

Tourism, Culture and Development: Hopes, Dreams and Realities in East Indonesia
Stroma Cole, Clevedon: Channel View Publications, 2008; pp xi + 278

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Stroma Cole's book *Tourism, Culture and Development: Hopes, Dreams and realities in East Indonesia*, poses questions that lie at the centre of community involvement in tourism, the drastic changes that a village undergo when it embraces tourism. It is a highly consequential contribution to scholarly research and education that skilfully interweaves concepts, theories, and empirical data related to tourism development in general and destination management in particular. The author astutely creates an essential tone for scholars with interests in the subfields of tourism studies such as authenticity, globalization, westernization, commodification, acculturation and homogenization studies.

Based on over sixteen years (1989-2005) of her empirical research Stroma explores the controversial aspects of development (and tourism development in particular) and marginality from a multiple lens. She discusses topics such as the history, education, population and comparison of sub-populations, ethnic and religious identity, adolescence, marketing, staff, organization and logistics in the Indonesian tourism industry. The appeal of the book lies in that it provides the stories of live people in real villages. It contains a series of stories, vignettes and quotations from all the parties involved in tourism. This captive narration provides a rich description of life in a marginal community.

In Part 1 of the book, comprising three chapters, the author deals with theoretical and contextual issues in the anthropology of tourism adeptly using very detailed local aspects. Through a micro-level analysis and comparison of Wogo and Ngadha villages Stroma challenges some assumptions in the tourism development literature and much more importantly shows how globalisation can be about powerlessness and a lack of change. It tells the story of how hopes are created due to the growth of the industry, how the rapid growth of tourism affects the balance power but fails to change the economic circumstances of the village. A point often ignored is that tourism is about residents' everyday lives and some very special days in the tourists' lives. The village becomes nothing more than an exotic overnight resting place. Levels of economic development are increasingly seen as part of culture and inequality as "cultural diversity". In such tragic situations – which are more often – tourism preserves poverty.

Stroma contrasts, in Part 2, the perceptions, priorities and attitudes of the tourists, the host community and the mediators. Using multiple perspectives the author astutely discusses how tradition, ethnicity and culture are strategically articulated, moulded, manipulated, and used to serve the different stakeholders' interests. Guidebooks and guides are powerful agents of change. While the latter serves as a bridge between guests and hosts, the later as "path-breakers". Both seek to manage the behaviour of tourists. Offensive behaviour among tourists tends to arise from cultural arrogance (i.e. a blatant disregard of sensitivities and reactions of local communities or behaviour which knowingly breaks moral, religious and social codes) than ignorance.

In the final part of the book the author deals with the influence of tourism and exposes the "conflictual arenas". She juxtaposes the disparate perceptions, priorities and attitudes of the tourists, the host community and the mediators. It is imperative to take cognisance of the fact that in those areas that are poorly endowed agriculturally,

tourism is easily adopted as an important economic development option. The nexus between the economic poverty of villagers and relatively well-off guests easily leads to conflicting values. The guest-host relationship is one of power and control and as the tourists maintain control they transgress the norms of guest behaviour. Conflict arises also between the villagers and state in relation to rights, ownership and consent over cultural property and cultural capital.

The obvious economic benefits that can accrue to a village are significant and apparent. Piped water is introduced and roads are built and this improves not only the accessibility of the area for tourism purposes but also for conveying produce to the markets. What usually obfuscated are the new group dynamics that lead to status and competition, gender conflict that may be introduced as division of labour is renegotiated and the conflict and paradox acculturation. The process of socio-economic integration with the wider aspirations of the community results in modernisation yet it is the very same "primitive, traditional and exotic" nature of the destination that attracts the tourists. The author makes the point that it may not be possible to disaggregate change brought about by tourism from other influences. For instance, a lot of western imports such as music and fashionable clothes may have little to do with tourism. It may also be worthwhile noting that villagers refuse to be frozen as cultural relics and where possible take development into their own hands thereby "spoiling" the village, according to tourists.

The value of the book lies in that it addresses issues relevant to the peripheral communities across the world. There are several themes in this book that have resonance with the development of tourism in Namibia. A major theme that comes out in the book is that the appropriation and manipulation of a destination's cultural assets in the quest for economic benefit through tourism should not lead to devaluation of local knowledge and demeaning of local values as "ignorant peasantry" values. Rather villagers should be empowered and this is central to successful tourism development.

It would be prudent for less developed countries to capitalise the flip side of globalisation, which is localisation. In other words, a destination should gain maximum mileage out its cultural uniqueness and attendant new identity that has been gained through tourism. Tourism is about selling places and cultural tourism in particular is about selling the culture specific to those places.

Stroma has published extensively on tourism in Indonesia and in less economically developed countries. Her book, *Tourism, Culture and Development: Hopes, Dreams and Realities in East Indonesia*, is her latest publication. It is a micro-level longitudinal study of the tourism industry in the Indonesian archipelago.

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