



Reconciling Nature and Culture in a Global Context?

Lessons from the World Heritage List

Sandra Pannell



Rainforest CRC

Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Rainforest Ecology and Management

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Sandra Pannell

Rainforest CRC, James Cook University, Cairns



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(*Top*) Komodo Dragon. Image: Roger Wilkinson.

(*Centre*) The cultural landscape of Val D'Orcia. Image: Roger Wilkinson.

(*Bottom*) Historic Centre of Macau. Image: Roger Wilkinson.

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People should be warned that this document contains images of deceased persons.

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Dr Sandra Pannell
Leader, Program 7
Rainforest CRC

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CHAPTER ONE – INTRODUCTION

Our cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration. They are our touchstones, our points of reference, our identity – UNESCO World Heritage Centre

For the past twenty years in Far North Queensland, Aboriginal Traditional Owners have argued for the acknowledgement of their cultural values in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. This two decade-long push for recognition ranges from greater involvement in the day-to-day management of the region, to a call for the renomination of the World Heritage-listed rainforests as a “living cultural landscape” (Wet Tropics Management Authority 2005: 1). This struggle has been framed by, and couched in terms of, a discourse on nature and culture. Trying to understand the terms of this discourse, the nature of people’s engagement with it, and some of the unintentional effects of it, forms a core element of this comparative study of World Heritage¹. As I argue in this research report, the discursive currency of this debate reflects the dominant interpretive paradigm of the World Heritage Convention.

As the title suggests, the 1972 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation’s (UNESCO) *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage* enshrines one of the most pervasive dualisms in Western thought – that of nature and culture (MacCormack and Strathern 1980). As Bloch and Bloch observe, we can trace the nature-culture idea back to the Enlightenment period when the “notion of an opposition between nature and the state of society [...] suddenly gains a great prominence” (1980: 27)². From the 1700s onwards, nature and culture have acquired a range of shifting meanings in both Western philosophical traditions and in common usage. For example, the concept of nature has, among other things, variously referred to a pre-social state, the internal processes of the human body, the universal order, including the “external world of plants, animals and the countryside”, and “the way of life of primitive peoples” (Bloch and Bloch 1980: 27). Similarly, our ideas about culture are not static, notwithstanding the efforts of anthropologists in the course of the past hundred years to once and for all fix the meaning of this ‘keyword’ (Williams 1976). As Kroeber and Kluckhohn observe in their ‘critical review of concepts and definitions’, by the early 1950s, 164 anthropological definitions of ‘culture’ existed in the literature (Kroeber and Kluckhohn 1952). UNESCO’s World Heritage Convention provides yet another set of criteria for the definition of culture and our understanding of nature.

‘Cultural’ and ‘natural heritage’ are defined in Articles 1 and 2 of the Convention. In summary, ‘monuments’, ‘groups of buildings’ and ‘sites’, the latter being the “works of man or the combined works of nature and of man” (UNESCO 2005a: 13), are considered as ‘cultural heritage’. ‘Natural heritage’, on the other hand, refers to ‘physical and biological formations’,

¹ In the course of three months’ research between October 2005 and January 2006, I visited eighteen World Heritage properties, including Komodo National Park (listed in 1991), the Historic Centre of Macau (2005), the Historic Centre of Rome (1980), Val d’Orcia (2004), the Historic Centre of the City of Pienza (1996), the Historic Centre of Sienna (1995), the Historic Centre of San Gimignano (1990), the Fortress of Suomenlinna (1991), the Rock Drawings of Alta (1985), Maritime Greenwich (1997), the Tower of London (1988), Westminster Palace, Westminster Abbey and Saint Margaret’s Church (1987), the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (2003), Stonehenge, Avebury and Associated Sites (1986), the City of Bath (1987), Paris, Banks of the Seine (1991), the Statue of Liberty (1984) and the Hawaii Volcanoes National Park (1987).

² However, as Marshal Sahlins points out, Enlightenment ideas about nature and culture can be traced back to Ancient Greece and the sophist’s opposition of custom (*nomos*) and nature (*physis*) (2004: 16). Classical Greek ideas about nature and culture “were revived in Western Europe during the seventeenth century” (ibid: 3).

'habitats of threatened species' and 'natural sites or natural areas', which are of "outstanding universal value" from the point of view of science, conservation and/or aesthetics (loc. cit.)³.

The 812 properties currently inscribed on the World Heritage List are identified as either 'natural', 'cultural', or as 'mixed' heritage (the latter being a combination of cultural and natural heritage, as defined by the Convention). This identification is not only based upon the Convention's broad definitions of heritage, but it is also justified according to the selection criteria presented in the Convention's 'Operational Guidelines' for the assessment of 'outstanding universal value'⁴. Up until the end of 2004, when the guidelines were again revised, six of the ten criteria were explicitly identified as 'cultural', while the remaining four criteria were classified as 'natural'. While the new guidelines (UNESCO 2005a) have supposedly abolished this distinction and 'merged' the ten criteria, properties nominated and inscribed in 2005 are still listed according to the tri-partite, pre-2005 classifications.

The merging of 'nature and culture' to create a "unified set of criteria" (UNESCO 1998: 3) represents the latest of UNESCO's efforts to redefine the relationship between these two key categories, and further identify the mediatory role played by heritage in the global expression of this dualism. For example, in earlier operational guidelines only the criteria for natural heritage made reference to "man's interaction with his natural environment" or "exceptional combinations of natural and cultural elements", while the category of 'mixed' cultural and natural properties did not appear to recognise interactions between its constituent cultural and natural elements (Titchen 1995: 240). The 1992 introduction of a fourth World Heritage category, that of 'cultural landscapes' as the "combined works of nature and of man" (UNESCO 2005a: 83), reflects a trend towards a more holistic view of the environment, one that moves away from previous ideas of heritage as necessarily consisting of isolated and discrete sites. While the inclusion of 'cultural landscapes' appears to address some of the abovementioned limitations of the Convention's operational categories, and serves to extend the definition of cultural heritage beyond the idea of just 'monuments' – 'groups of buildings' and 'sites' – it still pivots upon the notion of nature and culture as separate and opposed domains. Rather than addressing the fundamental dualism, which stands as the cornerstone of the Convention, the 1992 addition of a new category of cultural property only served to articulate the nature-culture distinction on a broader scale – at the landscape level.

