomers, 2010). With this "foreignisation of space" (Zoomers, 2010, p. 430), it can be argued that people in western Flores are compromising their future and the likelihood that tourism will ever lead to development; unless, perhaps, more people can see tourism development the way the local hotel owner does – as a force for empowering the local community to make choices about their own future.

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The Tourism Encounter in Community-Based Tourism in Northern Thailand: Empty Meeting Ground or Space for Change?

Claudia Dolezal

▸ Dolezal, C. (2015). The tourism encounter in community-based tourism in Northern Thailand: Empty meeting ground or space for change? *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, *8*(2), 165-186.

This article offers a contribution to the anthropology of tourism by investigating the tourism encounter in community-based tourism (CBT) in Northern Thailand. It does so by discussing MacCannell's (1992) idea of the Empty Meeting Grounds and Said's *Orientalism* (1978), two works that contributed to research on power inequalities between tourists and residents in the developing world. By establishing a relationship between the two and embedding these in the wider literature on the tourism encounter, this article suggests moving away from binaries towards understanding the space of the tourism encounter and its potential for change. Building on empirical research conducted in Ban Mae Kampong, a CBT village in Northern Thailand, findings suggest that CBT shows signs of resident-host interactions that are based on understanding and learning rather than exploitation. While also in CBT friendships and meaning take time to emerge and the 'Other' is used as attraction, villagers' agency and control over tourism are acknowledged. This paper therefore calls for a revisiting of the theoretical grounding that influences our understanding of the tourism encounter and argues for an investigation of community power relations in connection to the tourism encounter and its potential for residents' empowerment in CBT.

Keywords: Community-Based Tourism; Empowerment; Northern Thailand; Orientalism; Tourism Encounter

INTRODUCTION

During the last few decades, social scientists have contributed to a wide understanding of tourism as a socio-cultural phenomenon. Much research has been conducted on the host-guest relationship (Smith, 1989), especially in the Global South, where the difference between the two parties is strongly pronounced (McNaughton, 2006; Mowforth & Munt, 2003; van der Duim, Peters, & Wearing, 2005). Tourism studies have largely been influenced by (post)colonial thinking, involving a superior and an inferior, i.e. a suppressed Other (Said, 1978), mostly in the form of the post-modern tourist versus the ex-primitive and exotic host (MacCannell, 1992). MacCannell's (1992) book on the *Empty Meeting Grounds* significantly contributed to how the tourism encounter is still perceived today, particularly in the developing world. This resulted in the tourist being characterized as intruder into peaceful communities, leading to a number of negative socio-cultural impacts (Smith, 2003). The tourist gaze (Urry, 2002), the consump-

tion of exotic culture (Yamashita, 2003), the intrusion into private space and cultural commoditization (Cole, 2007; Holden, 2006) are all well researched issues. Over the years, this somewhat intangible exploitation of residents contributed a great part to tourism's negative connotation.

However, recent studies have shown that the tourism encounter does not have to be negative and exploitative. Scheyvens (2002), for example, argues that the interactions between tourists and residents may lead to empowerment of the latter, depending on the interest tourists show in local culture and traditions. Furthermore, it is increasingly acknowledged that residents are also subjects in the tourism encounter and have agency and control (Oakes, 2005; Stronza, 2001), for example when returning the gaze, which is by far not one-sided (Maoz, 2006). Above all, alternative forms of tourism, such as community-based tourism (CBT), should give power to residents in planning, managing, and implementing tourism (Boonratana, 2010; Murphy, 1983) thereby leading to a more fruitful tourism encounter. Nevertheless, concepts of Orientalism and the Empty Meeting Grounds still influence tourism research to date.

This paper proposes a more balanced view on the host-guest-relationship by conducting a more detailed analysis of both sides constructing the tourism encounter. This proposal serves as a kind of intervention into recent tourism research that has tended to focus mainly on the tourists' side (Erb, 2000; Galani-Moutafi, 2000; Nyaupane, Teye, & Paris, 2008). I argue, however, that it is useful to consider the possibility of a change in the perceptions of tourism encounters or even counter-arguments to Said's and MacCannell's ideas. A number of questions drive the present paper and challenge the tourism industry's reputation as an "Otherness machine" (Aitchison, 2001, p. 144): What is the nature of tourism meeting grounds? Is the encounter a "utopian vision of profit without exploitation" (MacCannell, 1992, p. 28) or is there a chance for residents' empowerment and a collapse of the 'Other' vs. 'Self' division?

Specifically, this paper investigates whether tourism has the potential to create the basis for a more equitable and equally beneficial tourism experience for hosts and guests, and also if MacCannell's and Said's arguments have stood the test of time against the development of new tourism forms. Within this background, the overall aim of the paper is to explore the nature of tourism's meeting grounds of residents and tourists by critically questioning the theoretical grounding that has influenced tourism studies in the last years and still does to date. This is done by discussing empirical findings from research conducted in Ban Mae Kampong, a village in Northern Thailand that engages in CBT. Hence, this paper presents empirical evidence to challenge the Orientalist discourse in tourism research and also the idea that tourism in remote or vulnerable communities will result in negative outcomes for the host community.

The paper starts by tracing Said's (1978) *Orientalism* – the masterpiece of postcolonial thought and discourse – and relating it to a detailed analysis of MacCannell's (1992) ideas. The two works have much in common and have contributed significantly to the negative connotation of tourism and the host-guest relationship more specifically. It further discusses the possibility of the tourism encounter to turn into a space for change and consequently introduces CBT as the broader context of this study. The paper continues by laying out the study context and methodology used before proceeding to a discussion of the findings.

ORIENTALISM, EMPTY MEETING GROUNDS, AND TOURISM

Said's (1978) Orientalism as both a discourse and system of knowledge the West holds about the Orient has experienced manifold usage in tourism research, particularly the postcolonial and socially constructed division into Orient and Occident or Self and Other (Aitchison, 2001; Caton & Santos, 2009; Osagie & Buzinde, 2011; van der Duim et al., 2005; Yan & Santos, 2009). This is particularly applicable to the tourism encounter, with residents in the developing world's tourist destinations presented as exotic, pristine, and authentic, whereas the Western tourist enjoys the image of the advanced and superior (Caton & Santos, 2009). In order to establish a link between Orientalism and tourism, Table 1 lists main characteristics that demonstrate the connections between the two.

What clearly emerges from Table 1 is the notion of hegemony as a core characteristic of Orientalism and tourism, whereby the Self (i.e. the West, the Occident, or the superior identity) dominates the Other (the exotic Orient), which can be studied for reasons of self-identification (Said, 1978). It is not surprising that tourism is often seen as a microcosm of Orientalism due to its exploitative nature with the tourist gazing at cultural difference and resident communities and consuming them in a subtle way (Urry, 2002). Thereby, tourists' main travel motives are often self-identification (Crouch, 2004; Meethan, 2006) and self-realization (MacCannell, 1992). These rather egoistic travel motives, paired with the subtle political, economic, and sociocultural control the industry exercises (Giampiccoli, 2007) contribute a great deal to the negative aftertaste of tourism literature and establish a connection between Orientalism and tourism.

Most importantly, Western imaginations create mere representations rather than realities of the Other – both within the context of Orientalism and tourism. Tourism relies upon created myths and fantasies for marketing purposes (Selwyn, 1996; Pritchard, 2000; Yan & Santos, 2009) to ultimately attract the authenticity-seeking tourist (MacCannell, 1976) who arrives at the destination with pre-formed perceptions of natives (Osagie & Buzinde, 2011). Just like the Orient, residents are often museumized and seen as fixed in time and space (Burns, 2001, 2006; MacCannell, 1992): i.e. passive objects waiting to be discovered (Said, 1978).

MacCannell (1992) picks up some of the major aspects of Orientalism and applies these to the tourism encounter. According to him, tourism's meeting ground is one "where people live and tourists visit" (MacCannell, 1992, p. 176), a place without any real relationships or bonds between the two and marked by economic transactions, consumption, and suppression. MacCannell refers to tourism as a meeting point of post-moderns and ex-primitives, with the former characterized by a constant movement (not only due to tourism) and in search of what s/he has lost due to modernity. This relates to MacCannell's (1976) idea of the search for the authentic, as already stated in *The Tourist* (MacCannell, 1976). However, the tourist confronts an "ex-primitive", a performative primitive and a myth in terminology that is due to the influences of globalization and used to keep tourists' desire for the exotic alive (MacCannell, 1992, p. 26). This encounter yields nothing but exploitation, without the possibility of a beneficial situation for both sides (MacCannell, 1992). Table 2 presents an overview of MacCannell's major arguments, put into comparison with Valene

Orientalism (see Said, 1978)	Tourism
Orient as socially constructed by the West, 'orientalized'	Industry with economic value and social significance (Nyaupane et al., 2008)
Construction of the Orient helps the West to define itself through establishing contrast	Travelling for the purpose of self-identification or –change (Meethan, 2006; Noy, 2004)
Orient as a discourse constructed through: representation of cultures, histories, language by the West, experienced through the 'lenses' of literature, travel and stereotypes shaping the encounter with the Other	Reinforces cultural representations through creating reality *a priori* (through marketing, travel brochures, imagery, etc.), expectations and knowledge influence the host-guest encounter (Pritchard, 2000)
West as dominating power (hegemony), superior identity: 'us' versus 'the Other', domestication of the exotic	Condemned for hegemonic power of its (mostly Western) actors in economic, political, and sociocultural terms reigning over residents in less developed countries (Giampiccoli, 2007)
West 'knows better' how to represent the Orient and decides on what is good for the Other; Orient regarded as a passive object that can be studied	Development discourse dominated by Western ideas in the past – tourism development done to/ for versus by the community (empowerment) (Scheyvens, 2002; Telfer & Sharpley, 2008)
Representations instead of truth, Orientalism as a system of power and ideology	Postcolonial theory influencing tourism studies (Osagie & Buzinde, 2011)
Variety and distinctiveness of Eastern cultures is generalized under the term 'Orient'	Cultural homogenization affecting tourism and tourists in search of the authentic (Gotham, 2005; MacCannell, 1976)
Orient gains its sense with the Western consumer only - defining culture for own benefits, not for purposes of truth	Cultural difference in tourism highlighted to benefit the West – the tourist who is chasing myths (Selwyn, 1996)
Orient is regarded as given, as an *a priori* knowledge and certainty locked in itself, unchangeable (e.g. in travel books) and fixed in time and space	Exotic cultures regarded as fixed in time and space due to usage as asset and basis for the tourist product (Burns, 2001, 2006)
Orient is toured and watched but the European stays detached without involvement	Tourist in search of the authentic trying to get close to natives but constantly gazing upon and consuming the Other (MacCannell, 1976; Urry, 2002)

Table 1. Orientalism and tourism
(sources indicated in the table; own compilation).

Smith's (1989) *Hosts and Guests*, a milestone in tourism research of the host-guest encounter. A comparison is useful insofar as both works are widely used within the anthropology of tourism, with Smith tending to regard tourism as less exploitative than MacCannell.

What becomes obvious from Table 2 is that, whereas MacCannell seems to condemn tourism (to 'exotic' places) and its impossibility of equality, Smith sees a chance for mutual understanding through a closer contact between hosts and guests. According to Smith, the nature of interactions depends on the type of tourism and tourist – at the same time, though, she acknowledges the tourist in search of meaning and the exotic. The dichotomy and difference between host and guest is not denied, however, it is argued that cultural brokers can contribute a fair part in mediating between them (Nash, 1989). Hence, tourism as a social phenomenon even offers the possibility

MacCannell's (1992) *Empty Meeting Grounds* is …	Smith's edited volume (1989) *Host and Guest* discusses …
… the result of polyglot communities that are "nothing more than a territorial entity with a unified economy … and perhaps a single race" (p. 2).	… a transitional touristic social system based on the relationship between host and guest and their played roles and power relations (Nash, 1989).
… the theoretical free space between dialogue-partners, where the division into 'I' and 'he' as well as subject and object is permanent.	… the emergence of stereotypes in the host-guest encounter, where hosts become objectified. (This can be changed though through a closer contact in homestays e.g.) (Smith, 1989).
… the meeting ground where ex-primitives perform and post-moderns consume what is lost due to modernity, i.e. a place of commercialization.	… cultural homogenization and the growing importance of 'model cultures', i.e. cultural reconstructions of the past to divert tourists away from hosts' private life (Smith, 1989).
… "a place where people live and tourists visit" (p. 176), i.e. a staged community without human relationships or bonds due to the division into economic gain (host) and self-realization (tourist).	… the social disruption of hosts, which is dependent on the type of tourism and the number of tourists, i.e. it is sought to establish categories of tourism and tourists (Smith, 1989).
… the reality of an "utopian vision of profit without exploitation" (p. 28).	… tourism as a form of imperialism, where the center controls the periphery (Nash, 1989).
… the reality of the host-guest encounter in tourism, where the tourist seeks "to experience a place where human relationships still seem to exist" (p. 177), but is confronted with a lack in real bonds.	… a meeting point of hosts and guests where either the latter wants to "become acquainted with local people", which may even lead to understanding (Smith, 1989, p. 9) or interactions are impersonal (Nash, 1989).
… socially constructed and performative ethnicity in the form of ethnic tourism – helping to enforce racism by pretending equality.	… ethnic tourism as a combination of nature and culture tourism to satisfy the demands of the curious tourist in search of the exotic and meaning (Smith, 1989).
… hegemonic in nature with a superior Self and an oppressed Other, where human difference is tried to be suppressed, i.e. poles and divisions collapsed.	… the dichotomy between host and guest, i.e. two separate poles/divisions, where difference cannot be denied and where cultural brokers can mediate between them (Nash, 1989).
… the chance of positive involution, i.e. making the community use its qualities for its own development.	… the chance of cultural involution, i.e. using representation through tourism for preservation and status creation (Mckean, 1989).

Table 2. The host-guest encounter in tourism: Two theoretical perspectives (sources indicated in the table; own compilation).

of a so-called "cultural involution" where representation is used by locals for the purpose of preservation and cultural pride (Mckean, 1989, p. 119). Despite MacCannell's rather skeptical outlook on tourism and the encounter between people(s), he recognizes the chance of a "positive involution", i.e. using the community's qualities for its own development in the future (MacCannell, 1992, p. 306).

Both works share similar views on the exploitative nature of tourism and the encounter between host and guest. Still, MacCannell's referral to a division into subject and object, or Self and Other, and the difficulty of emerging relationships based on the objectification of the Other, are key points that distinguish the two works. While

Smith mentions the impact of pre-formed stereotypes on hosts, she acclaims the chance of personal contact and meaningful interaction.

MacCannell's reference to the postmodern world characterized by commercialization and the loss of human bonds is also picked up by Bauman (2000) in his idea of the *liquid modernity*. His metaphor is useful for examining tourism as a social phenomenon in a restless and 'fluid' society that is unable to assimilate changes. With people constantly on the move and more individualistic than ever, the community becomes a utopia of harmony and security (Bauman, 2000). The search for both individual freedom and security as well as the restless nature of the postmodern subject affects social relations: The meeting of strangers, implied by the accelerated movement of people, seems to be a "mis-meeting", i.e. quick encounters with neither interaction nor depth (Bauman, 2000, p. 95) that resemble MacCannell's Empty Meeting Grounds.

RETHINKING TOURISM ENCOUNTERS

The previous section has highlighted the somewhat negative light cast upon the tourism encounter. This can largely be led back to the usage of binary divisions in tourism research, characterizing inequalities between a Self versus an Other or the West versus the South, which some regard as simplistic and in need to be deconstructed (van der Duim et al., 2005; McNaughton, 2006; Woosnam, 2010). One argument is that the anthropology of tourism should move away from examining the Other to studying the space in-between parties in order to understand the meaning they construct together (Nash, 1996; van der Duim, 2007a, 2007b). It should also move from focusing on the tourists' viewpoint only towards including the host perspective (Trupp, 2014) and consider counter-arguments to the Empty Meeting Grounds. This is useful in order to generate an understanding of the potential that the tourism encounter could bear for change and empowerment (Dolezal, 2015). Maoz's (2006) *mutual* gaze is such an example, acknowledging that the gaze can be returned and that hosts are no longer the object of the gaze as once argued by Urry (2002). In addition, third parties, such as guides, can act as mediators between tourists and residents (Jensen, 2010), micro-finance in CBT projects can enable women to start their own businesses and foster a sense of pride and achievement (Megarry, 2008), and possibilities for self-representation and self-commodification on the global consumer market can increase local control (Ruiz-Ballesteros & Hernández-Ramírez, 2010). Some argue that, for instance, the presentation of culture and traditional knowledge to tourists can even lead to empowerment when they show an interest in residents' life (Miettinen, 2005).

A move away from one-sided analyses that prove disempowering for residents towards postmodern analyses (based on understanding the space of the guest-host-relation and using dynamic conceptualizations of power) can enable an acknowledgement of residents' agency to ultimately foster greater power equality in the tourism encounter (Dolezal, 2011; Hollinshead, 1998; Uriely, 2005). Leveling power relations between host and guest goes hand in hand with the cross-cultural understanding enabled through social interactions in tourism (van der Duim et al., 2005). The cultural differences between the two parties, however, need to persist to avoid affecting the

tourism product due to unfulfilled expectations of meeting the exotic (Yang, 2011). On the other hand, MacCannell (2011) argues that for the tourist the "other must not be so profoundly other as to preclude the tourist from relaxing in its presence and 'taking it in'. Differences are rounded off to make the passage of tourists possible." (p. 219). Still, there is a chance of identification through differentiation, which happens "when tourists' attempts to positively differentiate themselves from one another collapse in a moment of identification with the Other" (Gillespie, 2007, p. 580). Nevertheless, this collapse of Self and Other needs familiarity with the Other (Gillespie, 2007), which might be difficult or unwanted in tourism. This is largely characterized by brief, commercial transactions between consumer and producer (Cheong & Miller, 2000).

Based on these assumptions, the subsequent empirical investigation should cast light on the possibility of the tourism encounter as a space for change, with a particular focus on CBT as an alternative form of tourism.

COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM

CBT emerged as an alternative form of tourism against mass tourism and its negative impacts (Yamashita, 2003) to ultimately prevent dependency and inequality and increase residents' control in managing tourism activities (Hipwell, 2009). In the best case, CBT not only involves the community in the implementation and managing of the tourism product but also in planning and developing it (Boonratana, 2010; Novelli & Gebhardt, 2007). Furthermore, CBT should contribute to a development strategy that exceeds economic gains and aims at sustainability, agency, and freedom (Matarrita-Cascante, 2010). In doing so, CBT uses existing natural and cultural resources and contributes to their preservation, while also fostering understanding between residents and tourists (Boonratana, 2010).

Still, CBT is often romanticized and presented as a utopian idealization of reality (Matarrita-Cascante, 2010). Academics and practitioners alike criticize CBT for being too small-scale to effectively help relieve poverty (Mitchell & Muckosy, 2008). Other limitations of CBT include the uncertainty of the extent of real community involvement or empowerment, mainly because power relations within the community and wider tourism network are highly complex (Matarrita-Cascante, 2010). Communities often only participate in the implementation of agendas that are decided upon by external parties (Butcher, 2007) and important decisions come from the usual tourism actors, such as governments or private investors (Mitchell & Muckosy, 2008). Putting people at the forefront, CBT supposedly builds on democracy, however, the mere fact of not offering any alternative to locals contradicts this democratic orientation (Butcher, 2003). Thus, extensive capacity building at local level is needed to enable community members to understand their possibilities and make more informed decisions (Novelli & Gebhardt, 2007). In a case study of tourism in western Flores, for example, Erb (2015) demonstrates that tourism needs to be connected to training to lead to village development. Difficulties exist particularly in pursuing a type of development that coincides with everyone's ideas as communities and individuals' opinions are extremely heterogeneous (Blackstock, 2005; Gursoy et al., 2009; McNaughton, 2006; Nash, 2004; van der Duim et al., 2005).

Despite the mentioned criticism of CBT, residents, or the once Others, are said to be more involved in tourism planning through CBT projects (van der Duim et al., 2005). After all, CBT emerged out of a shift in the development agenda to a more community-based and neopopulist one (Butcher, 2007) and is thus representative of a wider shift in tourism development which, slowly but still, becomes a more sustainable and reflective practice. This can be led back to tourism casting a number of positive benefits, such as, for instance, shifting power to local communities through the creation of community ventures (Novelli & Gebhardt, 2007), environmental and cultural preservation (Boonratana, 2010), local participation (Lapeyre, 2010), socio-economic diversification (Snyder & Sulle, 2011; Zapata et al., 2011) and increased resilience for sustainable development (Ruiz-Ballesteros, 2011). A number of community-based initiatives emerged over the past years, particularly as part of what is usually called 'indigenous tourism' (Butler & Hinch, 2007), i.e. touristic visitation of indigenous people. In many cases these can cast economic gains while also bearing potential to improving indigenous groups' status politically in gaining power relative to other, usually more powerful, actors (Theodossopoulos, 2010). In addition, CBT can create a space for residents to represent themselves rather than be represented by third parties, as much as they reinvent themselves through the tourism encounter (Amoamo, 2011; Miettinen, 2005). Given these complex dynamics between the actors involved, CBT is a twofold phenomenon. Seen from a macro perspective, it bears potential to shift power from external actors (e.g. governments or foreign investors) to the local level while at the same time, it can foster local power inequalities and competition at micro level (Dolezal, 2015).

STUDY SETTING AND METHODS

The empirical research for this study was undertaken in Ban Mae Kampong (BMK), a village in Mae On district in Northern Thailand. Villagers identify themselves as *khon muang* (Northern Thai people), and are not part of the highland ethnic minority groups often referred to as 'hilltribes'. It is a best-practice CBT example in Thailand (TICA, 2008) and is divided into four different parts with the inner one being the most prosperous part of the village. From the center, the village spreads out two kilometers. Agricultural land and forests surrounding the village are most important for villagers' living as they rely on the production of coffee (Arabica) and Miang Tea. The streams running through BMK constitute an additional contribution to the financial income as they are used to produce electricity, which is sold to other villages. BMK has produced electricity from hydropower since 1983, contributing a big part to its independence (UNDP, 2009).

The possibility of homestays in BMK as well as the village's CBT best-practice status are, amongst others, reasons for choosing the village as location for the empirical research of this study. BMK is also part of the Thailand Community-Based Tourism Institute (CBT-I, see: www.cbt-i.org), which highlights community development and participation in and through tourism. The CBT-I facilitates research on CBT in Thailand as well as cooperation amongst stakeholders in CBT. It also provides training of villagers engaging in tourism. Moreover, BMK has received marketing and funding support from the Ministry of Tourism and the Tourism Authority Thailand

(Kontogeorgopoulos et al., 2015). The role of the village chief (at the time of study), Phrommin Phrommala, further contributed to tourism success. He initiated tourism in BMK in 1996, focusing on a sustainable tourism strategy: Tourism is allocated around long-term planning, making the village use their resources for a sustainable future and business without trying to follow other examples of mass tourism destinations (UNDP, 2009).

Tourism in the village takes place in the form of day trips, Flight of the Gibbon adventure tours (i.e. a tourism company based in the village), and homestays. The village is attractive for a wide range of international and local tourists, including school groups, families, couples, and travel groups coming to BMK as a part of their prebooked tours. It is a place of learning for international and local school classes as it serves as a fieldtrip location for ecology classes or outdoor training. While day trippers spend only a limited period of time in the village, enjoying a walk to the waterfall or some Arabica coffee, homestay tourists spend a more considerable amount of time and also money. While day trippers' contact with locals remains rather shallow, homestay tourists are generally more involved with the family they stay with (Boonratana, 2010).

Homestays were introduced to BMK in 2000 and 17 out of 123 households offered rooms to tourists at the time of the research. Not all households in the village are able to offer this service as this means undertaking major changes on the house to meet Thai homestay standards. Villagers are either directly involved in tourism through homestay or guiding or indirectly through manufacturing handicrafts or offering transportation. Even those villagers working in tourism focus primarily on the production and harvest of tea or coffee, but welcome the work in tourism especially for the time when they are under-occupied. Hence, the village does not depend solely on tourism, as it is not the main source of income (Phrommin Phrommala, personal communication, June 23, 2011). A part of the income from tourism is shared between the households in the community. For example, around USD 10 of the 18 homestay per night go to the village fund, collecting money for emergency cases (Phrommin Phrommala, personal communication, June 25, 2011). Despite these efforts, various studies proved the gap in income between rich and poor (Suriya, 2011; Untong et al., 2006), suggesting prosperity inequalities in the village and social inequalities that come to the surface in the form of community conflict (Kontogeorgopoulos et al., 2015).

The methods used for this study consist of observations, informal semi-structured interviews, and conversations with residents and tourists in BMK. Observations focused on interactions between locals and tourists and their behavior as well as village life and helped frame the analysis. In total, twelve semi-structured interviews were conducted in June 2011 with villagers of the inner two clusters of the village, who are main actors in tourism (see Table 3). Interviews focused on homestay owners and those involved in tourism in other ways, while at the same time also including villagers who have limited contact to tourists.

To understand the interactions between locals and tourists, observations proved most important as tourists' time resources were scarce (especially for day visitors). Nevertheless, individual/group discussions were arranged where possible. Eleven people participated in the latter, with an additional number of tourists forming part

Interviewee No.	Gender, Age Group	Occupation, Selection Criteria
Person 1	male 60-80 years	homestay, Miang tea plantation and harvest, guides coordinator (former guide), musician → experience with tourists
Person 2	female 40-60 years	homestay, Miang tea plantation and harvest, handicraft producer and seller → role of handicrafts
Person 3	female 40-60 years	Miang tea plantation and harvest, food stand/restaurant → no or barely any direct contact with tourists
Person 4	female 20-40 years	homestay, tour guide, massage, massage coordinator → contact with tourists on different levels
Person 5	female 60-80 years	homestay, Miang tea plantation and harvest → contact with tourists, older generation
Person 6	female 60-80 years	homestay, sewing → contact with tourists, single woman
Person 7	female 40-60 years	Miang tea plantation and harvest, small grocery store → barely any direct contact with tourists
Person 8	male 40-60 years	homestay, Miang tea plantation and harvest, coffee → contact with tourists, gender
Person 9	female 40-60 years	homestay, Miang tea plantation and harvest, handicrafts → importance of handicrafts
Person 10	female 40-60 years	Flight of the Gibbon, Miang tea plantation and harvest → employed at a company from outside
Person 11	female 20-40 years	homestay, restaurant → regular contact with tourists, age
Person 12	male 40-60 years	village chief

Table 3. Interviewed villagers (own compilation).

of observations. Participants were chosen to be representative of different age groups, gender, and nationalities. Frame analysis was used to identify common themes and categories (Gray, 2003). It is a technique that is used mainly for understanding differing perspectives, e.g. power relations and underlying assumptions on specific social phenomena (Bullock, 2010). Thereby, patterns arise if enough individuals share similar viewpoints or actions (Oliver & Johnston, 2010) based on the premise that "when two or more people hold the same frame(s) regarding a situation, they are said to be socially constructing reality" (Bullock, 2010, p. 25). In this article, frame analysis focuses on interviews, hence it examines perspectives of tourists and hosts through spoken data. Observations form a vital part of the research by providing an active field of context. Common themes emerging from the analysis are then categorized and underlying frames – for both residents and tourists – deduced. For practical

reasons, the analysis is deliberately based on the binary division of 'residents' versus 'tourists'. This separation allows for both sides being represented, hence it enables a balanced voice.

Challenges and limitations during the fieldwork included, amongst others, the small number of tourists visiting the village. This is mainly due to the weather conditions as the rainy season is the low season for tourism (Suriya, 2011). Moreover, given the theoretical underpinnings only *farang* (foreign) tourists were subject of the research. In terms of the host community, the challenge was mainly to gain an adequate understanding of the cultural context: In Thai culture – largely influenced by Buddhism – communication tends to be indirect in order not to 'lose face' and smiling in Thailand has different meanings besides happiness and approval (Berger, 2007; Slagter & Kerbo, 1999). Consequently, it is important to note that frames get their meaning by the community producing them (Santos, 2004). In addition, this study largely focuses on resident interviewees who form part of tourism to gain an understanding of their perspective on the tourism encounter. It does not, however, address the power relations within the wider community, a topic that future research will need to tackle.

FINDINGS

Residents

— The Nature of Tourism for Residents

One of the key aspects that emerged from the data analysis is residents' positive attitude towards tourism and tourists. Residents regard tourism as work, however, besides the financial profit, it generates pride and contributes to variety in daily tasks. Locals express feelings of excitement, for example, one villager (person 8) said that "having tourists in our house every day would mean more fun for us as it is not that calm when we have a visit and we like talking to people and treating them well". Others say that the fun in tourism lies in communication, including pointing at words and trying to get by with basic vocabulary (person 1). Generally, tourism is a preferred job, as it is easy work, compared to the hard Miang tea harvest (person 5). It even makes their work more interesting (e.g. producing handicrafts) when tourists constitute an audience and even participate in the work (person 9). Tourists' interest therefore generates pride amongst villagers.

Still, not everyone in the village participates equally in tourism or is trained for it. While most interviewees who are active in tourism feel confident interacting with tourists, others show an inability to welcome tourists and to communicate, which hinders them from feeling proud (person 7). "I am afraid that tourists are not happy here because they do not understand the language", is what one villager (person 7) said in response to whether she wants to participate in tourism.

— Villagers' View of the Tourists' World

Empirical evidence revealed that residents regard money as a threat to the sharing

community and as a characteristic of the West, where life is thought to depend on money and consumption (person 4). Villagers make a clear distinction between village life and life in the West. The farangs' world is pictured as sad, a world characterized by individuals that are so busy that they have no time for each other (person 2, 3 and 4). This view expands into picturing farangs as constantly consuming, a lifestyle totally different from the idea of a sharing village or community (person 2, 3 and 4). One of the villagers even feels sorry for the tourists because of their stressful life and would like to understand their language to give them warmth and a feeling of family and belonging (person 4). Many interviews revealed the connection between village life, family, and a sense of community that tourists lack in the villagers' view.

— *Interactions With Tourists*

When it comes to interactions, data revealed difficulties for both residents and tourists due to a lack of language skills. Interactions take place in form of sign language rather than direct spoken communication, which leads, amongst others, to an unwillingness to participate in tourism due to the possibility that farangs "might laugh at me because I cannot speak their language" (person 3). Others argue that studying languages together with tourists would assist in learning from each other, even though knowledge might be forgotten quickly (person 8). Nevertheless, language remains an obstacle that hinders fruitful interactions between residents and tourists. When referring to foreign tourists, residents tend to use the term *farang*, which is used for foreigners with white skin. While tourists may regard this term as impolite, it was found that the word is used merely descriptively, i.e. to differentiate between Thai and foreign visitors (person 1). There is an absence of racist connotations and hosts are aware of the term's impolite character in tourists' eyes, hence they avoid using it in the presence of guests (person 8).

Interactions with tourists are generally positive for residents after having overcome an initial phase of shyness (person 1). In BMK, residents are teachers of a sustainable lifestyle, admired by tourists for their demonstration of skills and healthy way of living, which they educate tourists about (person 3). Still, besides some degree of language skill, interactions require effort from both sides. When tourists, for example, do not ask villagers to join them for dinner, they will have food on their own (person 6). Hence, sensibility and openness turn out to be key for both residents and tourists who co-construct the tourism encounter. This example also shows that in CBT, encounters are more natural and evolving rather than characterized by one-sided offensiveness.

Interactions, however, are not limited to direct contact and conversations but equally involve gestures such as the usage of cameras. Residents acknowledge the fact that for tourists travelling involves capturing the Other with the camera. However, rather than feeling disturbed by tourists taking pictures, residents are convinced that tourists' motive behind it is an interest in their life and work (person 5). Disruption takes place when people have wrong intentions and bad morals: "When they smile, I also smile. It depends on their heart, some people look good and have evil hearts, some don't but [have] a good heart" (person 8).

Regarding residents' positive attitude towards tourists, it is not surprising that tour-

ists staying longer than a few nights somewhat become a temporary family member and are remembered when they leave (person 8). In BMK, relationships that resemble friendships seem to emerge: Some of the villagers receive pictures from their guests and proudly present photo albums (person 2 and 5). Tourists – be it Thais or farangs – return to the same homestays to undertake activities with their hosts, thereby pointing towards emerging friendships. The data also revealed that villagers prefer hosting farangs to Thai tourists, who are regarded as demanding, disrespectful, loud and polluting the environment (person 4 and 10).

— Community Collaboration, Influence From Outside and Development

BMK is well organized in terms of job and task allocation given that every person living in BMK is part of one of more village associations (e.g. massage, souvenir production etc.). Generally speaking, although collaboration could be observed between those participating in tourism, villagers are not all equally involved in tourism as mainly the interior two clusters participate directly. One of the challenges in making CBT a true community enterprise is to involve all villagers – a challenge that seems impossible given that not all want to participate in tourism. Some villagers are convinced that collaboration and consent are indispensable for making CBT work (person 8 and 9) and selfish thinking – stemming mainly from those who are originally from outside the village, is destructive for tourism and village life.

At the same time, development in the village signifies a certain influence from outside (e.g. established television connections, companies from outside operating in the village, private investors buying land) and poses a threat to the sharing community. The future is connected to feelings of fear and uncertainty as many expressed their concerns about people selling properties to entrepreneurs who do not share the community mindset (person 4). However, the selling of land is a reality, particularly because more young villagers search job opportunities in the city of Chiang Mai. There is a pronounced fear that the young generation will not return to the village due to limited job opportunities that do not require physical strain (such as Miang harvest) (person 8 and 9). Brain-drain therefore constitutes one of the biggest threats to the village and CBT, although "the community's most valuable asset may be the energy of its young people" (Hipwell, 2009, p. 302).

Tourists

— Tourist Experience

When it comes to the overall tourism experience, it was found that tourists' motives to visit BMK vary. For some, experiencing a novel and different way of living and interacting with residents prevails (Spanish couple), while for others, the physical environment, i.e. the forest and traditional houses (American couple, French male tourist), constitute the key attraction. Tourists' stays in BMK are generally of short duration (i.e. ranging from a few hours to 3 nights) given that most tourists visit BMK as part of an organized roundtrip (French travel group, Spanish couple). For these tourists, Thailand's rural areas present a place to relax and escape daily routine, but

they would not stay longer (Spanish couple) as they miss their busy lifestyle (American couple) and the lack of comfort: "No, it is not organized here, one or two days and that's it, only to see the forest and all that" (French male). This contradicts the view of some homestay owners, as presented above – oftentimes accepting tourists as temporary family members.

— Authenticity

Authenticity emerged as a key frame in tourists' experiences, with tourists trying to get off the beaten track (e.g. on walking tours), arguing that what they like most is "to get away from the places that are most touristic [to see] the life of real people" (Spanish female). Tourists regard 'the authentic' as a positive construct connected to residents' warm-hearted and natural way of interacting with tourists, which may be harmed by development (French female). Tourists avoid staged events and, based on their fear of encountering staged events, even regard those events forming part of daily village life as contrived. CBT therefore seems to constitute an escape from the oftentimes contrived touristic world, while skepticism in regards to how authentic the village really is, remains. A group of French tourists, for instance, believed that when their guide told them to give alms to the monks, those monks would only walk by as a demonstration for tourists. They did not know that this very day was *wan phra* (Buddhist holy day), where it was usual for monks to collect alms.

— Development and the Other

Interviews revealed that tourists believe a balance should be found between tradition and development (French female). Progress is particularly important for tourists when it comes to comfort: "There are no mirrors for men to shave, the toilets are wet, you need a towel for your feet afterwards. No, it is not organized" (French male). While comfort may be missing for tourists, BMK is not regarded as poor or underdeveloped:

> Here people have warm water, which was a surprise, they are really well equipped here, like with the streets, electricity everywhere. The people are poor, above all in the big cities, but here they are better off, they are rich. (French female)

Hence, poverty is relative to the living conditions in the respective country, a view that is shared by others:

> To me the village does not seem poor. When you see the houses, it is not poor. When we were in Bangkok in some places you have the feeling that the people are poor, here I see a way of life that resembles much a rural village in Spain. They can eat, they have everything they need, they do not lack anything. (Spanish female)

This statement reveals that this particular tourist compares the Other to the own socio-cultural context she comes from, potentially leading to an identification with

the Other and the once foreign. Furthermore, some tourists perceive seeing and experiencing the Other as an advancement of their own personality: "We chose Thailand to see other cultures, other ways of living, learn about ourselves. It is like learning that there is another world" (Spanish male). The aspect of learning is essential in BMK, also because the tourist product fosters tourists' admiration of villagers' self-sustaining lifestyle. During a walking tour in the forest, a French couple, for instance, was impressed by the sustainable and efficient way the forest's resources are used. Hence, in CBT, residents teach tourists through means of educational tourism. This also happens in the form of students visiting BMK, who constitute more than half of the tourist numbers in the village (Boonratana, 2012), ultimately turning the village into a place of learning and education.