In embracing the category and definition of 'cultural landscapes', the Convention also recognised on a global scale the significance of 'intangible cultural heritage', leading to the 2003 *Draft International Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* (UNESCO 2003a). Like the notion of cultural landscapes, the recognition of intangible cultural heritage signalled a major shift away from the Convention's monumental concept of cultural heritage to one, which acknowledged "new concepts of the idea of cultural heritage" (World Heritage Committee 1994: 3). This movement away from a "rigid and restricted World Heritage List" (ibid: 2) towards one that is "receptive to the many and varied cultural manifestations of outstanding universal value" (loc. cit.) is one of the primary objectives of the 1994 *Global Strategy for a Balanced, Representative and Credible World Heritage List*.

³ A complete definition of 'cultural' and 'natural heritage' is given as part of the definition of World Heritage in 2005 'Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention' (UNESCO 2005a).

⁴ As of February 2006, there are 628 'cultural' properties, 160 'natural' sites and 24 'mixed' properties inscribed on the World Heritage List.

An analysis of the World Heritage List, undertaken by ICOMOS⁵ between 1987 and 1993, revealed that “Europe, historic towns and religious monuments, Christianity, historical periods and ‘elitist architecture’” (UNESCO 2005b) were all over-represented on the World Heritage List. According to this study, so-called ‘living’ and ‘traditional’ cultures were under-represented on the List. The study also pointed to major gaps on the List for natural areas, including “tropical / temperate grasslands, savannas, lake systems, tundra and polar systems, and cold winter systems” (UNESCO 2005b). In part, the omission of these ‘natural’ areas points to the World Heritage Committee’s preference for an ‘unspoiled’ nature, one which also conforms to Western ideals about aesthetically pleasing and familiar spaces (Sullivan 2004: 50). In summary, the List lacked ‘balance’ in “the type of inscribed properties and in the geographical areas of the world that were represented” (UNESCO 2005b). The ICOMOS study concluded that the reasons for this imbalance are both structural, relating to the nomination process, and qualitative, relating to the manner in which properties are identified, assessed and evaluated. This latter finding highlights the problems associated with the assessment of ‘outstanding universal value’ and some of the ambiguities encountered regarding the Convention’s requirements of authenticity and integrity. While not explicitly stated, the findings and conclusions of the ICOMOS study also highlight how the Convention has historically privileged Western views about culture, nature, and heritage, and provides a global framework for the protection and promotion of these particular values.

The World Heritage Convention is based upon and promotes the universality of ‘nature’ and ‘culture’. This assumption reflects the extent to which these two concepts have penetrated the Western psyche, to the point where their existence and opposition is seen as inevitable or ‘natural’. This said, the operation of the Convention requires and certainly encourages a degree of self-consciousness of these two concepts on the part of its member states and the general public. Although the Convention provides ‘definitions’ and ‘guidelines’ regarding natural and cultural properties, it is clear from a comparative analysis of a number of World Heritage sites that the values ascribed to nature and culture are not a global given. Nor is it necessarily the case that the invocation of the nature-culture distinction results in a set of universally uniform effects. What is clear, however, is that nature and culture, and the differences between them, are made visible in a range of inter-cultural and trans-cultural contexts. In the operationalisation of the Convention, member nation-states provide some of the localised venues for the ‘schismogenic’ (Bateson 1973) invention of nature and culture. In these contexts, science and other ‘expert’ disciplines provide some of the procedures for producing nature and culture (Smith 1998).

In the course of the past thirty or so years, it is apparent that the member states to the Convention and various advising experts have grappled with the problems posed by the application of the Convention, discussing and revising some of its key terms and conditions in the process. Notwithstanding the many expert conferences and congresses, and the growing list of World Heritage publications on the “main issues, achievements and challenges of the World Heritage mission” (Bandarin 2003: 3), little has been said about the nature-culture dichotomy which informs the Convention, let alone plotting some of the social, environmental and economic effects resulting from the invocation of this dualism. Surprising as this may sound, a possible explanation for this apparent lacunae may lie in the fact that “nature and culture have penetrated so deeply into cultural analysis” (Goody 1977: 64), and have become so commonplace in everyday life in the ‘Western world’, that we no longer problematise our conventional and largely unreflective assumptions about these two concepts. As Anthony Giddens once observed, “we live day-to-day lives in which for most of us what we do we can’t give any reason [...] it’s hard to say why we do these things except that they’re there and we do them” (cited in Inglis 2005: 3).

⁵ Founded in 1965, ICOMOS, the *International Council on Monuments and Sites*, is a non-government organisation based in Paris, France.

In keeping with this observation about the everyday aspects or 'habitus' (Bourdieu 1977) of culture and nature, I suggest here that the issues the Convention raises and discussion of some of its inherent problems are best explored through a consideration and comparison of how World Heritage is operationalised day-in-day-out at a number of listed sites. A number of these sites, in particular the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (1988) and Komodo National Park (1991) – both listed for their apparent 'natural' values – allow us to take a longitudinal view of the implications and effects of the nature-culture distinction, which lies at the heart of the Convention. Through the lens of these two sites, and a number of other listed properties (see Map 1), we are able to view how the humanist discourse of the Convention intersects with scientific, environmental, nationalist, and Indigenous land rights debates, in the process alerting us to the power relations involved in the production of World Heritage.

Adopting a comparative perspective also allows us to understand how the perpetuation of the nature-culture dichotomy is instrumental in generating other, often quite polarised, binary forms. For example 'Indigenous and non-Indigenous', 'mainstream' in contrast to 'minority groups', conservationists versus developers, and so on. In the context of World Heritage, the relationship between nature and culture establishes a sliding scale of value on which to assess the heritage worth of nominated properties. This scale is also used to plot a range of other values, measured in terms of authenticity, integrity, creativity, uniqueness, significance, universality and of its being superlative and representative", as well as in terms of spatial extent and relative age (i.e. 'the largest' or 'the oldest'). In examining a number of World Heritage properties, it is apparent that the expression of these values within the nature-culture framework of the Convention impacts upon the way both local and world history are presented. In many sites, particularly those cultural properties listed as illustrative of a "significant stage in human history" (UNESCO 2005: 20), the most notable effect, ironically, is the sanitisation of history or the complete erasure of certain historic events. As I hope to demonstrate in this report, the globalisation of the nature-culture distinction, and the complex of values it engenders, paradoxically encourages the very threats and dangers the Convention seeks to ameliorate through listing. As Schlosser observes, the nature-culture dualism is also very "unhelpful" in resolving the complex social and environmental conflicts it generates (2006: 14).

CHAPTER TWO – THE WET TROPICS WORLD HERITAGE AREA: A CONFUSION OF CATEGORIES?

In 1988, after more than a decade of political wrangling between the Queensland State Government and the Australian Commonwealth Government, heated exchanges between conservationists and the pro-logging sector, and with varied Aboriginal opposition and support, the struggle to 'secure' (McDonald and Lane 2000) the wet tropical forests of North Queensland culminated in their listing as a World Heritage property at the Twelfth Session of the World Heritage Committee in Brasilia. This 894,420-hectare corridor of largely contiguous rainforest, extending along the eastern zone of the Great Dividing Range from Cooktown to Townsville, was one of four properties nominated that year for their 'outstanding universal [natural] value'. By the end of 1988, a decade after the first twelve sites were inscribed on the World Heritage List (UNESCO 2005b), a total of 69 'natural', 229 'cultural' and 14 'mixed' properties had been listed.

Among the 'natural' properties inscribed on the World Heritage List, the Wet Tropics is often held up as unique in meeting all four of the natural heritage criteria identified in the Operational Guidelines for the Convention⁶ as part of its assessment as a property with 'outstanding universal value'. As such, the region is listed for the following values:

criterion (i): "it contains one of the most complete and diverse living records of the major stages in the evolution of land plants [...] as well as one of the most important living records of the history of marsupials and songbirds";

criterion (ii): it "provides outstanding examples of significant ongoing ecological processes and biological evolution including exceptionally high levels of species diversity and endemism reflecting long-isolated ancient biota";

criterion (iii): it "has outstanding features of natural beauty and magnificent sweeping landscapes"; and

criterion (iv): it "provides important habitats for the in situ conservation of biological diversity, including the only habitat for numerous species of plants and animals of conservation significance which have outstanding universal value from the point of view of science and conservation" (<http://www.deh.gov.au/heritage/worldheritage/sites/wettropics/values.html>).

⁶ In 1988, the natural heritage criteria identified in the Operational Guidelines for the Convention were defined as:

Criterion (i): outstanding examples representing the major stages of the earth's evolutionary history;

Criterion (ii): outstanding examples representing significant ongoing geological processes, biological evolution and man's interaction with his natural environment [...];

Criterion (iii): contain superlative natural phenomena, formations or features, for instance, outstanding examples of the most important ecosystems, areas of exceptional natural beauty or exceptional combinations of natural and cultural elements; and

Criterion (iv): contain the most important and significant natural habitats where threatened species of animals or plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation still survive (Operational Guidelines 1988, <http://whc.unesco.org/archive/opguide88.pdf>).

Since 1988, revision of the Operational Guidelines has resulted in minor changes to criterion (i), (ii) and (iii). For example, since 1996, criterion (iii) [now criterion (vii)] has included a reference to the 'aesthetic importance' of a nominated property (World Heritage Committee 1996: 13).

Like other 'natural' heritage properties on the List, the inscribed values of the Wet Tropics both conceal and reflect certain cultural assumptions, as well as a history of ideas, about nature.

NATURAL SCIENCES AND 'DEAD' NATURE

In their volume on 'Redefining Nature', Ellen and Fukui observe, "one of the main sources of data on how humans perceive and interact with the environment is the language we use to describe it, and the categories we infer from this" (1996: 5). In a Western context, professional scientific discourse represents a powerful and pervasive framework for describing and interpreting human action, and for understanding the world we live in. Modern science offers more than just description. It provides the procedures for the production of nature. As Ellen points out, scientific productions of nature are at the "heart of environmental politics, development and conservation practice" (Ellen 1996: 28). However, while we readily assume "that there is a sufficient shared understanding of what nature is for science to work as a global discourse" (ibid: 14), the environmental history of Australia (and elsewhere) illustrates how science works with conflicting and often ambiguous ideas about nature (and culture for that matter)⁷. Notwithstanding this ambiguity, scientific understandings of 'nature' are the result of social practices, some of which take place in laboratories, while others occur 'in the field'. The social embeddedness of science is often concealed when science is equated with reality.

The nomination of the Wet Tropics for World Heritage listing is based upon an extensive array of scientific reports and studies on the region's fauna and flora, as well as on the geomorphology and hydrology of the area (DASETT 1987). This said, the key reference relied upon in the nomination document is the study commissioned by the Australian Heritage Commission in 1984 to evaluate the "international conservation significance of the wet tropical rainforests of North-East Queensland" (Rainforest Conservation Society of Queensland 1986: iii). The study brings together the primary data and published findings of nearly thirty scientists from a range of investigative fields and disciplines. In 1984, this study represented the state of scientific knowledge and understanding of the wet tropical forests. While acknowledging gaps in research, on the basis of the available scientific evidence, the authors of the study conclude that the "wet tropics [...] are of outstanding conservation significance and more than adequately fulfil the criteria defined by the World Heritage Committee for inclusion in the World Heritage List" (1986: 3). This conclusion was further supported by three internationally acknowledged scientists and two World Conservation Union (IUCN) referees (RCSQ 1986: 150-166). The latter referees went so far as to describe the report as "the most detailed evaluation of any prospective World Heritage potential nomination that has been completed for any property" (RCSQ 1986: 164).