— Interactions With Hosts

Communication between tourists and residents is complex in BMK. Whereas hosts are better able to cope with language barriers, tourists' behavior was generally shy, perceiving the lack in English language skills of the host family as a problem (American couple). Attitudes towards communication with hosts varied between tourists as some showed efforts to communicate, such as a study group from Australia where students used vocabulary sheets to ask questions. For others, residents' lack in language skills was a major argument for non-interaction: "No, the family does not eat with us … You cannot talk to them because they do not speak English, in Bangkok they speak English everywhere" (French male). Observations made the dialectic nature of communication obvious, demanding effort from both residents and tourists to enable fruitful communication. When this effort is given, meaning can evolve through constructing and playing with words together – or at least attempting to do so (French couple).

The knowledge that is transmitted to tourists needs the help of cultural brokers, taking the form of guides from outside the village who enable translation between residents and tourists. In BMK, one villager accompanies the external guide on walking tours, where the local guide gives information to the broker who translates to tourists. Although in this case locals are unable to represent themselves in spoken language, a certain level of communication with tourists and their understanding of the local context emerges. Nevertheless, tourists' education and the transmission of knowledge take time and are not always possible during their rather short stays in the village. It was observed that tourists do not have enough knowledge about the village to make correct judgments about Thai culture. This was revealed earlier when it came to the conflict concerning monks' alms collection.

DISCUSSION

The empirical evidence discussed in this paper enabled a more positive outlook compared to the tourism literature, which at times displays residents as suppressed and dominated by outside actors, especially tourists. In BMK, tourism does not only constitute a source of income but also presents an activity that enables the use and display of skills, characterized by enjoyable interactions and emerging friendships.

These may be due to the relatively small number of tourists who stay overnight and the fair distribution of overnight stays amongst households. As a consequence, tourists' visits are a special occasion for most homestay owners. Moreover, it was found that tourists do not necessarily regard residents as 'underdeveloped' and 'backwards'. Particularly the younger generation of tourists admires residents' lifestyle and seeks to benefit from interactions by learning from their hosts. Nevertheless, when tourists stay with residents for a short period of time, they tend to regard their hosts as mere servants, meaning that interaction is limited. As argued by Nash (1996) "the fact that tourists, being tourists, are *en passant*, a condition that, itself, tends to lead to superficial social contacts, might justify the broader use of the term "empty meeting grounds" for tourist-host contacts" (p. 87). In these interactions, it was found that hosts feel sorry for tourists who are in search of what they have lost due to modernization. At the same time, the tourists' search not only for the authentic, but also for values of family and togetherness, is not inherently negative as has so long been propounded in the literature. After all, no sign of residents' exploitation by tourists or unidirectional power-relations were observed. Tourists do 'gaze' in BMK, however, residents do not feel disturbed, meaning that the tourist gaze does not necessarily come with unequal power relations. After all, "[l]ooking is complex too. There is an engaging, connecting, caring content and character of looking, rather than merely a detached, observing, exploitative one" (Crouch, 2004, p. 92). Residents are well aware of what vacations mean for tourists and understand their oftentimes superficial travel motives. Rather than exploiting the tourist or regarding them as the new colonizers, residents feel sorry for them, wanting to share their feeling of family, togetherness, and community.

As a consequence, it emerged that in BMK tourists and residents (at least those actively involved in tourism) derive benefits from tourism equally. What has contributed to the assumed power inequality in literature is the way the Other is often museumized, exoticized and 'sold' to the tourist. However, particularly in CBT, locals should be agents who – given that they initiate and plan the tourism product – can control how they present and market themselves (Theodossopoulos, 2010). In BMK, CBT uses exoticism and difference to earn money – while at the same time keeping tourist numbers low – therefore benefiting residents rather than presenting a microcosm of Orientalism. This means that residents are not victimized but have agency in how to represent themselves, consciously choosing what parts of their identities they wish to display (Stronza, 2001). Also, in contrast to Thailand's hilltribe villages, villagers in BMK do not belong to an ethnic minority group, which turns nature and education, rather than people themselves, into the main attractions. Along with the interest that tourists show, this status enables residents to empower themselves much more than is usually argued for tourism in the developing world.

In the context of CBT in BMK, more equal power relationships between residents and tourists are possible, based on an encounter with an Other (be it resident or tourist) that is based on respect and learning. Residents and tourists alike co-construct the tourism encounter to produce mutual benefits, with residents earning an income and diversifying livelihoods and tourists gaining rich personal experiences. Through learning about difference, both parties also learn about themselves. The connections that are drawn between oneself and others, however, take time and familiarity (Gil-

lespie, 2007), which is not always possible in tourism. This study revealed that, if meaning is to be constructed in CBT, effort (not necessarily skills) is needed from both sides, happening through a play with words between residents and tourists. This is in line with Cohen's (2004) argument that communication in Thailand's tourism encounters often "is an enjoyable game in itself and … ease[s] the tension of the encounter between complete strangers" (p. 220). Therefore, the possibility of creating meaning and relationships even without linguistically understanding each other emerged from this study. Hence, while residents may be regarded as exotic, pristine, and authentic, they share the status of proud teachers who showcase their skills, knowledge, and lifestyle to tourists.

While the so-called Other may form the basis of the CBT attraction, this study did not reveal any of Orientalism's hegemonic and imperialistic thinking – even though comfort emerged as an issue highlighting pronounced differences between tourists' and residents' lifestyle. As a consequence, CBT may be a field where Orientalism is not an appropriate metaphor or theory, making room for tourists' involvement in local realities (subject to certain temporal limitations) and turning the tourism encounters into a space of appreciation. Without romanticizing the tourism encounter, the signs of understanding, respect and learning evidenced in this study can challenge MacCannell's (1992) propounded 'emptiness' in encounters. At the same time, one needs to acknowledge that MacCannell's ideas were conceptualized at a time when CBT was still a largely unknown type of tourism. In addition to changes in tourism planning and development, both tourists and residents are not as naïve as once pictured. Tourists are well aware – at times even paranoid – of the 'staging' of events and residents do not always perform. In fact, they try to give tourists a sense of warmth and family. They "create ersatz communities to manufacture and even to sell a sense of community" (MacCannell, 1992, p. 89), which should not immediately be regarded as problematic. At the same time, however, this paper has shown the dilemmas that BMK and many other CBT villages face. As Kontogeorgopoulos et al. (2015) mention, tourism in BMK runs the danger of threatening 'rural authenticity' and the Thai principle of the 'self-sufficiency economy', which serves as the major attraction for both domestic and international tourists. With tourism and development, influence from outside is usually unavoidable, which is obvious in BMK where community spirit is increasingly disrupted and replaced by individualistic thinking and uneven benefits. This change in values poses a threat to the sharing community, the one aspect that seems to constitute the greatest asset for tourism in BMK.

CONCLUSION

This article has offered insights into tourism meeting grounds in CBT and has demonstrated the somewhat overcriticized nature of tourism research. While the theoretical concepts used in this study help us to shape our critical lens of the tourism encounter, this article showed that the socio-cultural realm of tourism is characterized by a theoretical grounding that is difficult to apply to alternative forms of tourism. In some cases, these types of tourism, including CBT or indigenous tourism, present more sustainable practices and different dynamics between residents and tourists than is the case for mass tourism. As a consequence, there is a need for more

empirically grounded research, particularly into the tourism encounter in CBT, in order to enable more nuanced analyses of tourism encounters in different tourism environments. The aim of this study was not to prove the inapplicability of MacCannell's thoughts, but to use his ideas and concepts to generate new insights in a CBT context. As MacCannell states himself, "nothing is healthier for the advancement of a field [than refutations]. So long as critiques and supportive studies are based on evidence, I look forward to joining the dialogue" (MacCannell, 2011, p. xi). MacCannell's intention with the Empty Meeting Grounds was certainly not a generalization of tourism's effect on societies, leading towards the need of making a distinction between mass tourism and other more alternative forms of tourism. In fact, this paper took MacCannell's ideas a step further, which already offered a hint of the changes that were and are still about to come. His idea of a positive involution connects to new and alternative forms of tourism, where the deadlocked concepts of inequality and binaries need refutation. It was found that the gaze exists but does not disturb, that meeting grounds can be characterized by fun and variety, and that appreciation, respect, and even friendships may emerge.

More research needs to be done that connects the wider community power relations to the tourism encounter, understanding how the social ties in the form of either collaboration or individualistic thinking play out in CBT, a business that is largely reliant on the existence of a 'community' in order to function effectively and as part of the attraction. Development through tourism, can, in turn, disrupt existing social ties that are the basis for CBT. Potential frustration, therefore, stems from the way tourism is managed and the fear of change rather than the tourism encounter. The latter, however, can serve as a window into intra-community relations, which often play out in the interactions that constitute the social space of the tourism encounter.

This study showed that the tourism encounter is a space that the (perhaps stereotypically restless) tourist and the (perhaps authentic) community co-construct, resulting in mutually fruitful relationships. In this case, it becomes a space of change, where the hosts' chance to teach the tourist escaping from an eventual daily empty meeting ground into the shelter of the – then rightly – romanticized community should neither be ignored, nor indicted but certainly seized.

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Commodification and Politicization of Heritage: Implications for Heritage Tourism at the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long, Hanoi (Vietnam)

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▸ Bui, H. T., & Lee, T. J. (2015). Commodification and politicization of heritage: Implications for heritage tourism at the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long, Hanoi (Vietnam). *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, *8*(2), 187-202.

The current study deconstructs the process of turning heritage resources into tourism products. A case study of the Central Sector of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long, a UNESCO World Heritage site located in the capital city of Vietnam, Hanoi, provides an in-depth understanding of the plural use of heritage. Findings from the study reveal issues of heritage dissonance inherent in the process of resource selection, interpretation, and targeting for different audiences. It is apparent that commodification cannot be separated from the politicization of heritage. In the case of heritage of national importance and international significance, politicization has been prioritized and results in diminishing the utilization of heritage for commercial purposes such as tourism.

Keywords: Commodification; Heritage; Identity; Tourism; UNESCO World Heritage

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INTRODUCTION

Heritage is defined as "a contemporary commodity purposefully created to satisfy contemporary consumption" (Ashworth, 1994, p. 16). Historical monuments become heritage products through a process of commodification, and heritage products influence place identities via politicization. Heritage tourism, a form of economic use of heritage is an arena operationalized by both commodification and politicization. The triangular relationship between heritage, identity, and tourism is summarized by Ashworth (1995): (1) Heritage contributes toward political identity (politicization); (2) heritage supports tourism (commodification); and (3) heritage tourism contributes toward the individual's appreciation of places and political identification. Similar to the propositions of Ashworth (1994), Smith (2006) contends that heritage symbolically represents identity through a cultural process that encompasses experience, memory, and remembrance.

The plural use of heritage depends on the socio-political and economic context of the respective society. Since "the past, transformed into heritage, is a ubiquitous resource with many contemporary cultural, economic and political functions" (Ashworth, Graham, & Tunbridge, 2007, p. 1), it is necessary to deconstruct how heritage is transformed for contemporary use within particular cultural, economic, and political contexts. For example, Hitchcock, King, and

Parnwell (2009) have set their conceptualizations and representations of heritage in Southeast Asia against relationships between culture, nature, tourism, and identity. Earlier work by Peleggi (2002) analyzing *The Politics of Ruins and the Business of Nostalgia* revealed that selected historical sites enjoy special visibility as symbols of Thai identity within the larger construct of the national heritage, at the same time as they are being commodified and consumed as tourist attractions. Thailand, however, never having been a colony, is a different case to other Southeast Asian countries that are former colonies. In the course of gaining independence, the political elites of Southeast Asian countries constructed narratives of their origins that have often been concerned with nation-building and creating distance from their former colonial masters (Hitchcock, King, & Parnwell, 2009); a process in which heritage plays an important part.

Moreover, recent criticism of the Eurocentric biases of the global heritage movement recognizes the need for the development of heritage frameworks that are sensitive to the complexities and socio-cultural specificities of the Asian region (Long, 2012; Winter, 2009; Winter & Daly, 2012). Rapid growth of travel for leisure and recreation within Asia today is presenting new challenges for policy makers regarding the management and presentation of heritage sites. These trends stimulate the discussion on heritage politics in the new era (Timothy & Boyd, 2006) and particularly within the political systems of Asian communist states (Long, 2012).

Previous studies of heritage in communist states have discussed the utilization of heritage for tourism (Henderson, 2000, 2007) as well as the hybridity of heritage that accommodates contemporary strategies of commemoration and tourism in the context of Vietnam (Bui, Joliffe, & Nguyen, 2011; Long, 2012). However, none of the work concerning heritage tourism in Vietnam has addressed the complicated nature of the interrelationship between heritage, identity, and tourism, leaving a large gap in scholarly research of Southeast Asian studies. This study contributes to existing literature by investigating the process of commodification and politicization of heritage within the context of contemporary Vietnam. Using a case study of the UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS), the Central Sector of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long – Hanoi, the analysis drills into the issue of heritage politics bounded up in the process of political and ideological legitimation and economic development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Adopting the notion that "heritage is not a 'thing', a 'site', a building or another material object, but heritage is what goes on at these sites" (Smith, 2006, p. 44), this review of literature clarifies the politicization and commodification of heritage (Ashworth, 1994) in the triangulation of heritage, identity, and tourism. Existing literature on heritage tourism in Southeast Asia and the context of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long, Hanoi (Vietnam), has also been reviewed.

Commodification and Politicization of Heritage

Heritage is defined by Smith (2006) as "a cultural process that engages with acts of remembering that work to create ways to understand and engage with the present, and

the sites themselves are cultural tools that can facilitate ... this process" (p. 44). Conceptualizing heritage as "what goes on at the site", Smith emphasized that "heritage had to be experienced for it to be heritage" (p. 75). Other important aspects of heritages include memory, remembering, and performance. The meanings and memories of past human experiences are recalled through contemporary interactions with physical places and landscapes (Smith, 2006).

Attention has increasingly been devoted to the ways in which cultural phenomena are deployed to make statements about identity. Providing "meaning to human existence" (Graham, 2002, p. 41), heritage is used as a legitimizing discourse in constructing and maintaining a range of 'identities' (Crouch & Parker, 2003, p. 405). Heritage plays a majorly important part in the process of trying to distance independent Southeast Asian states from their former colonial powers (Hitchcock, King, & Parnwell, 2009). In post-colonial developing states this is an urgent task to select and deploy archaeological finds and heritage sites to present images of national resilience, unity, and innovation, often in the context of an "imagined" (Anderson, 1991, pp. 178-185) golden or glorious age of endeavor and achievement which was subsequently eclipsed by colonialism (Glover & Bellwood, 2003).

This point was addressed in an earlier work of Richter (1999) on cultural politics of heritage in Asia where "even the very substance of a heritage is a political construction of what is remembered" (p. 109). Heritage has been politicized in shaping sociocultural identities in support of particular state structures. The "dominant ideology hypothesis" (Ashworth, 1994, p. 20) asserts that governments will project message legitimating their position. Official narratives are highly selective, particularly in communist states, where the official attitudes to the past, including approaches to heritage, contribute to "the effort to create more purely nationalistic narratives" (Long, 2012, p. 210). In some cases such as China and Russia, heritages are laboratories and mirrors of new cultural practices and ideologies that reflect the two countries' different historical traditions (Breidenbach & Nyiri, 2007).

The state, and particularly the state in the developing world, enters into a relationship between tourism and identity because both are seen to require state-directed political action (Hitchcock, King, & Parnwell, 2010). Heritage and associated narratives of identity, however, appear in a different manner to domestic and international visitors. Places of heritage are commonly used to build patriotism at the domestic level and spread propaganda to international visitors (Timothy & Boyd, 2006). According to Richter (1989), formal planning of tourism in developing Asia started around the beginning of the 1970s, and in general gave greater priority to international over domestic tourism, Western over Asian tourists, and up-market over low-spending clientele. The single most important objective was 'more tourism'. However, current trends of heritage tourism promotion show a shift in market focus. For example, Peleggi (1996) addressed growing appreciation of cultural heritage in the domestic arena.

Heritage is a political tool in negotiations over identity, but it is also a part of an 'industry' – a heritage, tourism, and leisure industry. Cultural tourism was once regarded as a specialist, niche activity that was thought to be pursued by a small number of better educated, more affluent tourists who were looking for something other than the standard sun, sand, and sea holiday. Now, it is viewed as part of mainstream

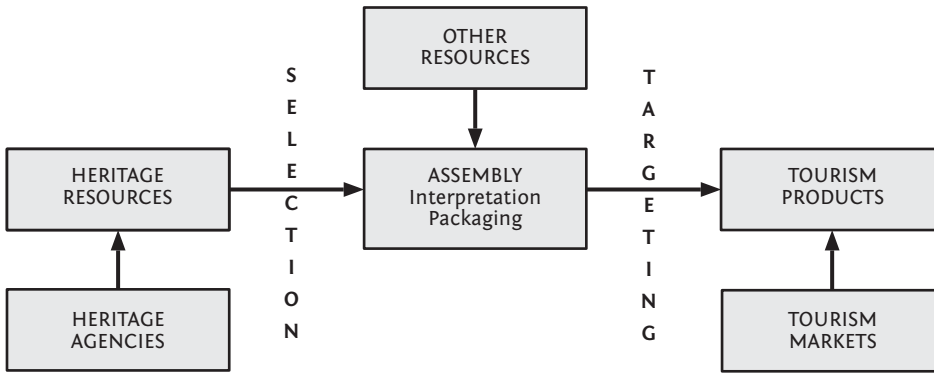

Figure 1. Commodification of heritage (adapted from Ashworth, 1994, 2000).

tourism (du Cros & McKercher, 2015). The transformation process actualizes the potential of the asset by converting it into something that tourists can consume. In order to facilitate this consumption, cultural heritage assets must be transformed into products. Despite the fact that cultural tourists want to consume a heritage experience, not everyone is capable of having the same depth or quality of experience (du Cros & McKercher, 2015).