The core scientific report, which informs the Australian Government's nomination of the 'Wet Tropical Rainforests of North-East Australia', is revealing in its conceptualisation of nature. The 'outstanding' and 'universal' significance of the region is primarily presented in terms of the evolutionary value of nature, where the wet tropical rainforests are described as a "relict of a vegetation type which was once more widespread" (DASETT 1987: 4). In this particular diachronic view of nature, the current complement of species is presented as the ultimate product of evolution, rather than as a temporary expression of a continually changing global

⁷ While the preservation of particular habitats is informed by the notion of restoring some form of ecological 'balance', as witnessed by programs such as the 'Global Representative System of Marine Protected Areas' or, in Australia, the 'Representative Areas Program', the scientific idea of a 'balanced' nature has, in recent years, been challenged by a more disordered view of nature. 'Chaos theory' and the 'intermediate disturbance hypotheses' represent two instances of this latter view. Ideas of 'balance' and 'representation' also lie at the heart of UNESCO's 'Global Strategy for a Balanced, Representative and Credible World Heritage List', launched in 1994.

taxa. Emphasis upon nature's 'balance' in evolutionary terms underscores criterion (i) and (ii) of the Convention's Guidelines and also the scientific response to them contained in the Australian Government's nomination document. As a vast natural expanse of evolutionary residues (Figure 1), the rainforests of North Queensland are akin to the monumental landscapes of an ancient past, represented by Angkor, the Historic Centre of Rome, and a number of other World Heritage cultural properties.

Critical to the idea of a balanced nature resulting from continuous evolutionary processes is the concept of an 'untouched nature', where evidence of human intervention is either ignored or downplayed so as not to detract from the area's pristine 'natural' values. This last point is particularly apparent in the way European occupation of the wet tropical rainforests is brushed aside in three paragraphs in the nomination document. European, as opposed to Aboriginal occupation is obviously regarded as negatively impacting upon the 'natural values' and 'balance' of the region. Notwithstanding more than a hundred years of European settlement and at least 40,000 years of Aboriginal occupation, there are numerous examples in the nomination document and in the supporting reports where the region's tropical forests are described as 'pristine' or in 'virgin condition' (ibid: 15).

The notion of nature conveyed in the DASETT report as 'pristine preserved parts' harks back to Enlightenment ideas where "the 'natural' was the appearance of the non-human in the presences of any animals, plants and landscapes beyond human control" (Luke 1995: 11). As Luke observes, these "Edenic myths of exceptionalistic purity" (loc. cit.) also informed early conservation efforts, and are still apparent in contemporary environmental movements. Given the key role of conservation groups in 'securing' the Wet Tropics, with the resultant battle lines drawn around natural zones without a discernable human presence, it is not so surprising that this particular view of nature is kept alive in the nomination document. J. Baird Callicott and others suggest that the comprehension of nature in terms of an 'entity-oriented' evolutionary ecology, in which humans are depicted as a "destructive force of change external to the biota" (Callicott *et al.* 1999: 24), constitutes a particular school of conservation philosophy, namely, 'compositionalism'. According to these authors, 'biological integrity' and 'biological diversity' are key normative concepts in the glossary of compositionalism, while 'ecological restoration' and the 'preservation' of biological diversity are critical conservation objectives associated with this school of thought (ibid: 25).

While the view of nature presented in the Wet Tropics nomination document has much in common with the philosophy of compositionalism, the biodiversity-centric vision of nature, which now dominates environmental and scientific discourses is not readily apparent. The view of nature presented in the document largely conforms to the prevalent construction of nature before it was declared 'dead' in the late 1980s and early 1990s (McKibben 1989; Merchant 1990). Prior to the 'death' of nature, conservation efforts were directed towards protecting "untouched and undisturbed expanses" (Luke 1995: 13), some of which had dubious ecological worth.

In keeping with the concept of nature as "acceptable appearances and preserved presences" (Luke 1995: 14), the nomination document provides a detailed inventory of endemic species, accompanied by photographic evidence of the 'reality' of the nature so memorialised. As these lists suggest, 'nature' is commonly presented in the nomination document as a thing that "really exists out there in the world" (ibid: 12) and is thus a discernable and valid object of scientific study. In other words, nature is seen as something which is 'found' or 'discovered', rather than something "that itself requires explanation" (Castree and Braun 1998: 17). In keeping with this 'entity-oriented' stance, so-called 'natural values' are regarded as an inherent property or quality of the geographic features and species described, rather than part of the beliefs and practices associated with a group or a society at a particular point in time. In many respects, how society views nature is in part a function of how society has affected nature. Nature and the cultural conceptions of nature develop

together, “they co-evolve” (Dove 1992: 246). This last point is particularly evident when we look again at the Wet Tropics nomination document.

The view of nature presented in the nomination document and in the supporting reports as ‘fragile’ (see also Figure 2), and certain cultures as ‘destructive’, invites and encourages social intervention and environmental preservation. As Cindi Katz points out, “‘preservation’ is most commonly accomplished by a physical and textual exclusion of sedimented layers of social activity and actors, past and present” (1998: 54). In defining and cordoning off nature as patches of protected spaces, science often overlooks historical changes in the way nature is perceived and influenced by other ideas⁸. While the nomination document provides a short statement on European use of the general region, from the ‘pioneering graziers’ and cedar cutters of the late nineteenth century to the more intensive agricultural pursuits and tourist endeavours of the twentieth century, there is no discussion of the cultural processes whereby the forests of the region were transformed from ‘vile’ and ‘useless scrub’ into a ‘pristine’ and rainforested ‘wilderness’, as now depicted on the World Heritage List. As Jane Lennon observes, “many of today’s natural areas in Australia were largely ‘wastelands’ remaining from nineteenth century imperial land settlement schemes” (2000: 182).