Concerning how heritage has been selected, interpreted and targeted to different markets, Ashworth (1994, 2000) proposed a model of heritage commodification presented in Figure 1. In this model, resources are selected based on the criteria of consumer demand and created through interpretation for targeting certain markets with particular heritage (tourism) products. In fact, "the interpretation, not the resource, is literally the product" (Ashworth, 1994, p. 17). The interpretation and representations of the heritage resource are selected according to the demand of the present (Ashworth, Graham, & Tunbridge, 2005). The discrepancy between the interpreted heritage product and 'objective historical truth' also results from different experiences perceived by visitors in regards to the heritage asset. Here, personal experience, attachment, relevance, and emotional elements are brought into heritage construction (Timothy & Boyd, 2006).

The touristic uses of heritage, however, have the potential to cause heritage dissonance as the creation of "heritage products endow those products with the tensions and dilemmas inherent in all commodification for contemporary markets" (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 1996, p. 21). The root cause of the dissonant nature of heritage lies in their observation that heritage is created through interpretation. Not only what is interpreted, but how it is interpreted and by whom will create different messages about the value and meaning of specific heritage places and the past represented (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 1996). This issue, however, has been explored only to a limited extent in the context of Southeast Asian tourism, and Vietnam in particular.

Heritage, Identity, and Tourism in Vietnam

Vietnam is a socialist country with strongly centralized political structures. Since 1986, the country implemented market economy reforms. Central government also

exerts an influence at cultural levels. Aligning with economic reforms, during the 1990s the Vietnamese government came to realize that one way to win international recognition for Hanoi was through promoting its heritage (Logan, 2009, p. 90). In June 2001 the National Assembly introduced the Law on Cultural Heritage that focuses primarily on defining tangible or intangible cultural heritage, historical-cultural sites, scenic landscapes, relics, and antiquities. At the national level, heritage has been extensively used to express the cultural, social, and political beliefs of the political leaders under the mainstream interpretation of patriotism and national identity in the context of the capital city of Vietnam (Bui, Joliffe, & Nguyen, 2012).

Designation of UNESCO World Heritage status is believed to be a top tourism brand that places destinations among the pantheon of other world-class destinations (Li, Wu, & Cai, 2008). The approach to designating a UNESCO World Heritage in Vietnam is found to be similar. In a newspaper interview in 2007, Vietnam's Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Nguyen Van Tho, gave five reasons for embracing the World Heritage program for:

> building and advanced Vietnam culture with strong national identity; it promotes national pride and Vietnam's image in the world; it offers a global brand, and was prerequisite to developing human resources, attracting foreign investment, especially in tourism; and it could be a good and convincing tool to introduce Vietnam's national identity to the world, especially its age-old history and rich culture. (cited in Logan, 2014, p. 70)

Starting in the 1990s, the growth of the tourism industry and the development of cultural heritage policy in Vietnam became deeply intertwined. The government saw heritage tourism as a powerful economic and diplomatic tool; consequently heritage preservation received a great deal of attention relative to other cultural endeavors (Saltiel, 2014). Cultural tourism emerges as the most important economic activity in Vietnam (Lask & Herold, 2004). Hue and Hoi An, two cities in central Vietnam, are key examples of how inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List brings public relations and economic benefits. In Hoi An and Hue, through the sale of tourist entry tickets to the World Heritage site, the municipal government has been able to restore properties, both state-owned and private, and has transformed the once deteriorating heritage town into a thriving tourist destination. It was believed that the inscription of Thang Long Citadel is expected for the boost of tourism, and for further international recognition of Vietnam and its governance structure after being designated World Heritage status in 2010 (Logan, 2014). This is positively perceived by the residents of the city (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2013).

The Imperial Citadel of Thang Long – Hanoi

Thang Long is the ancient name of Hanoi, the capital city of Vietnam established in 1010. The archeological evidence shows the sign of early residence dated back to the seventh century. The transformation of Thang Long follows a cyclical pattern; the city began as the provincial capital of an external power before becoming capital of an independent Vietnamese state (Whitmore, 2013). The city served as the political

and economic center from the early 11th century to the late 18th century. Although from 1802 onwards, the imperial city was moved to Hue, Thang Long, remained an important political center in Northern Vietnam. Capturing Hanoi in 1874, the French demolished the ancient citadel, tore down the imperial palace, and in the place of the former citadel, erected the military headquarters of colonial power for the vast region ensemble of French Indochina (modern Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia). After the First War of Independence (also called Indochina War, 1946-1954), followed by the division of Vietnam into two entities in 1954, the Citadel became the military headquarters for North Vietnam during the Second War of Independence (so called Vietnam War, 1954-1975). Between 1994 and 2004, the Ministry of Defense gradually abandoned its use of the property, handling it over for cultural and historic purposes. The Citadel reclaimed its cultural identity thanks to a break-through archeological excavation in 2002 for the construction of a new National Assembly Hall at 18 Hoang Dieu (now an annexed archeological site). The Central Sector of the Imperial Citadel of Thang Long-Hanoi was designated UNESCO World Heritage status at the 2010 World Heritage meeting in Brasilia in the year of its 1000th birthday.

The Universal Outstanding Values (OUV) of the Thang Long Citadel are reflected in criteria (ii), (iii) and (iv) in its longevity and continuity of a political center as stated in the description of the property on UNESCO World Heritage Center (2015). On criterion (ii), the property features cross-cultural exchanges that contributed to the formation of a unique culture in the Red River Delta. Criterion (iii) was justified by the almost uninterrupted role that the Citadel has played as the center of power from the 11th century up to now. Criterion (iv) states that the Citadel, with its political function and symbolic role, is directly associated with numerous and important cultural and historical events that have marked the formation and deployment processes of an independent country over a thousand years, including through the colonial period and the two modern wars of national liberation and unification.

METHODS

The case study method employed in this study is an in depth empirical inquiry investigating a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2009). The mutual interdependence of the commodification and politicization of heritage as a case should better be examined with the heritage designated with UNESCO World Heritage status. Thanks to its global significance, this designation attracts great attention from policy-makers and the tourism industry for both the purposes of nation-building and economic enhancement. Located in the capital city with a long history of being the political and cultural center of the country, Thang Long – Hanoi Imperial Citadel has long been an essential part of the history of the capital city and of the country as a whole. More importantly, the Citadel has been selected as a prime target in the strategy to boost heritage tourism in Hanoi (Thang Long Conservation Center, 2013), where the UNESCO World Heritage label functions both for reaffirmation of political identity and as an asset for heritage tourism.

Data for the research was derived through participant observation by one of the authors, who has been witness to the transformation of the Citadel for many years. The team conducted ten interviews with heritage custodians, government officers

in the tourism industry, and scholars to gain an in-depth understanding of the patterns of heritage governance. In the interviews, respondents talked freely about their concerns with regards to issues of heritage governance and in relation to tourism development. Instead of using a structured approach, the conversations with selected respondents were conducted in a flexible manner, adopting a semi-structured framework. Interviews and participant observation were carried out with fifteen tourists in 2014 and 2015. A researcher approached tourists and talked to them as they toured different sections of the Citadel. The questions centered on their observation and perception of interpretation programs at the heritage site. In addition, an extensive review of scholarly publications and the attainment of data from governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in the conservation and development of the site, adds more insightful understanding of the triangular relationship of heritage, identity, and tourism development at this UNESCO World Heritage site. Fieldwork data was projected against the framework of heritage commodification by Ashworth (1994) presented in Figure 1. Data was sorted and arranged into themes reflecting different components of the framework.

FINDINGS

Analyzing the responses of visitors and actors involved in heritage management and interpretation, the findings from our current study shed light on three major actions in the convergence of heritage resource to tourism products. First, OUV of the heritage determined the selection of central themes presenting heritage identity. Second, interpretation of heritage identity features the OUV while relatively neglecting tourists' interest. Third, interpretation targets domestic tourists for fulfilling political purposes and thus leads to dissonance in perception of international tourists. Examining the process of converting heritage resources into tourism products, we discovered that the narratives of the Vietnam War parallel with the narration of historical heritage's OUV. Despite limited interpretation of the Vietnam War at the Citadel, tourists found the heritage of war fascinating and demanded more information.

Selection

Commenting on potential resources for tourism development in the early 1990s, Gillespie and Logan (1995) noted: "There is no doubt that Vietnam will become a tourist mecca within the next ten or fifteen years and not only because of its recent war history but also because of its imperial monuments at Hue and natural scenery at Ha Long Bay and along its southern coastline" (p. 105). Interestingly, resources from the recent history of wars came into the narrative prior to cultural and natural resources. Wars and national struggles for independence are presented as parallel to the cultural values of the heritage in the OUV statement of the Citadel. In further detail, criteria (iv) refers to the symbolic role of the long history of resistance against invaders remarked by various wars:

> It was within this distinctive Vietnamese cultural and power center that key events in the consolidation and defense of national independence from China

> led to the Red River area, with Thang Long – Hanoi at its center, becoming, in effect the 'border zone' between Southeast and East Asia. The defense of Vietnamese independence from Mongol invasion in the 13th century, an event of great regional importance, served to perpetuate the separation of Southeast Asia from China ....The meeting of East and West and the struggle for power under the colonial period have also left remarkable imprint on the heritage site. ... Vietnam played the leading role in the war against colonialism and the national liberation movement in the 20th century in Southeast Asia and Asia as a whole. (Thang Long Conservation Center, 2012, pp. 90-91)

The interpretation and exhibits displayed in the area of the Citadel mainly present OUV criteria (ii) referring to cross-cultural exchanges and criterion (iii) for the center of power since the 11th century. For example, the panels introducing outstanding values of heritage at the entrance contain no information on the two contemporary wars:

> The heritage with its architectural remains, construction technology, town planning, landscape design and monumental and plastic arts, represents the contacts and exchanges of ideas of Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, colonialism and communism on the background of local culture of Vietnam. They are adjusted, adopted and modified to create a unique and typical Vietnamese culture that exists, over a thousand year of history. The Heritage is the prominent emblem of the evolution of Asian civilization of the Vietnamese that being formed and proceeded in the Northern Delta from the 7th century to the 19th–20th century. (Panel "Outstanding values of Thang Long-Hanoi Imperial Citadel" at Archaeological site 18 Hoang Dieu, Ha Noi, Vietnam)

The information exhibited on the two major wars, Indochina- (1946-1954) and Vietnam Wars (1954-1975), however, is relatively limited. Panels in the interpretation center do not provide much information related to the wars. While there are three buildings dedicated for archaeological exhibits and displays, the information related to the wars can only been found in two panels of D67 Building and D67 Bunker that very briefly introduce their functions:

> This building was constructed in 1967 at the height of the American War (Vietnam War). It housed the General Headquarters of the People's Army of Vietnam ...The D67 Building was erected on the northern part of the Kinh Thien Palace foundation. (Panel at D67 Building – The Central Sector of Thang Long – Hanoi Citadel)

> The army dug a system of bunkers beneath the Citadel. The most important section was constructed in 1967 under the D67 building and liking to the Dragon House. In this D67 Bunker (also called the Central Military Commission Bunker) the Politburo, Central Military Commission and Army commanders met to make key decisions about the conduct of the American War. (Panel at D67 Bunker – The Central Sector of Thang Long – Hanoi Citadel)

Selecting resources is arguably influenced by the structure of heritage governance. Heritage, with universal outstanding value and national importance, is managed within horizontal and vertical axes of governance. On the horizontal axis, gov-

ernmental agencies including the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism provide a leadership role, while the information and narratives are controlled by the Central Bureau for Culture and Ideology. International agencies such as UNESCO play a monitoring role, parallel to the national agency the Department of Heritage that serves as the advisory board under the leadership of the ministry and the bureau. On the vertical axis, governance of heritage is directed by Hanoi's People Committee in liaison with the Department of Culture, Sport and Tourism. Research and investigation work at the site is the responsibility of the Archaeological Institute and Citadel Research Institute, two research divisions of the Vietnam Academy of Social Science. The Thang Long Conservation Center functions as a focal contacting point dealing with operational issues at the heritage site. The Center receives financial resources from the Hanoi's People Committee, administers the operation of the site, and coordinates with research institutions to conduct research and site planning which is monitored by UNESCO. The horizontal and vertical axes of heritage governance and UNESCO's monitoring role warrant the elements and stories which are selected and shaped in order to satisfy internal consumption for Vietnamese domestic tourists and fulfill political duty rather than aiming to entertain or educate international tourists.

Interpretation

A survey by UNESCO on domestic visitors found that even though 97% of respondents agreed that the property represents national identity the heritage site has failed to retain visitors, evidenced by a low degree of repeated visits (UNESCO, 2013b). The results of the survey on domestic tourists reveal that close to 80% of the visitors came to the site due to curiosity, motivated by friends and relatives (77.5%), and sightseeing (78.5%). Visitors highly evaluate the historical values of the site and its setting at the heart of the historical area in Hanoi. With a spacious area and an impressive main gate (*doan mon*) that's in a good shape, the Citadel is popular for many public get-together events, such as graduation ceremonies, school visits, and other educational trips. The heritage site has been the venue for educating students about Vietnamese tradition and history, resulting in much information and interpretation being presented in Vietnamese.

Information at the site is presented in various panels, pictures, and exhibits in Vietnamese and also in English to a limited extent. Reading the panels is the only way to grasp the information, if a guide is not provided. If tourists are not able to read English, the interpretation contained little meaning to them. A heritage expert admitted limitation of site interpretation stating that "without a guide, tourists can hardly understand anything" (personal communication, March 2014). A personal guided tour is only available in English, therefore there are limited opportunities for tourists with a language background other than English and Vietnamese to get in-depth information. At some sites this limitation can be overcome by the provision of audio guides in different languages, but this is not the case at the Thang Long – Hanoi Citadel. At the time of the study, there had been no audio-visual guide to aid tourists in understanding the site. Regarding the lack of appropriate aids in interpretation, international visitors regarded the interpretation of the authentic historical aspect as overwhelming.

> Too much information. It is hard for first-time visitors to understand. (Tourist from Thailand, March 2015)
>
> Audio guide is needed, due to there is not enough signs in foreign languages and site guides. (Tourist from China, March 2015)

International visitors, however, found it hard to follow the interpretation without a mental connection to the history being presented.

> The history details are mostly available in Vietnamese, so if there is not a tour guide that can explain deeply about the history, it would be hard to understand the concept and purpose of the heritage. (Tourist from China, March 2015)

Heritage includes tangible elements of the past (buildings, monuments, artifacts, sites, and constructed landscapes) as well as intangible culture expressed in behavior, action, performance or mythology (Hitchcock, King, & Parnwell, 2009). At the Citadel, visitors only see the tangible built environment, of which the most impressive features were destroyed. There is no single form of display of intangible elements such as stories or personalities aiding tourists' imagination. The heritage asset has been perceived as an inactive archaeological relic that does not stimulate the interest and curiosity of the visitors to learn more. It is evident that the heritage resource here carries heavy political responsibility for nation-building; but the site is poorly equipped with simple tools in order to communicate this message to the audience. Referring to Ashworth's (1995) argument that heritage tourism contributes toward the individual's appreciation of places and, consequently, political identification, this linkage seems to be missing at the Citadel.

Targeting

The target of heritage interrelation is to increase visitors' awareness of the heritage OUVs. As stated in the OUVs of the heritage, it is the longevity, continuity, and diversity of culture and political power of feudal Vietnam that are presented. It seems that authentic cultural tradition is part of the message imbedded in the interpretation, in addition to the cultural heritage tourism products that target both international and domestic cultural heritage tourists. Interviews with tourists at the site revealed that cultural tourism products have not been well-perceived, if to not say, that they fail to attract tourists.

> The Citadel in Hanoi didn't really impress me much. I couldn't tell any outstanding point of it. (Tourist from Indonesia, March 2015)
>
> The archeological site is only interesting for researchers and people interested in conservation. The archeological site is all brick and dried land, very unattractive. (Tourist from Thailand, February 2015)

While the information in relation to the Vietnamese culture and history is presented excessively, the narratives about the Vietnam War that brought international attention to Vietnam back in 1960s and 1970s, have almost been neglected. As men-

tioned earlier, limited information on the Vietnam Wars without much context of the war made tourists feel that it was hard to understand the topic. The colonial architecture of buildings at the heritage site contrasted with the presentation of unique Vietnamese culture and also made tourists feel confused:

> There was a lot of information to take in from the guide, while clear, there was too much history covered and went back and forth. Also was not expecting Vietnam War to show up at the citadel. (Tourist from USA, March 2015)

While the supply side promotes the Citadel as witness to a thousand years of cultural history, on the demand side, international visitors in particular, associate the country with the recent wars (Henderson, 2000, 2007).

> This site is also good for those interested in war (Vietnam War). I was hoping for some footage of the history of war, just anything to aid me better. (Tourist from USA, March 2015)

Concerning promotion and advertisement, visitors commented that there has not been enough information on road signs, tourist brochures, and guidebooks. The need for active marketing of the heritage of Thang Long is also highlighted in the management plan for the site. Until recently, it has not appeared in the school history textbook or in the agenda for out-of-class room teaching. Much work is needed in connecting the site with existing heritage to form a story line of Vietnamese culture, history, and tradition.

CONCLUSION

Analyzing the case of Thang Long – Hanoi Imperial Citadel in Hanoi, Vietnam, this article investigated the process of commodification and politicization of heritage in a communist state. Using the theoretical framework on heritage commodification (Ashworth, 1994, 2000), the authors examined conflicts that arise from plural functions of heritage, reflecting on the concept of heritage dissonance by Ashworth and Tunbridge (1996). Beyond the claim of Logan (2014) that the state parties use heritage and the World Heritage system for their own nationalistic and political purposes, the interviews with tourists and policy makers provided evidence that the intended messages of longevity, continuity, and diversity of the heritage OUVs have yet to be successfully communicated to tourists. Exhibits, displays, and interpretation have not yet been impressive enough to communicate a message of the universal importance of the heritage.

The results of the analysis, however, challenge Ashworth's (1994) comments that successful commodification is demand-driven. When heritage is heavily politicized for national pride and carrying out the official interpretation, the control over the selection and interpretation of heritage results in heritage resources being displayed in the way the ideological doctrine governs. Interpretation, therefore, has been determined by supply instead of demand. The mismatch between what the tourists want to see and how the heritage is displayed exemplifies this aspect. While the heritage

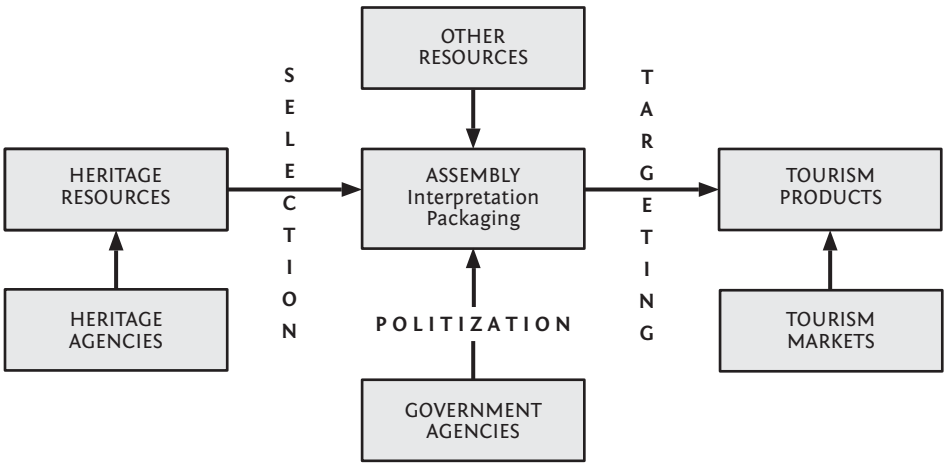

Figure 2. Commodification and politicization of heritage (own compilation).

on exhibit drills into the authentic tradition of ancient Vietnam, it neglects the contemporary aspect of the history, which appears to impress many visitors to the site. In other words, supply-demand tension in the selection and interpretation of resources was directly influenced by the characteristics of Vietnam's political system.

As a result of this study, adjustment has been made to the model of commodification of heritage proposed by Ashworth (1994, 2000). The dimension of heritage politicization is argued as influencing the entire process of commodification through the selection of heritage resources and targeting to different markets via tourism products under the direction of government agencies. A new model integrates commodification and politicization of heritage, as proposed in Figure 2.

A unique aspect of heritage politics emerges from the analysis of interviews with tourists, and that is the culture-war interactions at the Thang Long Citadel. On the one hand, the relics at the Citadel remind us of a thousand year history of cultural diversity in Northern Vietnam, but the Citadel itself has long been the military headquarters of the French Union in the Indochina War, and of North Vietnam in the Vietnam War. It is evidenced, in the case of the Citadel, that tourists were interested in the heritage related to more contemporary wars versus the older historic ones. The parallel of war heritage and cultural heritage is not a surprise in a country like Vietnam with a history written by many wars. This uniqueness of the heritage should be brought into the tourism development strategy, as it is the 'selling point' of such heritage sites.

The results of the case study of Thang Long Citadel have several implications for the heritage tourism industry and heritage management for the city of Hanoi. Reflecting on du Cros and McKercher's (2015) comments that within the transformation process from heritage asset to heritage tourism product, the asset should be converted into something that tourists can understand and enjoy, several suggestions emerge for successful transformation from heritage resources to tourism products.

Firstly, interpretation at the heritage site, currently mainly serving the domestic market, is to be designed with its users in mind. More attractive and interactive

methods of interpretation are recommended to attract international visitors. The material presented should assume little prior knowledge of the site and subject being interpreted. Currently, the interpretation at the Thang Long Citadel is dominated by panels and to a lesser extent, the interpretation presented by onsite guides. Instead of text-heavy interpretation boards, other media such as audio and video can be introduced. In addition, related off-site installations, educational programs, and community activities are among possible aids to on-site interpretation.

Secondly, market-based product development is recommended for heritage tourism at the Thang Long Citadel. It is important to understand the nature of demand for heritage so that product development and promotional strategies may be designed in accordance with the needs and expectations of visitors. Furthermore, demand for heritage product varies at different parts of the site (the Central Sector and Archaeological site), and among different groups of visitors (domestic and international). Identification of these variations is essential to enable individual sites to design their development and promotion policies in accordance with the requirements of cultural tourists.

In sum, heritage is characterized inherently by a dissonance created through its simultaneous commodification and politicization. Although this paper examines the complexity of the politics of heritage in Hanoi from heritage tourism perspectives, further research is needed to understand the relationship that exists among stakeholders in similar heritage sites where the surrounding population has a different interest. Future research may involve either qualitative or quantitative field studies with tourists at the Citadel to better understand their behavior and expectations.

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Shaping Southeast Asia: Tracing Tourism Imaginaries in Guidebooks and Travel Blogs

Felix Magnus Bergmeister

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Tourism constitutes both an economic activity and a cultural force that involves a dynamic interplay between travelers and their ideas about the societies they visit. This paper traces the construction and negotiation of "tourism imaginaries" (Salazar, 2012) in popular guidebooks and independent travel-blogs, critically examining questions of representation and power relations in a Southeast Asian context. Employing critical discourse analysis, this paper investigates how particular Southeast Asian destinations are represented from a Western perspective. Whereas long-established commercial media such as guidebooks function mainly to communicate destination images to the reader, recent participatory media formats (e.g. travel-blogs) are more experienced-based and enable tourists to form ideas about foreign places in idiosyncratic ways. The preliminary insights of this study show that hegemonic narratives from guidebooks are rather reproduced than critically challenged and subverted in the examples under review.

Keywords: Guidebooks; Power; Tourism and Destination Images; Tourism Imaginaries; Travel-Blogs

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Following Crang (2014), tourism can be seen as "a very literal sort of geography" (p. 68). It writes the earth by inscribing meaning onto places via the communication of narratives, myths, and dreams that effectively construct the destinations tourists consume (Crang, 2014, p. 68). At the heart of this semiotic process lie "tourism imaginaries", which operate "as socially transmitted representational assemblages that interact with people's personal imaginings and are used as meaning making and world shaping devices" (Salazar, 2012, p. 864). From this perspective, tourism constitutes a powerful cultural force that involves practices of mediating and interpreting the world. Likewise, it can provide a window into the cultural organization of societies and intercultural power differentials on a global scale (Wilkes, 2013, p. 33-34). The present paper is part of an ongoing dissertation project, investigating the construction of destination images in popular guidebooks and independent travel-blogs and tracing matters of power and identity in a regional Southeast Asian context.

THE GROWING IMPORTANCE OF TOURIST AGENCY

Scarles and Lester (2013) point out that tourism research has predominately investigated destination images as they are constructed through important media texts such as guidebooks and brochures (pp. 1-2). However, with the recent pro-

liferation of new media, tourists are no longer confined to their role as passive media consumers but increasingly emerge as active agents with the potential to shape representations of places themselves (Larsen, 2006, p. 79). Travel blogs have gained importance in this regard as travelers frequently use them to share their holiday experiences with friends and the general public (Chandralal, Rindfleish, & Valenzuela, 2015, p. 681). Furthermore, blog entries reveal insights into travelers' feelings and emotions and provide feedback on how tourists actually interpret a destination (Banyai & Glover, 2012, p. 268). Accordingly, a more comprehensive understanding of destination images can be gained by comparatively investigating the joint knowledge mediation between professionally projected images and tourists' reflexive accounts (Bell, 2013, pp. 116-118). Consequently, I adopt a research strategy that combines the analysis of top-down circulation of place narratives (e.g. in guidebooks) as well as tourist-bloggers' capacities to negotiate sites via new media along the axis of interpretation and reproduction (e.g. in travel blogs).

To investigate the potentially tension-ridden interplay between discourse, geography, and power, I apply critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2003; KhoshraviNiK, 2010; Van Djik, 1993) vis-à-vis Said's (1978) notion of Orientalism as a conceptual framework for the discursive construction of regional inequalities. In that sense, power and lack of power are conceptualized as a function of access to discourse, so that particular social conditions can be legitimized through the communication of beliefs, ideologies, and ideas via systems of representation (Van Djik, 1993, p. 256). Central to this process is the encoding of social macro-structures (e.g. ideologies of colonialism and Western hegemony) into textual micro-structures by means of strategic linguistic choices. These strategies include the in- or exclusion of actors in the text, the ways these actors and their actions are put into perspective, and the arguments that are used for or against them (KhoshraviNiK, 2010, pp. 64-66). In brief, the goal of this study is to explore how particular destinations are represented in terms of difference and otherness, and to what extent the voice of the commercial guidebook coincides with or differs from the experience-based format of the independent travel blog.

GUIDEBOOKS AND REPRESENTATIONAL STRATEGIES

Lonely Planet's recent guidebook on Southeast Asia (the shoestring edition) includes a general qualification of the region as "friendly and intense, historic and devout" (Williams et al., 2014, p. 6). Besides, the guidebook features a full chapter on "People and Culture", which offers additional insights into the construction of the region for the tourists' imagination. Southeast Asia is described as:

> A culturally rich region that encompasses most of the world's religions with a tropical flair. Colorful artistic traditions date back to the period of regional empires, when kings and sultans were cultural patrons. Akin to the region's personality, each country's culture chest is generously shared with curious outsiders. (Williams et al., 2014, p. 922)

In this first quote, the reader is transmitted a message of "colorful artistic tradi-

tions" that date back to a bygone period of regional empires, ruled by presumably generous kings. This heritage is said to continue to function as the main source of today's cultural richness. Furthermore, the passage supposes that it is these attractions that are happily shared with curious travelers – thanks to the region's taken-for-granted friendly personality and attitude towards foreign visitors.

Besides this seductive framing of Southeast Asia, a somewhat different labeling can be observed in a second quote: "Increasingly, though, the region is moving towards a more urban and industrial way of life. Southeast Asian cities, except for Singapore, are studies in disorder and dysfunction, and are fascinating places for their faults" (Williams et al., 2014, p. 933). As both extracts suggest, the guidebook structures parts of its representational strategy along the binary pairs 'traditional vs. modern' and 'non-problematic vs. potentially problematic'. On the one hand, supposedly century-old manifestations of Southeast Asian culture are labeled as the region's true authentic heritage and on the other hand, recent socio-economic developments such as urbanization and industrialization are dismissed as chaotic and dysfunctional.

Previous research has revealed that such a perspective is problematic as it implicitly precludes local agency and assumes a false dichotomy of an authentic past and a degenerate present (Tegelberg, 2010, p. 500). As Bhattacharya (1997) has shown in her influential analysis of Lonely Planet India, this narrative strategy of pitting 'then vs. now' gives a particular region the positive valence of escape from modernity. Consequently, indigenous development is portrayed in the limelight of a negative attitude towards modernization (p. 383). Any change in the relationship between the modern tourist and the other destination is thus implicitly assumed as inconvenient. Since the Western tourist is encouraged to escape progress towards pre-industrial authenticity, the destination must be discursively precluded from western-like development in order to continue to appear as the pre-modern tourist attraction that is portrayed in the guidebook.

TRAVEL BLOGS, EXPERIENCE, AND INTERPRETATION

The following section demonstrates the potential of travel blogs for this study by means of a further example. As discussed above, travel blogs are gaining increasing importance as vehicles for sharing personal travel stories and they offer researchers the opportunity to better understand how individuals negotiate destinations. Nevertheless, analyzing travel blogs poses a number of challenges. Given that the goal of this study is not and cannot be an exhaustive reading of all available blog posts on Southeast Asia (*travelblog.org* lists 40,600 entries for Thailand alone), I rather screen the material for topic-related blog entries by means of useful key words. In a first step, I will scrutinize Lonely Planet to identify topics and discourses that appear worth investigating (e.g. the above indicated 'positive past vs. negative present' dichotomy). In a second step, I search for travel blog entries that relate to these topics. These posts are then analyzed in-depth to better understand how individual tourists interpret their actual experience against the discursive background that my analysis of the guidebook suggests. The following blog entries have been selected from the website *travelblog.org* for an exemplary analysis.

> POST 1: Singapore is a good place to start a trip to Asia. It's Asian without any chaos. There are many things I like and appreciate about Singapore: The streets are clean. It is illegal to litter. English is the common language. (The Castelloes, 2009)

> POST 2: Hanoi is one of the craziest cities I've ever been to. It's chaos and has a kind of grimy feel to it, but at the same time is totally endearing and pulls you in. (Joey, 2013)

> POST 3: 'Breathtaking' is not an over statement when attempting to describe Angkor Wat. In fact there are not enough words to describe the gob-smacking magnificence of Angkor Wat & all its surrounding temples. When the French naturalist, Henri Mouhot, first discovered it in the mid 1800's, after centuries of being hidden in the jungle, he described it as, "A temple that would rival Solomon, erected by some ancient Michelangelo. It is grander than anything left to us by Greece or Rome." (Shakespeare, 2014)

Arguably, much of Lonely Planet's above discussed strategy of representing Southeast Asia as friendly, historic, culturally rich, and increasingly industrializing with some negative results can be traced in these three individual accounts. In the first entry, Lonely Planet is almost quoted verbatim when Singapore is qualified as the ideal entry to Southeast Asia for the reason that it is Asian without any chaos. This utterance is, however, problematic as it not only implies that chaos reigns in all other cities in the region, but also assumes that the city is the only economic center in Southeast Asia where industrialization and progress have brought about 'a civilized' way of life with a working legal system, clean streets, and English as a common language. This effectively equals civilization with a particular model of Western lifestyle. Notions of superiority towards other cultures can therefore be traced in this quote.

The second post implicitly confirms the ideological stance of the first one. A different central city in Southeast Asia (Hanoi) is visited by a traveler and qualified as crazy and chaotic with a grimy feel to it. Interestingly, though, the author uses the conjunction "but" which functions to contrast the propositional content of the sentence-initial clause. As can be observed, the contrastive second clause operates as mitigation and balances out the harsh first statement with a possible reference to personal experience and interpretation. Even though Hanoi is described as the craziest city the author has ever seen, actual experience may have induced the person to alter the message and describe the city in positive and even affectionate terms. As such, the short extract is more open to alternative interpretation than the first one and might therefore point towards a more inclusive strategy of negotiating the self vis-à-vis the other.

Thirdly, Angkor Wat is described by using the terms "breathtaking" and "gob-smacking magnificence". This rhetoric of admiration is intra-textually confirmed by a reference to an extra-textual voice: the French naturalist, Henri Mouhot. Notably, the account of a colonial explorer is used in a post-colonial context and country to serve as a reference point for the description of a superb edifice that was erected in pre-colonial times. The double loop of logical implication that underlies the text re-

quires critical examination: Firstly, Mouhot's account of "a temple that would rival Solomon, erected by some ancient Michelangelo [and which] is grander than anything left to us by Greece or Rome" establishes an implicit link between mythology, the great empires of the ancient world, and European art of the first rank. The temples erected by the Khmer are thus symbolically incorporated into the 'great' tradition of European achievement. Secondly, Mouhot is credited for discovering Angkor "after centuries of being hidden in the jungle". This rhetoric of discovery implies both enduring local decline and the power of colonial conquest to bring to light an architectural greatness that might have been lost forever, so that the temples symbolize the dangers of decadence and thus justify France's moral responsibility in Indochina (Edwards, 2007, p. 20). Taking this into account, the blog reader receives the implicit message that Angkor's now preserved grandiosity still draws heavily from European discovery and Western power of representation. In addition, the absence of local voices in favor of a colonial persona suggests that a supposedly more authentic and reliable past is given greater valence than the present.

Arguably, the comparative reading of the examples introduced above point at representational strategies informed by a Western discourse, claiming superiority over representation and cultural judgment. The blog entries under investigation perpetuate rather than subvert the power differential between self and other by assigning positive valence to a bygone colonial past and/or Western way of life. As these brief examples shall demonstrate, critical discourse analysis makes it possible to draw a connection between tourist texts as social practices and the underlying ideologies by which they might be informed. As a consequence, subsequent research will have to identify further representational strategies and discursive topics in the guidebooks and investigate whether they are sustained or challenged in the blogs. My forthcoming dissertation project will thus identify further representational strategies and discursive topics in the guidebooks and investigate whether they are sustained or challenged in the blogs.

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Change and Challenges for Foreign Retirees in Thailand: An Interview with Nancy Lindley

Christina Vogler

▸ Vogler, C. (2015). Change and challenges for foreign retirees in Thailand: An interview with Nancy Lindley. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies, 8*(2), 209-214.

The northern city of Chiang Mai in Thailand has become a popular destination for national and international tourists as well as for a growing number of expatriates and retirement migrants. Compared to Thailand's southern destinations such as Phuket or Pattaya, Chiang Mai features a cooler climate and interesting cultural and environmental surroundings. Therefore, since 2006/07, the city continues to attract many retired expats from several countries all over the world. Nancy Lindley is the head of the *Chiang Mai Expats Club* and the coordinator of *Lanna Care Net*, a network, which provides advice and assistance for elderly foreigners. As a retirement migrant from the USA, she gives insight into the expats' community, reports on the challenges for foreign retirees in Chiang Mai and talks about the elder care system for foreigners. The interview took place in November 2014 in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Keywords: Elderly Care; Expatriates; Retirement Migration; Thailand

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Christina Vogler: *Why is Chiang Mai so famous with retired people from "Western" countries?*

Nancy Lindley: Due to the obvious reasons like weather and culture, Chiang Mai is being positioned as a retirement destination by the Thai government for its good medical facilities. There are a lot of universities and cultural attractions in town. Quite a few consulates are located in Chiang Mai – so you do have some support from your local government. It is a compact enough city where retirees can get around relatively easily. You have got Western amenities here in terms of restaurants and shopping and the things you need for daily life if you want to live a mix between Thai and Western lifestyle. It is quite affordable. The airport has good international connections; you can fly to several international destinations without having to go through Bangkok. My husband and I came in 2006 to investigate – that is really common. After that, people would go back home, do what they need to do to get ready, and come back here to retire. It is a place where people deliberately decide to retire. In 2006/07 the city started advertising in magazines too.