Science and scientists played an important role in effecting this transformation in perception and values. Scientific exploration contributed to the identification of economically valuable floral species in the region in the early years of Anglo-Australian settlement, while in the twentieth century science helped shape the Queensland Government’s management of the vast tracts of ‘State Forest’, now part of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. In more recent times, scientific knowledge and the principles of scientific management have been applied to the development of the region’s agricultural and tourism industries. While the Wet Tropics today are viewed through the lens of science as one of the remaining vestiges of ‘pure nature’, in more popular readings of the environment, the grassy, rolling contours of the Atherton Tableland, once covered by the pristine rainforests today valorised by science, are commonly seen as ‘natural’ spaces as well. Notwithstanding these contrasting visions, both views ultimately deny the social history of the landscapes they behold. As these comments suggest, our reading of the environment is a cultural practice, informed by specific social entailments and motivated by certain economic and political agendas.

A poignant example of how ideas about nature and culture mediate (and at times are the product of) the interface of scientific concepts and political pressure is provided by a brief examination of the names ascribed to the World Heritage Area. The original nomination document refers to the approximately 11,000 square kilometres as ‘wet tropical rainforests’, a designation based upon scientific classification of the region’s vegetation. While this label suggests that the entirety of the area in question is covered in ‘rainforest’, the key support document for the nomination states that only 6,300 square kilometres of this area is actually ‘rainforest’ (RCSQ 1986: 11). The remaining area consists of “wet sclerophyll, mangrove, dune and swale formations” (IUCN 1988: 11), among other things. Aware that less than 60% of the nominated region constituted actual ‘rainforest’, in their consideration of the nomination the World Heritage Bureau recommended that the “name of [the] property be reconsidered to reflect the nature of the area” (WHC 1988: 2). The resulting name, ‘Wet Tropics’, is thus the product of ‘sexing up’ science and political spin. As this example suggests, the concept of nature as a scientific category is also crucial to political discourse, and vice versa.

⁸ For example, in the latter part of the nineteenth century and throughout much of the twentieth century, the forests of the regions were commonly described as useless ‘scrub’ or impenetrable ‘jungle’ by the Anglo-Australian settlers. As Michael Dove points out, ‘jungle’ is an English borrowing of the Urdu word *jongal*, which in its original linguistic context and usage referred to a “savanna vegetation suited to the keeping of livestock” (cited in Ellen 1996: 8).

For all its talk of natural features and species, the Wet Tropics nomination provides some inkling of the cultural processes at work in the scientific construction of nature. While not commonly regarded as an object of scientific investigation, the nomination provides an interesting and supposedly scientific treatise on 'natural beauty' as part of its justification under criterion (iii) of the Convention's Guidelines. The descriptions of 'magnificent sweeping landscapes', 'exceptional coastal scenery', 'rugged mountain peaks', 'spectacular waterfalls', 'superb gorge scenery', and 'swiftly flowing rivers' (DASETT 1987: 29) resonate with a relatively recent Anglo-Australian cultural aesthetic about natural spaces construed as pristine wilderness (Figure 3). In addition to an overabundance of superlatives, this particular aesthetic form, rendered as objective and value-free scientific description, is further authorised by reference to a series of quantifiers, i.e. the highest mountain, the longest waterfall, the largest island, 3,000 year old trees, 600 metre deep gorges, 70 kilometres of undisturbed rainforest, and so on (DASETT 1987: 29; RCSQ 1986: 63-70). In this ode to 'the gigantic' (see Mbembe 2001: 22), "the quantitative becomes an essential [and necessary] quality" of that described (*loc. cit.*). As these extracts from the nomination document indicate, the so-called 'natural beauty' of the Wet Tropics is dominated by science's preoccupation with the visible or vision-based images. As indicated by the criteria for assessing the 'outstanding universal value' of 'natural properties', this preoccupation is also enshrined in the World Heritage Convention.

If the Wet Tropics and other so-called 'natural' World Heritage properties are anything to go by, it appears that scientific ideas about nature neatly dovetail with the categorisation of nature that appears in the Convention. While UNESCO's 'Global Strategy' aims to address the under-representation of identified geographical areas on the List, there appears to be little debate and contestation about the Convention's depiction of 'natural heritage' in terms of "its biological and geographical diversity" (see UNESCO 1998: 14). The apparent universality of 'nature' stands in stark contrast to the many UNESCO-sponsored papers and proceedings, which point to the issues and fundamental problems surrounding the Convention's definition of cultural heritage (e.g. see the thirteen reports, manuals and in-depth papers produced as part of UNESCO's World Heritage Paper Series).

This brief foray into the environmental history of North Queensland begs the question, to paraphrase Marilyn Strathern (1980: 177), as to "how large a part of the total assemblage of meanings must we be able to identify to speak with confidence and positively assert that something or other is natural as opposed to cultural?" This issue of classification is one, which bedevils state environment and heritage agencies, and some researchers as well (see Sorvig 2002), in their search for the 'one size fits all' definition of natural and cultural values. The fact that the World Heritage Convention appears to have achieved this feat in no way, suggests that this is a *fait accompli*, judging by the way the so-called natural and cultural 'values' of listed World Heritage sites are represented at the local level. This disjuncture between listed World Heritage values and those acknowledged at the local level is just one of a number of 'misconceptions, misrepresentations and missed opportunities' (Reser and Bentrupperbäumer 2001: 38) associated with World Heritage. In research involving both management agency personnel and visitors, Bentrupperbäumer and Reser (2000: 13) conclude that in the Wet Topics World Heritage Area there is a "lack of clear understanding and consensus" regarding the expression 'World Heritage values' generally. As I discuss in chapter three with reference to Komodo National Park in eastern Indonesia, while the World Heritage Convention and other United Nations' initiatives represent a new route to the apparent globalisation of certain concepts about nature and culture, it is misguided to think that this project is by any means total or complete.

The 'discovery' of rainforest in North Queensland, and homologous 'wilderness' areas in other parts of the world, as a place and subject of international debate has certainly triggered a reconfiguration of scientific knowledge and associated discourses about nature in the last two decades or so. As the environmental history of North Queensland attests, the 'discovery'

of rainforest and the subsequent construction of it as a rich source of biodiversity is not “socially innocent” (Castree and Braun 1998: 30). As discussed in the following section, the emergence of rainforests as an object of scientific scrutiny, political opportunism and global environmental concern resulted in new forms of governmentality, social regulation and, for some people, a continuation of their historical marginalisation. Bluntly stated, with the World Heritage listing of the Wet Tropics, nature and society were both reshaped in the long shadow cast by the forest of protectionism that followed.

WHOSE NATURE, WHOSE CULTURE?

Enclosed within the 3,000 kilometre long boundary of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area are 733 separate parcels of land, including National Parks (32%), Forest Reserves (29%), State Forest (10%), a range of leases over public land (11%) and Unallocated State Land (7%) (Wet Tropics Management Authority website 2006). Two percent of the World Heritage Area is comprised of freehold titled land (approximately 300 separate parcels covering some 3,000 ha), including Aboriginal trust and reserve lands at Yarrabah (15,450.9 ha).

Underlying the various European tenures incorporated into the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area are the traditional estates of some eighteen Aboriginal groups. In the pre-Native Title era of the 1980s, the Queensland and Commonwealth Governments, together with the World Heritage Committee, “believed Aboriginal peoples ‘owned’ only a small percentage of [the] proposed World Heritage listed lands” (Bama Rainforest Aboriginal Corporation 1996: 16). Many Traditional Owners opposed the inclusion of Aboriginal lands within the World Heritage Area boundaries without due consultation and consent. Indeed, in June 1988 two Aboriginal people travelled with Queensland Government representatives to a meeting of the World Heritage Bureau in Paris to express their objection to the listing (Bama Rainforest Aboriginal Corporation 1996: 79). In the IUCN evaluation of the Government of Australia’s nomination, the “position of the aboriginal owners on the question of inclusion of their land” (IUCN 1988: 11) is identified as a ‘secondary issue’. The IUCN believed that this issue would be addressed by the Government’s assurances that it would “involve the aboriginal communities in future management of the area” (loc. cit.). History, however, points to a very different outcome than the one promised by the national government in 1988. While the resultant lack of Aboriginal involvement in the management of the Wet Tropics is seen by many as the product of the broken promises of politicians, I would also suggest here that this exclusion is one of the more apparent social effects of a discourse unable to accommodate contemporary Indigenous constructions of identity, heritage and, ultimately, ‘culture’.

THE PRODUCTION OF NATURAL SUBJECTS

In the nearly twenty years since the listing of the Wet Tropics, Traditional Owners have continued to rally for the renomination of the region for its cultural values, objecting to the fact that the inscription of the region’s rainforests on the World Heritage List for their ‘natural’ values appeared to disregard Indigenous values (see Bama Rainforest Aboriginal Corporation 1996). While local histories of the nomination process continue to espouse this view, the nomination documents reveal a different story about the relationship between nature and culture, played out in the murky depths of outdated evolutionary theories. Unbeknown to many, the original nomination document presented to the World Heritage Committee by the Government of Australia provided documentary justification for the designation of the area as a World Heritage *cultural property* based upon the assertion that:

The wet tropics of North-east Australia preserves the only recognised extant Aboriginal rainforest culture and is therefore a major component of the cultural record of an Aboriginal society which has a long continuous history in the nominated area for at least 40,000 years (DASETT 1987: 19).

To support this assertion, the nomination relies upon the 1986 report commissioned by the Australian Heritage Commission, and two articles identified in the appended bibliography; one by the anthropologist Norman Tindale on the 'Prehistory of the Aborigines', and one by the palaeobotanist Peter Kershaw on 'Aboriginal burning during the last two glacial / interglacial cycles'. The Rainforest Conservation Society of Queensland (RCSQ) report itself provides three pages of information on the 'history of Aboriginal occupation' of the region (1986: 39-41), summarising archaeological findings at the time and providing some information about 'Aboriginal prehistorical legends'.

Based on the material of the primary linguist for the region, R. M. W. Dixon, local Aboriginal 'mythology' is identified in this report as an "unparalleled human record of events dating back to the Pleistocene era" (RCSQ 1986: 40). Further evidence of the long history of Aboriginal use of the region is provided by palynological research, which suggests human occupation of the Atherton Tableland from at least 40,000 to 45,000 years ago "when a huge increase in charcoal deposits coincides with major replacement of rainforest by fire-adapted *Eucalyptus*" (ibid: 39). While this evidence could be read as an instance of culture challenging nature and creating environmental imbalances, in the nomination document the contraction of the region's rainforests is depicted in terms of "a series of dramatic changes of climate" (DASETT 1987: 27). In this scenario, Aboriginal environmental impacts in the Pleistocene period are solely understood in terms of wider natural processes and outcomes. The implication from this subordination of culture to nature is that Aborigines, like some floral species, are "examples of ancient taxa that survived and persist as relicts within the Australian wet tropics today" (DASETT 1987: 27). While the palynological evidence points to considerable human modification of the environment, and prior Aboriginal occupation of dry sclerophyll ecosystems, preliminary archaeological evidence for the "origins of Aboriginal rainforest culture" (ibid: 39) only dates from 6300 BP. Whether using palynological or archaeological evidence as the baseline, an Aboriginal presence in the region is detectable only by reference to deeper "charcoal deposits" (RCSQ 1986: 39) or radio-carbon dated refuse.

In many ways, these scientific deliberations (and disappearing acts) conform to a more romanticised view of Aboriginal people as the original conservationists, living in harmony with nature and 'leaving nothing but footprints' on the Australian landscape (see Sackett 1991; Pannell 1996; Kuper 2003). As this summary indicates, in the RCSQ report 'Aboriginal people of the rainforests', their 'oral traditions', and occupation patterns are inextricably intertwined with the formation of some of the key features identified in the nomination document as 'areas of exceptional natural beauty' or as 'important and significant natural habitats'. This conflation of cultural and natural history is highlighted by the fact that these references to 'Aboriginal history' in this influential report appear in the chapter entitled 'Description and Inventory of the Natural Features'. Presented as the most recent phase in the 'natural history' of the region, the section on the 'history of Aboriginal occupation' thus logically appears in the closing pages of the chapter, preceded by the sections on hydrology, geomorphology, vegetation types, flora and fauna. In both the nomination document and the key study outlining the 'outstanding universal significance' of the region, Aboriginal people and culture are firmly placed within the realm of nature and are viewed, along with the tropical forests themselves, as a 'relict' of 'natural' evolutionary processes. Indeed, in the nomination document, the 'wet tropics' are said to 'preserve' the world's only example of 'Aboriginal rainforest culture' (see DASETT 1987: 19; RCSQ 1986: 78-79). The depiction of Aboriginal people as purely 'natural subjects' is certainly not what the Traditional Owners of the Wet Tropics have in mind when they state that they "do not distinguish between nature and culture". As Schlosser points out, all too often in environmental disputes Indigenous people are either "erased from nature or collapsed in it" (2006: 5). This idea of Indigenous people as 'natural subjects' strongly resonates with nineteenth century depictions of Aborigines and the region's environment.