Vogler: *How many retired expats live in Chiang Mai?*

Lindley: From what Thai immigration told us, the number of retirement visas

has just really shot up. They say that numbers have doubled in the last two years. You can certainly believe that when you go to the immigration office and see the crowd there. You are looking at a number between 10,000 and 20,000 retirees. It's hard to get those numbers because there is not only the Western population, but also a lot of Japanese and Korean retirees too. They have their own long-stay communities, clubs and organizations.

Vogler: *So the* Expats Club *is only for "Western" people?*

Lindley: Yes, our Chiang Mai Expats Club does its business in English. There is the Swiss Lanna Society that is very active too. And there are some Germans that are in that group too. The Swiss seem over-represented here. We cooperate with them. There is a lot of cross-communication between the organizations.

Vogler: *How did the* Chiang Mai Expats Club *develop?*

Lindley: It was founded in 2005/06. Originally it was an organization for younger business people but soon it became evident that it was the retirees who were interested in an organization and its activities. It was the retirees who really drove it forward.

Vogler: *Do you see change within the foreign population here over the time?*

Lindley: What we are seeing here in the *Expats Club* is that back in 2008 there were more single men coming here as retirees for the low cost of living and the availability of sex. Now there are more and more couples coming and single women who retire here; so we are seeing a shift. I get at least 5 to 6 emails a week from people who message me about retiring in Chiang Mai. Also, people who are coming here now are not as much on the edge financially. Officially, you have to have an income of either 65,000 baht a month or 800,000 baht[1] Thai bank account. In the past, there used to be ways to bypass this regulation. There was a lot of gamesmanship that went on where older people were doing visa runs[2] but as you get older it gets physically and mentally hard to keep doing that. Anyways, after the military coup the rules got stricter and this is also why a lot of people now choose other countries like Cambodia for retiring. My husband and I went to Siem Reap for vacation, where you can buy a one-year business visa for around 300 dollars and give your passport to somebody, a fixer at a drugstore or something [*note by interviewer: who will then provide you with a legal visa informally*]. No questions asked. Cambodia is the new retirement destination! Elderly Western men sit in the pub streets talking about how much more easy-going Cambodian women are than the Thai women. That's where they are going now. Not here, not anymore. Another change is that there are men in Chiang Mai who lived a straight life before they retired. Now in their retirement they have come out of the closet and have a Thai boyfriend. They got the freedom now to say, "Now that I have retired I can do whatever I want."

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1 THB 65,000 = EUR 1,727; THB 800,000 = EUR 21,261; rate: 21 July 2015

2 'Visa run' = Leaving the country to a neighboring state for a short time, then re-entering again to the original destination of choice to avoid visa complications.

Vogler: *What are the challenges expats are facing in Chiang Mai?*

Lindley: Part of what Thailand and specifically Chiang Mai are promoted for is the low cost of living. Some websites and articles unrealistically promote the low cost of living. What happened, especially after the 2008 global crisis, is that a lot of people found themselves with all their savings wiped out. All they had left was their pensions, perhaps around 1,000 dollars a month, which is a difficult number to live on in Europe or North America. So people worried what they should do. They were in their 50s or 60s and maybe unemployable. Thailand was promoted as a nice place to live. So they came over here and did find that it was a good place to live. However, the problem is they can live on that budget but there are no reserves. When they get into problems, like health problems, they have no safety net. Some don't do anything to keep their visa status up-to-date so when it gets really bad, (and often there is alcohol involved) they end up in the immigration detention center (IDC), then are eventually deported back to their home countries. We don't have a lot of these cases Chiang Mai, but Bangkok certainly does. Thailand is now discouraging budget retirees. By discouraging, I mean they are stricter in enforcing regulations.

Vogler: *Is this where* Lanna Care Net *comes in?*

Lindley: Yes, I have been the coordinator of *Lanna Care Net* since the Honorary British Consul started it about 3 years ago. It is a support network. We volunteer and help resident expats in need. It was founded because we see retirees getting into trouble and needing systems they can relate to, and then we see that there are expats here who have skills that can maybe help those in need, and we do a match-up. So what we saw is that 95 percent of the people who make use of *Lanna Care Net* get themselves into medical problems [*note: as they grow older, they have to seek medical care more often*]. These guys are not thinking ahead –they do not have any financial reserves because they were living on their low pensions. Unlike in their home countries, there is no governmental safety net for them in Thailand. Some of our clients come to us on visa-overstay then we have to work out the overstay situation. The last few months have been very busy with that. Luckily, the Thai government hasn't enforced a blacklist yet so this means that after an overstay, you might have to pay a penalty when you get out of the country , but you can still return to Thailand without giving reasons.

Vogler: *What are the other tasks of* Lanna Care Net*?*

Lindley: There might be people we visit once a week; we set up their medications for them, go with them to their doctor's appointments, listen to what the doctor says and help them to understand it. For those who have cancer, we accompany them. When you have got something like that you often need a friend to help, listen, and ask the doctor some questions. People who accompany them are sometimes former doctors or nurses themselves, so they have a better idea of the issue. When it gets to the point where they need more care we talk to Thai people who may have worked for them before and who have experience. They would come to their home and assist them, like home care. Of course, this is dependent on the elder person having the funds to pay for it.

Vogler: *What experience have you made with retirement homes for foreigners* – Baan Kamlangchay *or* Care Resort Chiang Mai*, as examples?*

Lindley: *Baan Kamlangchay* is for Swiss retirees and successfully attracts people directly from their home country. The people I work with are people who come here to live, so they don't go and live at a nursing home directly. *Care Resort Chiang Mai* is new, isolated, and far out of the city. I think if the owner had a critical mass of active retirees, they could build their own social life. The problem is that some founders have the idea that if they make a place really pretty, people would come eventually. They don't realize that this is not what people want. As president of the *Expats Club*, I see that people prefer living in a condo. In my condo, there are at least a dozen of people who are in their 80s and they live an independent lifestyle, playing Bridge, going to the Computer Club, going to music performances and eating out at restaurants. They want to be in a place like this where they can get a *Tuktuk*, a *Songthaew*[3]. They want to enjoy an active life. Whenever I get a chance to talk to someone who has money for an investment, I tell them: I'd like to see a facility like this in town! They should buy a bunch of empty units and offer assisted living with proper barrier-free facilities and a nurse to supervise medication. There is another nursing home here called *Mc Kean* which is the place where many people go. Their price is in line with what our resident expats can pay, somewhere between 32,000 and 45,000 baht depending on the level of care but exclusive of the drugs you might need. *Mc Kean* has different wings: There is a hospital, which delivers nursing home care and then there is one for assisted living and one for Alzheimer's care. It also houses *Lanna Care Net* clients that can no longer live on their own in town. If it cannot be arranged for somebody to be with them in their home, they too go to *Mc Kean*.

Vogler: *What are future plans for your community? How do people handle the fact of getting older and transience?*

Lindley: I wouldn't necessarily say plans, but options. No case is ever helpless, but an option that we work with is getting people back to their home country. About one third of the cases we work with on *Lanna Care Net* are repatriations. We would organize for someone to go back to their home country. They don't have hospices here in Thailand per se. They can set up a sort of hospice situation like *Mc Kean*, but it is not the same as in the West. For example, here you cannot have injectable morphine in your home, even if you have a registered nurse coming in. In fact, we are working on a case like that right now and she will be going back. To get someone back to their home country with a fatal diagnosis can be tricky because they can get to the point where they can't travel. Anyhow, you do have to have a good network. *Lanna Care Net* and the *Expats Club* are a good way to meet people but it's important to have someone who is closer than that: family.

Vogler: *What is the situation with insurance? Do retired expats have insurance here?*

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3 *Tuktuk* is the Thai expression for a three-wheeled motorbike taxi; *Songthaew* is the expression for a shared taxi bus, popular in Chiang Mai.

Lindley: The Thai government has an insurance program, the '30 Baht Program': Thai people pay no more than 30 baht[4] every time they seek medical care if they don't receive insurance through employment. The Thai government opened this insurance to neighboring countries, mostly because of migrant laborers (Burmese, Laotians, Cambodians, etc.). The retirees could enroll, but the program could be understood as "for all foreigners". Every province interpreted it differently and Chiang Mai allowed it for all foreigners. There was a real rush on it. *Nakhon Phing* hospital had over 100 people over 80 years old enrolling within the first month. They didn't have the resources. It was a disaster. Now they have changed it. It is hard to start a new insurance policy once you are over 65, globally. A lot of the retirees come here after 65. Even if you start younger and keep paying, the rates go up as they grow older. It is expensive to keep the policy up, so very few have insurance and if something happens they pay on the spot.

Vogler: *What do you think about the term 'gerontological colonialism' promoted by some European newspapers?*

Lindley: Certainly, in some aspects it is accurate. Some of it might be about the high population we have because of the baby boomers. I can see that it makes a difference in how many older people go to a place and how they might change that place with their financial and health situation for better and worse.

Vogler: *Thank you for the interview.*

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Christina Maria Vogler obtained her Master at the Department of Geography and Regional Studies, University of Vienna, focusing on demography, population studies and Southeast Asia. The interview is part of the master thesis "Receiving and Providing Care Abroad. Interactions between International Retirement Migration and the Elderly Care Sector in Chiang Mai, Thailand" and developed out of a cooperation with the Research Institute of Languages and Cultures in Asia (RILCA), Mahidol University, Thailand.

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4 THB 30 = EUR 0,80; rate:21 July 2015

Conference Report: Land Grabbing, Conflict, and Agrarian-Environmental Transformations: Perspectives From East and Southeast Asia, 5-6 June 2015, Chiang Mai University

Rainer Einzenberger

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It was an extraordinarily emotional moment for an academic conference when the Cambodian human rights activist Hong Chinda[1] informed the audience that her family had just been evicted from their land once again by the Cambodian authorities. This time, the incident happened during her absence, while she was attending the conference on "Land Grabbing, Conflict and Agrarian-Environmental Transformations: Perspectives From East and Southeast Asia"[2] and only shortly before she addressed the 240 international participants of the conference in her speech. Hong Chinda's case is just one of the countless examples of conflict over land in the Southeast Asian region. Her testimony is a reminder of the importance of this conference, which was a follow-up to the related international academic conferences organized by the Land Deal Politics Initiative (LDPI) at University of Sussex (UK) in 2011 and at Cornell University (USA) in 2012. Established in 2010, the LDPI is a network of academic research institutions and individuals that "aims to provide in-depth and systematic enquiry into the global land grab in order to have deeper, meaningful and productive debates around causes and implications" (LDPI, n.d.).

Academic interest in what is now globally known as *land grab* followed the sudden increase in large-scale, cross border land acquisitions in the Global South that began around 2007 (Hall, 2013, p. 95). A briefing of the international non-governmental organization GRAIN, titled "SEIZED! The 2008 Land Grab for

1 Hong Chinda is a human rights activist from Sihanoukville in Cambodia. She is a member of the Community Peace Building Network (CPN) and a founding member of the Action Research Team (ART) which is an informal community based network of land, forest, and fishery rights activists from seven provinces in Cambodia. ("Land Grabbing", 2015).

2 The conference was organized by a broad range of organizations and institutions: BRICS Initiatives for Critical Agrarian Studies (BICAS), Land Deal Politics Initiative (LDPI), Mosaic Research Project, Transnational Institute (TNI), Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO), Focus on the Global South, The Regional Center for Social Science and Sustainable Development (RCSD) Chiang Mai University in cooperation with Demeter (Droits et Egalite pour une Meilleure Economie de la Terre), Geneva Graduate Institute, University of Amsterdam WOTRO/AISSR Project on Land Investments (Indonesia/Philippines), Université de Montréal – REINVENTERRA (Asia) Project Mekong Research Group, University of Sydney (AMRC), and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. More information on the conference's procedures can be found at: http://www.iss.nl/research/research_programmes/political_economy_of_resources_environment_and_population_per/networks/land_deal_politics_ldpi/conferences/land_grabbing_perspectives_from_east_and_southeast_asia/

Food and Financial Security", was reportedly one of the first publications highlighting the issue (GRAIN, 2008). While acknowledging that land grab is nothing new and has been ongoing for centuries (most noticeably since the colonial period), GRAIN claimed that the world food crisis and the bigger financial crisis triggered a new boom in investment in land for both outsourced food production and as a new source for profit (GRAIN, 2008). If the conference in Chiang Mai was to draw one single conclusion, it was that the problems over land are rapidly increasing rather than decreasing, offering a rather gloomy outlook.

The report from GRAIN already identified China as one major global player involved in land grabbing. China had been outsourcing part of its food production well before the global financial crisis in 2008 as part of its general "go abroad strategy" (GRAIN, 2008). Unsurprisingly, China's influence also featured prominently at the conference in Chiang Mai where numerous case studies related to China's investment in mainland Southeast Asia were presented[3]. Prominent examples included country cases such as the Lao PDR and Cambodia where Chinese companies control a major share of agricultural land. Fewer studies were presented on Vietnam and Myanmar, with the latter representing one of the latest investment frontiers for foreign capital (again with China as top investor) – a topic that remains narrowly researched. Remarkable was the lack of contributions on Thailand, reflecting the criticism expressed by Thai activist Prue Odochao during his speech at the conference. He criticized that few Thai academics are committed to helping the thousands of rural communities in Thailand still under threat of eviction from land declared as forest area. This situation, according to Odochao, has not improved since the current military government took over power in a coup in May 2014. To remind the audience of the very dangerous life still faced by activists in Thailand, Prue Odochao reported the case of his friend, Pholachi Rakchongcharoen (also known as "Billy") – a Karen human rights activist who went missing in April 2014 after trying to defend his community against Thai National Park authorities (Amnesty International, 2014).

With over 80 papers presented at the 24 parallel panels, the conference covered a broad range of issues. Even so, the panels managed to stay focused and concise, providing much room for discussion due to strict time management. The topics discussed included, for example, the main actors involved in land grabbing (transnational corporations, states, and local elites), gendered experiences of Southeast Asia's corporate land rush and the broader context of agrarian transformation in the region. Other panels explored the intersection of land grabs and climate change mitigation. A constant reminder was not to lose sight of other "powers of exclusion" (Hall, Hirsch, & Li 2011), which often work in more subtle ways than large scale land grabbing. In this context the Economic Land Concessions in Cambodia was a frequently quoted case. While there was broad agreement on the increasing number of land grabbing cases and the global forces at play, several academics, such as Henry Bernstein, urged not to forget the processes of class formation as well as the internal differentiations and gender dynamics related to land issues. A case in point was a paper by Kevin Woods who studied the involvement of Thai based agribusiness giant CP Group in maize contract farming in Myanmar's Shan State. The paper argued that "corporatization and regional-/globalisation of the chicken feed market has radically

3 Moreover, conference participants also addressed China's role in Africa and Southern America.

transformed agrarian relations and structures of debt and dispossession in rural, upland Shan State" (Woods, 2015, abstract), without the need for direct land grabbing.

A major discussion at the conference revolved around the best way to secure land tenure for those who need it the most, and the seeming dichotomy between private land tenure on the one hand versus customary (communal) land tenure on the other. The latter is seen by some advocates as a way to enclose land for the purpose of keeping it out of the control of market forces and to protect its oftentimes indigenous inhabitants. A critic, such as Professor Ben White, however, argued in his closing statement that "both [forms of tenure] result in vast differentiation of rural societies quite different from the egalitarian small-holder communities envisioned by agrarian movements; they do not provide and they often work against democratic control of land". While he made some proposals for alternative land tenure regimes following the general principal of "land to the tiller"[4] , it is unlikely that this debate will come to a conclusion anytime soon, but will stimulate further discussion in the future. Still, the unconventional mix of academics and activists in this conference provided an exciting, unusual, and profound contribution to the debate. For those academics and practitioners interested in issues on land grabbing and agrarian transformations, it is strongly recommended to visit the conference's website which provides free access to the complete papers presented.[5]

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4 The principle of "land to the tiller" is based on communal but not customary ownership and democratically allocated individual use rights.

5 See the conference website at: http://www.iss.nl/research/research_programmes/political_economy_of_resources_environment_and_population_per/networks/land_deal_politics_ldpi/conferences/

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Reflections on the 8th EuroSEAS Conference, 11–14 August, Vienna

Duncan McCargo

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As a veteran of five previous EuroSEAS (The European Association for Southeast Asian Studies) conferences in Hamburg, London, Naples, Gothenburg, and Lisbon, I was greatly looking forward to taking part in the Vienna conference. EuroSEAS was established in 1995 to promote the academic study of Southeast Asia, on the basis that bringing together researchers from across the continent of Europe would be far more fruitful than limiting our main contacts to colleagues from our own countries. EuroSEAS thus set out to counter the structural marginalization that Southeast Asian studies has often suffered in individual institutions and national contexts. Along with the other members of the board, I had already visited Vienna in November 2014 for a site inspection; I had been a member of the program committee; and I had been copied into an awful lot of emails about arrangements. I was well aware of the meticulous preparations made by the organizers Gabriele Weichart and Martin Slama, along with their committee of local colleagues. But none of this had really prepared me for what we all experienced: simply the best organized conference I have ever attended.

It helped that Vienna is a beautiful city and that we had such spectacular venues at each stage of the proceedings: the historic Austrian Academy of Sciences auditorium, with its remarkable ceiling paintings, one of the grandest secular rooms in all of Europe; the main building of the University of Vienna; and, for our conference dinner, the Vienna City Hall. It also helped that we were blessed with glorious weather, basking in radiant summer sun (though I was rather relieved to go back each night to an air-conditioned hotel room).

But the quality of the eighth EuroSEAS conference was ultimately determined neither by the buildings nor by the weather. EuroSEAS is already known as an extremely friendly gathering: There is much less of the hierarchism and exclusivity that characterizes a large professional conference like AAS (Annual Conference of the Association for Asian Studies), no invitation-only receptions, no huddled gatherings of insiders. In short, we are a thoroughly open organization. This climate of openness and friendliness is a mix of the twenty-year history of an organization that was specifically created to break down national boundaries, not to mention disciplinary ones; and an active determination by each successive host to sustain and enhance what we might for want of a better term call the spirit of EuroSEAS. Our hosts in Vienna succeeded admirably in doing exactly that, right down to the festive closing ceremony they scheduled for the final hour of the conference – an innovation that confounded the sceptics amongst us.

It is impossible here to do justice to all that transpired during the week of 11–14 August, 2015 but let me mention a few highlights:

The conference for me began a day before the formal opening, when we held the second EuroSEAS PhD workshop with a group of eight doctoral students from universities across the continent. Using a formula developed by EuroSEAS secretary Henk Schulte Nordholt for the first such workshop in Amsterdam in 2014, the Vienna team ably led by Judith Ehlert hosted an event that provided the participants with some remarkable intellectual exchanges on a wide range of topics including Indonesian politics, the history of the Siamese timber trade, and an ethnography of Philippine families. The PhD workshop was a precursor of things to come.

Ben Anderson's keynote *Alarms of an Old Alarmist* on the opening night of the conference was a session to remember: Not only the auditorium but even the overspill hall was full to capacity, and we found ourselves in the unfortunate position of being unable to accommodate all who wished to hear one of the world's greatest Southeast Asianists give his inimitable thoughts on recent developments in the field. Sadly, his Vienna keynote turned out to be a swan song for Professor Anderson, who passed away unexpectedly in Indonesia on 13 December, aged 79: an enormous loss to Southeast Asian studies.

Ayu Utami's keynote the following morning on *The Spirit of Indonesia: Rasa, Race and Religion*, again delivered to a packed house in the stunning setting of the University of Vienna's *Großer Festsaal*, was beautifully crafted and delivered on the thought-provoking topic of "critical spirituality" as a tool to confront fundamentalist tendencies. Opening EuroSEAS with these two keynote speakers set the tone for the many parallel sessions that followed: A balance of the critical, the deeply researched and the passionately engaged. The highly eclectic program covered a range of topics from archaeology to contemporary politics; from ancient Malay manuscripts to the latest tweets and Facebook pages.

Among the many highlights in the days that followed were three afternoon roundtables on contemporary issues and developments in the region generously hosted by our main sponsor for the conference, *Nikkei Asian Review* (NAR). On 12 August, we had a session on emerging regionalism in Southeast Asia chaired by NAR editor-at-large Ken Koyanagi, while on the final day we had a lively discussion about comparative political developments in the region chaired by NAR chief editor Gwen Robinson. In the wake of the Jokowi's election and the latest Thai coup, was Southeast Asia turning away from democracy, or embracing it? But the most popular of the three sessions was undoubtedly the 12 August discussion of the latest trends in Myanmar, which coincided with the dramatic ousting of House Speaker Shwe Mann from his post as chair of the ruling USDP (Union Solidarity and Development Party). The room was full as Gwen Robinson moderated a remarkable discussion featuring Ardeth Thawnghmung Kyaw Yin Hlaing, Marcus Brand and Wolfram Schaffar – a session that later featured on Austrian television.

Another important facet of the conference was the lively cultural program, and especially the excellent series of film screenings put together by Ascan Breuer and Rainer Einzenberger. These included the presentation of two of Ascan's own films, *Riding my Tiger* and *Jakarta Disorder*; as well as the Austrian premiere of the Thai documentary *Paradoxocracy*, which has rarely been shown outside the country; and

the remarkable Burmese film *Nargis*. The cultural programme was rounded off by a literary café event with Ayu Utami on the final night of the conference. At the Nikkei-sponsored reception on 12 August, the first ever EuroSEAS book prizes were presented to two well-deserved winners: Philip Taylor (Social Science) for *The Khmer lands of Vietnam: Environment, cosmology, and sovereignty* (NUS Press/NIAS Press 2014) and Mandy Sadan for *Being and Becoming Kachin. Histories beyond the state in the borderworld of Burma* (OUP 2013). The creation of these new prizes reflects the wider mission of EuroSEAS to promote the academic study of Southeast Asia.

The Vienna EuroSEAS conference was a highlight both for the very dedicated team of local academics and students who put the event together, and for our organization as a whole. Vienna has set a high bar for those who will come next. I look forward to seeing many of you once again in Oxford (2017) and Berlin (2019).

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Konferenzbericht: Die Schattenseiten des Wirtschaftswachstums in Südostasien. 19.–20. Juni 2015, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt a. M.

Heinz Gödde

▸ Gödde, H. (2015). Konferenzbericht: Die Schattenseiten des Wirtschaftswachstums in Südostasien. 19.–20. Juni 2015, Goethe-Universität Frankfurt a. M.. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, *8*(2), 223-224.

Die Südostasienwissenschaften der Goethe-Universität Frankfurt a. M. luden in Zusammenarbeit mit der Südostasien Informationsstelle im Asienhaus Köln und dem Arbeitskreis Südostasien der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Asienkunde den 19. und 20. Juni 2015 zu der Konferenz „Die Schattenseiten des Wirtschaftswachstums in Südostasien" nach Frankfurt ein.

An den beiden Tagen wurde in fünf verschiedenen Panels das Thema der Tagung diskutiert. Der erste Workshop beschäftigte sich mit dem Gegenstand „Wirtschaftsmodelle in Südostasien und deren Bewertung". Andreas Nölke (Universität Frankfurt) stellte „Varianten des Kapitalismus" vor, wobei zunächst die Dimensionen des wirtschaftlichen Aufstiegs der großen Schwellenländer Brasilien, China und Indien und deren Wirtschaftsmodelle diskutiert wurden. Südostasien wurde dann in diesem Kontext verortet und die Unterschiede der einzelnen südostasiatischen Staaten herausgearbeitet. Nach der Betrachtung der Makroebene konzentrierte sich der nachfolgende Beitrag auf die Mikroebene von Stadt, Stadtvierteln und Haushalten in Indonesien. Christoph Antweiler (Universität Bonn) zeigte „Boom und Exklusion in der Peripherie – Makassar, Süd-Sulawesi als Beispiel einer wachsenden Regionalmetropole". Im dritten Teil dieses Workshops setzte sich Vincent Houben (Humboldt-Universität Berlin) mit der „Beständigkeit sozialer Ungleichheit in Südostasien" und deren Grundmuster auseinander, die sich mindestens bis in die Kolonialzeit hinein zurückverfolgen lassen können.

Im zweiten Workshop diskutierten die Teilnehmer_innen die „Sozioökonomischen Folgen des Wirtschaftsbooms". Rüdiger Korff (Universität Passau) präsentierte die „Sozioökonomische Entwicklung und Legitimationskrise der Eliten" in einzelnen südostasiatischen Ländern. Spätestens im Verlauf der Asienkrise wurden auch die Schattenseiten der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung in der Region erkennbar. Diese zeigten aber auch ganz deutlich Probleme für die Legitimation der jeweiligen politischen Eliten, mit unterschiedlichen, länderspezifischen Reaktionen auf diesen Legitimationsverlust. Parallel zu diesem Workshop fand ein studentisches Forum statt, das von den Fachschaften der Südasienwissenschaften der Universitäten Bonn und Frankfurt organisiert wurde. Dieses Forum eröffnete die Möglichkeit, Seminararbeiten zum Konferenzthema zu diskutieren und bot Chancen zum Informationsaustausch.

Zwei weitere Workshops rundeten die Tagung am nächsten Tag ab. Dabei

handelte der dritte Workshop von „Wirtschaftswachstum und Demokratisierung in Südostasien". Entwicklungen in den beiden muslimischen Staaten Malaysia und Indonesien waren das Thema der Präsentation von Claudia Derichs (Universität Marburg) über „Die Islamisierung der Wirtschaftspolitik und ihre Folgen in Malaysia/Indonesien". Fallbeispiele aus einer islamischen, schariakonformen Unternehmenswelt (Banken, Versicherungen, …) legen demnach eine eigene Art von Management und Arbeitsorganisation (Rolle des Gebetsrufes, Geschlechtertrennung, das Hand- oder auch nicht Handgeben, …) wie auch eine Verbundenheit zur arabischen Welt an den Tag. Patrick Ziegenhain (Universität Frankfurt) untersuchte das „Wirtschaftswachstum als Folge von oder trotz Demokratie in Indonesien und den Philippinen". Dabei wurde aufgezeigt, dass der Prozess der Demokratisierung in den einzelnen Ländern jeweils eine unterschiedliche Entwicklung durchläuft, die bis hin zur Stagnation des Demokratisierungsprozesses oder gar zu einem Rückschritt reicht. Wirtschaftswachstum zeigt sich auch in autoritären Systemen der Region.

Die Konsequenzen der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung für die Umwelt wurden im Rahmen des vierten Workshops mit dem Titel „Natur als Rohstoff? Die ökologischen Auswirkungen des Wirtschaftsbooms" diskutiert. Michaela Haug (Universität Köln) untersuchte in ihrem Vortrag „Sozio-ökonomische Folgen der Palmölexpansion in Indonesien" anhand einer kleinräumigen Studie an der Pionierfront des Palmölbooms eine Vielzahl von Konsequenzen dieser Entwicklung. In der weiteren Präsentation „Boom, Transformation, Flut? Die politische Ökologie des Flusses in Südostasien" diskutierte Oliver Pye (Universität Bonn) vielfältige Aspekte von Wasser an Beispielen der Staudammpolitik, der Entwicklung in den Deltas wie auch den Zusammenhang von Wasser und Stadt.

Die Tagung, organisiert von Patrick Ziegenhain (Universität Frankfurt), brachte einen gelungenen Einblick in die Schattenseiten des Wirtschaftswachstums in Südostasien. Wirtschaftliche Entwicklung, gesellschaftliche und ökologische Folgen wurden an Regional- und Lokalbeispielen vorgestellt und alle Teilnehmer_innen, darunter auch viele Studierende verschiedener Universitäten, erhielten eine Vielzahl von Anregungen für die weitere Beschäftigung mit Südostasien.

Zur gleichen Zeit war die zweite Ausgabe 2015 der Zeitschrift *südostasien* erschienen, die ihren Schwerpunkt auf die gleiche Thematik setzte: „In den Schatten gestellt – Soziologische, ökonomische und ökologische Auswirkungen des Wirtschaftswachstums". Die unterschiedlichen Beiträge in diesem Heft schließen an die Inhalte der Tagung an, indem die Vielfalt des Raumes Südostasien, der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung und deren Folgen deutlich gemacht werden.

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Book Review: Köster, U., Trong, P. L., & Grein, C. (Eds.). (2014). Handbuch Myanmar. Gesellschaft, Politik, Wirtschaft, Kultur, Entwicklung.

Angermünde: Horlemann Verlag. ISBN: 978-3-89502-361-3. 496 Seiten.

▸ Stange, G. (2015). Book review: Köster, U., Trong, P. L., & Grein, C. (Hrsg.). (2014). Handbuch Myanmar. Gesellschaft, Politik, Wirtschaft, Kultur, Entwicklung. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, *8*(2), 225-228.

Ute Köster, Phuong Le Trong und Christina Grein haben mit der Herausgabe des *Handbuch Myanmar* für die Burma-Initiative in Köln Erstaunliches geleistet. Sie und die fast 50 Autor_innen des Handbuchs tragen dazu bei, die große Lücke in Bezug auf kompakte, wissenschaftlich fundierte und vor allem umfassende Informationen zu einem Land zu schließen, das hinsichtlich seines rasanten politischen, wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Wandels in den vergangenen fünf Jahren weltweit seinesgleichen sucht.

Myanmar befindet sich nach einer fast 50-jährigen Militärdiktatur seit dem Jahre 2010 in einem von „oben" gesteuerten demokratischen Transformationsprozess, der gleichzeitig die wirtschaftliche und politische Öffnung des größten Landes Festlandsüdostasiens bedeutete. Neben dieser, wie es scheint, fundamentalen Transformation des politischen Systems und seiner Akteur_innen steht das sprachlich, ethnisch und religiöse äußerst vielfältige Land vor der großen Herausforderung eines nationalen Versöhnungsprozesses zwischen der Regierung in der Hauptstadt Naypyidaw und den unterschiedlichen bewaffneten Gruppierungen der ethnischen Minderheiten des Landes, die seit Jahrzehnten für mehr Selbstbestimmung und/ oder die Unabhängigkeit von Myanmar kämpfen.

Das knapp 500 Seiten umfassende Handbuch gliedert sich in insgesamt sechs hinsichtlich ihres Umfangs unterschiedlich gewichtete Kapitel und einen umfassenden Anhang. Sympathisch erscheint zunächst, dass die Einleitung in Form eines „Fahrplans" durch das Buch eine kompetente und gut lesbare „Einführung" (S. 13) zu den Kernthemen Gesellschaft, Politik, Wirtschaft, Kultur und Entwicklung bietet. Zudem geben die Herausgeber_innen eine Leseanleitung an die Hand, ohne die man in einer derart komplexen Publikation leicht den Überblick verlieren würde. So ziehen sich durch das gesamte Buch themenzentrierte Verweise auf Internetquellen und Querverweise auf weitere Beiträge im Handbuch, die sich mit dem jeweiligen Thema beziehungsweise einem bestimmten Aspekt in einem anderen Zusammenhang beschäftigen.

Das erste Kapitel „Das Land und seine Menschen" thematisiert Fragen der Demographie, Migration und Urbanisierung sowie der linguistischen und ethnischen Vielfalt des Landes. Vor dem Hintergrund dramatischer Naturkatastrophen wie etwa die des Zyklons Nargis im Jahr 2008 nimmt das Kapitel gleichermaßen die Auswirkungen von und den Umgang mit Naturrisiken in den Blick.

www.seas.at doi 10.14764/10.ASEAS-2015.2-11

Darüber hinaus wird der außerordentliche Reichtum des Landes an natürlichen Ressourcen unter Gerechtigkeits- und Umweltgesichtspunkten diskutiert.

Das zweite Kapitel „Facetten der Kultur" nimmt sich zunächst in den ersten drei Beiträgen der wichtigsten Kongregationen und Glaubensvorstellungen (Buddhismus, Christentum, Islam und Animismus) sowie der Beziehungen ihrer Anhänger_innen zueinander an. Von einer „Eintracht in Vielfalt" (S. 88) unter den Religionen kann derzeit in Myanmar allerdings kaum gesprochen werden, wie unter anderem die gewaltsamen Ausschreitungen buddhistischer Mönche gegen die staatsbürgerlich nicht anerkannte muslimische Minderheit der Rohingya im Rakhine-Staat verdeutlichen, die im fünften Kapitel „Soziale Brennpunkte" eingehend diskutiert werden. Die sich anschließenden Kapitel widmen sich dem zeitgenössischen Theater, dem Wandel der musikalischen Traditionen der Bamar, der größten ethnischen Gruppe Myanmars, sowie der modernen und zeitgenössischen Literatur des Landes als Reflexion gesellschaftlicher und politischer Wandlungsprozesse. Eine wunderbare Auflockerung bieten dabei die das Buch durchziehenden zahlreichen bebilderten Textboxen, die sich in Miniessays unterschiedlichsten Alltagsphänomenen Myanmars widmen und den Leser_innen das Land auf diese Weise nahe bringen. So wird im zweiten Kapitel etwa von der „kleinen, aber lebendigen Punkszene" (S. 116) Yangons oder aber von der allgegenwärtigen lebenspraktischen Bedeutung der Astrologie in Form von „zahnlosen Mittwochselefanten und Planetendiagrammen" (S. 104) berichtet. Etwas traurig muss stimmen, dass ein Einblick in die moderne und zeitgenössische Malerei Myanmars leider fehlt. Wie in anderen südostasiatischen Ländern auch ist es sicher eine der großen Herausforderungen der nahen Zukunft, eine Kunstgeschichte Myanmars zu schreiben. Wer es einmal in das letzte Stockwerk des Nationalmuseums geschafft oder einen Tee in der Pansodan-Galerie in Yangon getrunken hat, weiß, dass die moderne und zeitgenössische Kunst des Landes ein solches Unterfangen durchaus lohnenswert erscheinen lassen.

Das mit Abstand umfangreichste dritte Kapitel des Handbuchs „Geschichte, Staat und Politik" konzentriert sich vorrangig auf Fragestellungen, die hinsichtlich der aktuellen politischen Entwicklungen in Myanmar dringend sind und diskutiert diese vor dem Hintergrund der historischen Entwicklungen des Landes. So erfahren die Leser_innen, dass eine zukünftige Stärkung der Rechte der ethnischen Minderheiten Myanmars auch maßgeblich davon abhängen wird, ob es gelingt, die offizielle Lesart der Geschichte des Landes als Geschichte der politisch und wirtschaftlich dominanten größten ethnischen Gruppe der Bamar umzudeuten und allen Volksgruppen einen Platz in einem gemeinsamen Nationenbildungsnarrativ einzuräumen. Es geht also in Myanmar derzeit nicht nur um die Frage, ob der einmal eingeschlagene Weg der Demokratisierung weiter beschritten wird, sondern auch darum, den Nationenbildungsprozess Myanmars als noch längst nicht abgeschlossen zu begreifen, und ihn im Sinne einer nationalen Integration weiter zu gestalten. Die Beiträge beschäftigen sich mit dringenden Themen wie der Reform des Wahlsystems und der Verfassung – unter anderem in Bezug auf die Frage einer angemessenen politischen Repräsentation der ethnischen Minderheiten des Landes – sowie der Rolle der (lange Zeit staatlich gelenkten) Medien für den Demokratisierungsprozess. Darüber hinaus beleuchtet das Kapitel in mehreren Beiträgen die geopolitische Rolle und die Außenpolitik Myanmars sowohl in Asien an der „Seite der Riesen" Indien und China als auch die

neuen politischen Beziehungen zu den USA und der EU vor dem Hintergrund der jahrzehntelangen Sanktionen gegen das Land, die im Jahre 2012 seitens der EU aufgehoben wurden. In diesem Zusammenhang widmet sich ein Beitrag dezidiert den deutsch-myanmarischen Beziehungen der vergangenen sechzig Jahre. Besondere Beachtung wird darüber hinaus den zwei derzeit wohl bedeutendsten politischen Protagonisten geschenkt: dem vom „Bürosoldaten zum Staatsmann" (S. 217) gewandelten Präsidenten Thein Sein, der die Demokratisierung von oben verkörpert, sowie der Tochter des Staatsgründers Aung San, Friedensnobelpreisträgerin und Gesicht der Opposition Myanmars, Aung San Suu Kyi.