As Raymond Williams (1976) reminds us, the term 'culture' derives in a roundabout way from the Latin verb *colere*, 'to cultivate', and is thus associated with tilling of the soil. In this sense then, it is easy to see how the forests of Far North Queensland were construed at the point of the first European incursions in the late 1800s as being without culture; brutish enclaves lacking refinement and the other human-created characteristics attributed to agricultural vistas. From the 1870s onwards, a certain cultural framework emerged for perceiving this environment. Based upon a series of binary oppositions, 'scrub' was seen as 'wild' and 'natural', while the developing farms and towns came to epitomise a European sense of domesticated, cultural spaces. Given this environmental model, it is not so surprising that the Aborigines who inhabited the rainforests of the region were spoken of in the same terms reserved for these 'dark' and 'repugnant' 'jungles' (Savage 1992: 219). The writings of early explorers, scientists and government agents alike, men such as Christie Palmerston (Savage 1992), Archibald Meston (1889), and Robert L. Jack (1888), provide numerous examples of this usage.

The recurrent spatial construction of Aborigines 'in nature' intersects with a familiar set of temporal coordinates, in the process reproducing an all too commonly held 'chronotope' (Bakhtin 1981) of Aboriginality. The RCSQ report and the nomination document consistently refer to Aboriginal occupation and use in the past tense, locating these activities in the distant past – within the prehistory of the region. In these two key documents, and in the IUCN evaluation of the nomination, 'rainforest-dwelling Aborigines' are identified as 'Barrineans' – living vestiges of an earlier 'invasion' of 'Oceania negrito type' people (see RCSQ 1986: 39; IUCN 1988). This reference to 'Barrineans' derives from an outdated and discredited theory of human evolution in and migration to Australia (see Brayshaw 1990: 25-26; Horsfall 2002).

Discussing the results of their 1938-1939 expedition to North Queensland, the anthropologist Norman Tindale and his colleague Joseph Birdsell speak of the existence of a 'Tasmanoid group' in the rainforests of North Queensland (1941). The dozen 'small' or 'pygmoid' tribes belonging to this group are said to exhibit physical characteristics similar to those of Tasmanian Aborigines, hence their use of the label. Tindale and Birdsell also referred to this aggregation of tribes as the 'Barrineans', in reference to their territorial proximity to Lake Barrine on the Atherton Tableland. Both authors believed the rainforest-dwelling Barrineans to be "a separate small-framed type of modern man forming one of the earliest stocks in southern Asia" (Tindale 1974: 89), and thus, according to these authors, the Barrineans represent "the first wave of the Aboriginal occupation of Australia" (see IUCN 1988: 4).

In contrast to the portrayal of local people in Komodo National Park, and in many other World Heritage sites, the nomination document and supporting reports do not dispute the claim that Aboriginal people are the original inhabitants of the region. Indeed, in the evolutionary model presented in the nomination, Aboriginal people are identified as an endemic species along with the region's fauna and flora. In this sense, Aborigines are located in the same 'deep' time of natural history that also explains the formation and presence of the region's wet tropical rainforests. In much the same way that these forests are said to contain the "group of birds considered to represent the *ancestral* [emphasis added] stock from which Australia's, and possibly the world's songbirds evolved" (DASETT 1987: 25), they are also home to 'humankind's first comers', the Aborigines, in their "natural state of humanity" (Kuper 2003: 390).

In the flawed evolutionary picture presented in the nomination document and in supporting 'scientific' reports, Aboriginal people and culture are portrayed in a pre-contact setting – leaching toxic plant foods, cracking rainforest nuts, cutting wooden swords and shields from the surrounding forests, weaving baskets, wearing bark cloth, and wielding Pleistocene-aged stone-axes (Figure 4) (DASETT 1987: 13; World Conservation Monitoring Centre 1992; RCSQ 1986: 39). This primitivist view of 'ancient' and 'natural' Aborigines, uncontaminated

by the ravages of colonial contact and culture, is perpetuated in the IUCN evaluation document, where continuing Aboriginal use of their lands incorporated within the Wet Tropics boundary is confined to “traditional non-commercial purposes” (1988: 11). As indicated in the IUCN evaluation, confining Aboriginal use of the Wet Tropics to ‘traditional’ purposes, supposedly in tune with nature, serves to maintain the listed environmental values of the area. As this stated condition of the listing suggests, ‘traditional’ Aborigines, depicted as “authentic natives”, represent a world in which “culture does not challenge nature” (Kuper 2003: 395).

The documentary sources and reports appended to the nomination document talk about some of the ‘remnants’ of this ancient hunter-gatherer society ‘surviving’ at the Bloomfield River within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (see RCSQ 1986: 40-41). Others, not so fortunate, such as the “last remaining members of the ‘Bandjin’ tribe from Hinchinbrook”, are proclaimed to be “now dead” (ibid: 41), while the residents of Murray Upper are described as “less intact” (loc. cit.). Notable for their absence from this decimated demographic profile are the Aboriginal residents of Yarrabah, the former Church of England Mission near Cairns. While their lands were included within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, the community of Yarrabah is clearly not regarded as one of the centres of “survival of the aboriginal rainforest culture” (RCSQ 1986: 41). When coupled with the idea of nature as an endangered array of evolutionary relicts, these proclamations about Aboriginal people and culture make the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area look more like a “nature cemetery” rather than a nature conservancy (Luke 1995: 17). As Bender points out, this kind of spatial-temporal representation is not so unusual in the context of heritage protection:

Those involved in the conservation, preservation and mummification of landscape create normative landscapes, as though there was only one way of telling or experiencing. They attempt to ‘freeze’ the landscape as a palimpsest of past activity (Bender 1999: 26).