Das vierte Kapitel bietet „Einblicke in die Wirtschaft" des Landes. Schwerpunkte bilden dabei einerseits die trotz des enormen Ressourcenreichtums des Landes bislang ausgebliebene Entwicklung verarbeitender Industrien und die damit verbundene Knappheit formeller, qualifizierter Beschäftigungsmöglichkeiten. Andererseits warnen die Autor_innen des Kapitels vor den möglichen negativen sozialpolitischen und ökonomischen Auswirkungen des aktuellen Einströmens internationaler Investitionen nach Myanmar und mahnt eine „verantwortungsbewusste Wirtschaftspolitik" (S. 266) an. Verdeutlicht wird dies anhand des zunehmenden Landraubs in den durch die Regierung eingerichteten Sonderwirtschaftszonen (SEZ) durch nationale und internationale privatwirtschaftliche Akteur_innen sowie durch das myanmarische Militär. Einen weiteren Fokus bildet die enorme wirtschaftliche Bedeutung des illegalen Anbaus von Opium im Goldenen Dreieck zwischen Myanmar, Thailand und Laos und dessen vehementer, jedoch bislang wenig erfolgreicher Bekämpfung durch die Regierung Myanmars. Abschließend stellt das Kapitel die Frage nach den Herausforderungen und Chancen für den Tourismussektor in einem Land, das touristisch auch aufgrund der jahrzehntelangen Sanktionspolitik im Vergleich zu seinen regionalen Nachbarn kaum erschlossen ist, allerdings ein erhebliches touristisches Potential besitzt. Auch hier wird vor der Gefahr gewarnt, dass die Chance des Aufbaus einer sozial gerechten und nachhaltigen touristischen Infrastruktur zugunsten kurzfristiger Gewinninteressen verspielt werden könnte.

Das fünfte Kapitel „Soziale Brennpunkte" thematisiert die komplexen sozialen Problemlagen eines Landes, dessen öffentliche Ausgaben für Bildung die niedrigsten und für das Militär die höchsten im globalen Vergleich sind (S. 313). Dringender sozialpolitischer Handlungsbedarf ergibt sich in Myanmar, so die Beiträge des Kapitels, aufgrund chronischer Unterernährung, Einkommensarmut, hoher Kindersterblichkeit sowie massiver sozialen Ungleichheit und der damit einhergehenden Ausgrenzung großer Bevölkerungsteile, allen voran der ethnischen Minderheiten des Landes. Die Beiträge des Kapitels fokussieren daher schwerpunktmäßig den Zustand des Bildungssystems, die Situation von Kindern, die Menschenrechtslage sowie die Themen Flucht, Vertreibung und Arbeitsmigration

Das sechste Kapitel „Möglichkeiten und Entwicklung" zeigt auf Grundlage des vorangegangenen Kapitels einleitend die vielfältigen Herausforderungen und bürokratischen Hürden auf, vor denen Akteur_innen der internationalen Entwicklungszusammenarbeit stehen, die es zum Ziel haben den Transformationsprozess Myanmars aktiv mitzugestalten. Die Beiträge beschäftigen sich mit Fragen der Armutsbekämpfung und den Chancen, die sich für diese mit der internationalen Öffnung Myanmars ergeben. Darüber hinaus findet die Zivilgesellschaft Myanmars und ihre Rolle

im Kampf gegen Armut und soziale Ungleichheit Vorstellung. Die letzten drei Beiträge dürften vor allem für „Entwicklungspraktiker_innen" interessant sein. Sie beschäftigen sich dezidiert mit der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit zwischen Myanmar und der Bundesrepublik Deutschland und zeigen anhand zweier Praxisbeispiele von deutschen Entwicklungsorganisationen in Myanmar auf, wie sich partnerschaftliche Zusammenarbeit konkret gestaltet. Der abschließende Beitrag reflektiert zusammenfassend die wesentlichen Entwicklungen und aktuellen Herausforderungen in Myanmars Transformationsprozess.

Der mit viel Detailliebe und Bedacht erarbeitete Anhang bietet den Leser_innen eine Zeittafel der wichtigsten historischen Ereignisse seit der Gründung des ersten birmanischen Großreichs Mitte des 11. Jahrhunderts. Eine große Orientierungshilfe für die Leser_innen stellen zudem die Kurzbiographien zentraler historischer und zeitgenössischer Vertreter_innen der Eliten Myanmars dar, da es sich im Vergleich zu anderen südostasiatischen Ländern bei Myanmar um ein Land handelt, über dessen Akteur_innen vergleichsweise wenig bekannt ist. Darüber hinaus bietet der Anhang Empfehlungen zu Internetseiten und weiterführender Literatur. Abgerundet wird der Anhang durch einen kurzen, jedoch für erste Alltagskommunikation durchaus hilfreichen Myanma-Sprachführer.

Auch wenn die Herausgeber_innen angesichts des komplexen Unterfangens, ein Überblickswerk zu Myanmar vorzulegen, explizit keinen Anspruch auf Vollständigkeit erheben, den zu stellen ohnehin vermessen wäre, ist es ihnen gemeinsam mit den Autor_innen gelungen, ein bislang einzigartiges Informations- und Analyseangebot zu Myanmar in deutscher Sprache zu schaffen. Aus diesem Grund soll diese Rezension ungewöhnlicherweise mit zwei Forderungen schließen. Zum einen sollte das *Handbuch Myanmar* schnellstmöglich ins Englische übersetzt werden, um es einem weiteren internationalen Leser_innenkreis zugänglich zu machen. Zum anderen wird es aus den genannten Gründen mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit zum favorisierten Vademekum für all die Aktivist_innen, Politiker_innen, Mitarbeiter_innen der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit, Geschäftsleute und nicht zuletzt Reisenden werden. Leider ist es mit seinen 500 Seiten kein Leichtgewicht und wird so manchen Koffer oder Rucksack um einiges schwerer wiegen lassen. Eine ebook-Ausgabe könnte hier sicherlich Abhilfe schaffen.

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Book Review: Creak, S. (2015). Embodied Nation. Sport, Masculinity, and the Making of Modern Laos.

Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. ISBN: 978-0-8248-3889-8. XIV + 327 Seiten.

▸ Lubenovic, V. (2015). Book review: Creak, S. (2015). Embodied nation. Sport, masculinity, and the making of modern Laos. *ASEAS – Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies*, *8*(2), 229-234.

Simon Creak, Dozent für südostasiatische Geschichte an der Universität Melbourne, behandelt in seinem 2015 erschienenen Buch die Staatswerdung und -bildung der heutigen Demokratischen Volksrepublik Laos aus einer bisher einzigartigen Perspektive. *Embodied Nation* untersucht die Bedeutung des Sportes, des Körperkultes und der Maskulinität für den historischen Prozess der Staatsbildung im 20. Jahrhundert, die auf politisch-ideologischer Ebene von zahlreichen Umbrüchen gekennzeichnet ist.

Die französische Kolonialperiode, die im ersten Kapitel analysiert wird und die moderne territoriale Entität Laos markiert, bildet den Ausgangspunkt seiner Untersuchung. Dafür wird der Fokus auf *tikhi* – ein dem englischen Feldhockey ähnliches Spiel – gelegt. Es wird nachgezeichnet, wie französische Reisende sowie Anthropologen des *École française d'Extrême-Orient* durch ihre Berichte und Interpretationen das Spiel mit nationalen, kulturellen und geschlechterspezifischen Bedeutungen versahen und so an der Entstehung einer kohärenten Idee der laotischen Kultur mitwirkten, die den geographischen Grenzen der Kolonie entsprach und ihren Vorstellungen folgend traditionell geprägt war. Insofern war, neben ihrer Auswirkung auf die Geschlechterverhältnisse, die Rechtfertigung des modernisierenden kolonialen Projekts ein grundlegendes Element der einseitigen französischen Wissensproduktion.

Kapitel zwei widmet sich der Periode zwischen 1940 und 1944 und zeigt, wie Sport und Körperkult zu einer bedeutenden nationalen politischen Agenda wurden. Ausgehend vom faschistischen Vichy-Frankreich schildert der Autor, wie Ideen von Maskulinität als zentraler Ausdruck eines kulturellen Nationalismus ihren Weg vom Mutterland über andere Teile Indochinas bis nach Laos fanden und sich in militärischer Praxis – samt visuellen und ideologischen Begleiterscheinungen – niederschlugen. Von Frankreich nicht intendiert, äußerte sich dies jedoch in einem Erstarken des laotischen Patriotismus, der den Glauben in das französische Kolonialprojekt in Frage stellte.

In Kapitel drei analysiert der Autor die royalistische Übergangsperiode von Laos zu einem unabhängigen Staat. Mittels in dieser Zeit angefertigter Fotografien und Zeichnungen legt Creak die fortwährenden französischen Bemühungen um Einflusssicherung angesichts der aufkeimenden Blockkonfrontation im Binnenstaat und deren Auswirkungen auf die voranschreitende Militarisierung dar. Besonderes Augenmerk legt er dabei auf die Bedeutung der laotischen Soldaten als Symbol für die neugewonnene formelle Unabhängigkeit des Landes.

Mit Kapitel vier beginnt die genaue Erörterung der Bedeutung von Sport-

www.seas.at doi 10.14764/10.ASEAS-2015.2-12

ereignissen in Zeiten innerstaatlicher ideologischer Machtkämpfe für die nationale Staatsbildung. Die 1961 und 1964 abgehaltenen *National Games* dienen dem Autor als Beispiel für die Instrumentalisierung von Sportveranstaltungen für politische Zwecke. Die Machthaber nutzten sie nicht nur als Legitimationsquelle, sondern auch als Zeichen nationaler Einheit und nationalen Fortschritts.

Kapitel fünf behandelt in weiterer Folge die Art und Weise, wie regionale Kräfte in Laos globale Prozesse im Kontakt mit Nachbarstaaten – und hier insbesondere Thailand und Vietnam – vor dem Hintergrund politischer Entwicklungen vor Ort vermittelten und sich diese in sportpolitischer Natur niederschlugen. Es werden Hintergründe der Teilnahme des Landes an den SEAP (*South East Asia Peninsular*) Games und GANEFO (*Games of the New Emerging Forces*) beleuchtet.

Kapitel sechs und sieben widmen sich der Periode nach der Machtergreifung der kommunistischen LPRP (*Lao People's Revolutionary Party*) ab 1975. Ersteres konzentriert sich auf die Intentionen staatlicher Rhetorik durch die Stärkung des Breitensports physisch starke und gesunde Staatsbürger_innen hervorzubringen, die als Voraussetzung für den weiteren erfolgreichen sozialistischen Weg gedeutet wurden. Dabei untersucht der Autor vorrangig den Zusammenhang zwischen sozialistischer Ideologie und dem daraus abgeleiteten Körperkult. Er legt nicht nur die kulturellen und historischen Auswirkungen, sondern auch die Probleme, Grenzen und Paradoxien bei der Umsetzung dar.

Kapitel sieben beleuchtet die Bedeutung professioneller Sportler_innen für die Verfolgung innerstaatlicher sozialistischer Anliegen. Der Autor stellt vier Hypothesen vor, die unter anderem darauf hinweisen, wie die LRPR Publikumssport dafür nutzte, eine revolutionäre Atmosphäre im Land zu schaffen, um die Massen für den weiteren Weg der Revolution zu mobilisieren. Die Analyse der Teilnahme an bzw. des Fernbleibens von internationalen Sportveranstaltungen, mit dem Ziel sich international zu positionieren und zu präsentieren, bildet einen wichtigen Teil dieses Buchabschnitts. Die Hypothesen werden entlang zweier bedeutender Großveranstaltungen, nämlich der Olympischen Spiele 1980 in Moskau und der National Games 1985 in Vientiane, untersucht.

Mit Kapitel acht schließt das Werk ab. Der Sprung in die jüngere Geschichte behandelt die Bedeutung der 2009 in Vientiane ausgetragenen South East Asian (SEA) Games für das heutige Regime. Creak zeigt, wie der laotische Staatsapparat immer mehr Abstand von sozialistischen Motiven genommen und sie durch eine aktuelle „moderne" und für die Region spezifische Ideologie kapitalistischer Entwicklung ersetzt hat. Es wird gezeigt, wie die Spiele den Machthabern unter anderem dazu dienten, der internationalen Öffentlichkeit die stetig voranschreitende sozio-ökonomische Entwicklung des Landes vor Augen zu führen. Dabei geht der Autor auch auf die negativen Begleiterscheinungen des eingeschlagenen Weges ein.

Simon Creaks Arbeit stellt ein unverwechselbares Novum dar, da sie die erste wissenschaftliche Auseinandersetzung in Buchform ist, die sich primär der Bedeutung des Sportes und männlichen Körperkultes für die Entstehung und den Werdegang von Laos annimmt. Zugleich werden die Verbindungen der sportlichen Sphäre mit anderen bedeutenden Bereichen – wie beispielsweise Religion oder Medien – gezeigt und bearbeitet. Das fundierte Wissen, das der Autor nicht nur über die Geschichte des Landes, sondern auch über die Sprache Lao vorweisen kann, ermöglicht es ihm,

auf die Bedeutung des Verhältnisses von Sprache/Rhetorik und Sport hinzuweisen und eine große Vielfalt historischer Dokumente in seine Analyse einzubinden. Dies steigert nicht nur das Lesevergnügen, sondern trägt auch entscheidend zur Plausibilität der Argumente bei. Creak liefert eine schlüssige Begründung dafür, wie Sport in spezifischen Ausformungen von den Akteuren für die jeweiligen Ideologien und die damit verbundenen Vorstellungen politischen und sozialen Wandels genutzt wurde. In weiten Teilen des Buches wird dabei besonderer Wert auf Vorstellungen und Aushandlungsprozesse von Maskulinität gelegt. Der Autor eröffnet neue Sichtweisen auf historische Fragestellungen, die bisherige Hypothesen infrage stellen. Dies muss als ein besonderes Merkmal der Arbeit hervorgehoben werden, da sie dadurch nicht völlig losgelöst von bisherigen Forschungsprojekten zum Staatswerdungsprozess Laos steht, sondern eine differenzierte Auseinandersetzung mit ihnen darstellt. Gleichzeitig muss kritisch angemerkt werden, dass sich im Werk ebenso Annahmen finden, die einer noch detaillierteren Auseinandersetzung bedürfen. Als Beispiel sei die Abhandlung über die Gründe der Teilnahme an den GANEFO angeführt. Obwohl das Unterkapitel die Politik der GANEFO und die damit verbundenen ideologischen Machtspiele der regionalen und internationalen Mächte auf über acht Seiten beleuchtet, folgert Creak, dass die Möglichkeit der Sportler_innen, Laos auf einer internationalen Bühne zu repräsentieren „was probably more important than the ideological politics of GANEFO" (S. 160). Zudem ist es bedauerlich, dass das abschließende Kapitel, welches die SEA Games 2009 in Vientiane behandelt, als das kürzeste der Arbeit ausfällt. Als äußerst bedeutender Punkt in der jüngeren Zeitgeschichte des Landes, wäre eine detailliertere Ausarbeitung wünschenswert gewesen. Ungeachtet der vorgebrachten Kritikpunkte liefert Simon Creak mit *Embodied Nation* eine leicht verständliche Historiographie von Laos, die sich nicht in Fachtermini verliert und somit auch für dem Forschungsgebiet fremde Leser_innen eine spannende Lektüre aus einer bis dato einmaligen Perspektive bietet.

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Call for Papers

ASEAS

FOCUS

New Media in Southeast Asia

The upcoming issue of the Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies (ASEAS) 9(2) features a focus on new media in Southeast Asia and the online-offline nexus as a field of emerging forms of sociality, social practices, and their local implications.

We consider new media as an umbrella term for various internet- and mobile device-based forms of communication such as email, instant messaging, and social networking sites, but also blogs, personal websites, and other sites of visual and textual material display. Irremissible in the digital age we live in, these media are deeply embedded in the offline lives and real-time practices of real people living in real places. While new media provide ample space for crafting a personal image or connecting and communicating with "the rest of the world", eventually it is the users themselves who decide upon the use and utility of certain media. People's ideas, practical orientations, and social and cultural contexts shape new media as much as new media offers seemingly endless opportunities for self-expression and self-assertion while conducting relationships.

The employment of different media for a plurality of purposes calls for studies of 'polymedia' and the ways users 'socialize' new media and re-configure social practices and relationships by using one or the other medium. 'Power' is another recurrent theme in this topic, particularly with regard to social, political, and economic contexts as well as regulatory infrastructures. This online-offline nexus implies that new media technologies exist within the political economies of other (local and global) networks and institutions. Studies of new media thus ultimately reveal information about the nature of the offline, "non-mediated", and non-digital world.

With this regard, we welcome submissions that consider one or more of the following aspects:

- New media technologies, changing media ecologies, and their implications for social life (e.g. appropriation and navigation of new media for community-building purposes; new media and the constitution of 'self');
- New communicative environments and the concept of polymedia (e.g. new conflicting media ideologies and idioms of practices);
- Emerging forms of sociality, social rules, and forms of expression (e.g. re-socialization of media; implicit and explicit social rules and the use of new media; online replication and remediation of social orders; new social formations and affiliations);
- New media and power dynamics in social and political contexts (e.g. interconnections between policy, regulations, and users' practices; digital divides and new forms of digital inequality; new media in the contexts of migration, e-governance, etc.);
- Participatory forms of content production and redistribution (e.g. online "projects" mediated by blogs, online campaigns, and other social networking sites, and their local impact);
- Alternative communication technology and communicative ecologies (e.g. projects of empowerment through combinations of new media and public facilities).

Deadline ***15 JANUARY 2016*** - If you intend to submit a paper, please contact dayana.parvanova@seas.at - We also accept contributions outside the focus; in this case please contact the ASEAS editorial team aseas@seas.at - Please submit your paper online at http://aseas.univie.ac.at. You can find more information on our submission guidelines here: http://www.seas.at/our-journal-aseas/submission-guidelines/.

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