The omission of the Aboriginal residents of Yarrabah alerts us to the operation of another dichotomy, other than the primary nature-culture dualism. The nomination document and supporting scientific reports set up an opposition between ‘cultural’ Aborigines in ‘nature’ and acculturated Aboriginal people situated outside of ‘nature’. ‘Natural’ Aborigines inhabit the rainforest and observe ‘traditional Aboriginal culture’ in a pre-contact time frame (RCSQ 1986: 40). Aboriginal people removed from their natural rainforest habitat, and living on former missions or government settlements, are in terms of the indices of the RCSQ report and the nomination document, both out of place and out of time. As presented in the RCSQ report, this spatial and temporal dislocation also equates to a loss of culture.

As ‘endangered authenticities’ (Clifford 1988), Aboriginal people appear no different from the other ‘rare, very restricted and endangered species’ identified in the nomination document as living in confined habitats throughout the wet tropical forests. Notwithstanding the tenacity of “the few remaining surviving gatherer-hunter societies” (ibid: 40), the general picture of Aboriginal ‘cultural heritage’ which emerges from these sources is one of relicts and remnants of material culture, devoid of social actors.

Contemporary and apparently informed scientific propositions about Aboriginal society and culture strongly resonate with nineteenth century notions of Aboriginal people as ‘stone-age relicts’ or a ‘doomed race’. Indeed, there is little that separates these ideas from those expressed in the report of the first ‘scientific’ expedition to the region in 1889, where local Aborigines are identified as “savage and inferior races”, “destined to disappear” (Meston 1889: 9). Like the Rainforest Conservation Society of Queensland Report, Archibald Meston’s 1889 ‘scientific report’ also positions its discussion of the local Aborigines amongst the more detailed descriptions of the region’s fauna and flora (Meston 1889). While it would be comforting to dismiss the view of Aboriginality presented in nineteenth century accounts

and twentieth century scientific reports as 'out dated' or 'ill informed', as Elizabeth Povinelli argues, in Australia these ideas about Indigenous subjects and societies are the "liberal multicultural legacy of colonialism" (2002).

Thus, although the Australian Government identified the wet tropical forests of north-east Queensland as both a 'cultural' and 'natural' property in its nomination to the World Heritage Committee, it comes as no surprise, particularly in the absence of information to the contrary, that the IUCN evaluation recommends listing on the basis of the area's 'natural values'. In this scenario, and in keeping with the many references to Aboriginal history as 'prehistory', Aboriginal culture is portrayed as pre-cultural in contrast to Anglo-European culture, which is presented as both a threat to and saviour of nature. Either way, Anglo-Australian culture is presented as something that exists outside of nature but within history. This is certainly the view presented on the Wet Tropics information sheet compiled by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre on behalf of UNESCO, and in the RCSQ report (1986: 78-79), where 'Aboriginal rainforest culture' is portrayed as a part of the 'regional ecosystem'. As such, it is identified, along with the region's fauna, flora, and features of 'outstanding natural beauty', as contributing to the 'conservation value' of the World Heritage site (WCMC 1992: 6).

It is difficult to avoid the social and political implications of the discursive placement of Aboriginal people as either 'in nature' but 'out of time', or 'out of nature' but 'in time'. In the first scenario culture is collapsed into nature, while in the latter situation, as discussed in the following section, culture is replaced by politics and the threatening image (for Anglo-Celtic Australians at least) of the Aboriginal political activist.

THE HEGEMONY OF NATURE

The listing of the Wet Tropics as a solely natural artefact, and the associated depiction of Aboriginal occupation and history as 'in nature' and 'out of time' set in place a geography of practices and beliefs, which effectively excluded contemporary Aboriginal people from an active role in the cultural and political activities called 'management'.

This exclusion occurred despite:

1. The IUCN's expressed desire to see the 'Aboriginal owners' of the various titles included in the boundaries of the 'wet tropical rainforests of north-east Queensland' involved in and endorse the "aims of the Convention in their area" (IUCN 1988: 11);
2. The World Heritage Bureau's request for more information on and clarification of "land ownership by Aboriginal people" (WHC 1988: 2);
3. The Australian Government's numerous assurances at the time that it would "involve the Aboriginal communities in future management of the area" (IUCN 1988: 11); and
4. The preamble of the *Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993*, which clearly states that "it is also the intention of the Parliament to acknowledge the significant contribution that Aboriginal people can make to the future management of cultural and natural heritage with the property, particularly through joint management agreements".

'Which Way Our Cultural Survival', the 1998 'Review of Aboriginal Involvement in the Management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area' (Review Steering Committee 1998), identifies ten factors 'constraining' Aboriginal involvement in management. These range from issues arising from 'legislation' to ones stemming from 'insufficient resources' (RSC 1998: 24-29). Three of the 'constraints' identified in the Review, namely 'differences in world view', 'World Heritage listing and cultural values' and 'bias towards natural values protection', directly relate to the arguments presented here on how powerful and pervasive ideas about

culture and nature intersect to create a discursive space, which is unable to accommodate contemporary Indigenous constructions of identity and heritage.

While the Review is correct in suggesting that Anglo-Australian ideas about 'wilderness', the concept of terra nullius and dichotomous notions of nature-culture, where culture "plays second fiddle to [...] natural values" (RSC 1998: 26), are 'constraints', the primary focus of the Review upon Aboriginal involvement in regional management fails to address some of the more potent and pernicious effects of the listing. These effects, I argue, relate to how human subjects and relations are produced through listing-related scientific discourses about nature and culture.

For Aboriginal people the listing promotes, to borrow Elizabeth Povinelli's observation about the effects of Australian multiculturalism, "a domesticated nonconflictual 'traditional' form of sociality and (inter)subjectivity" (2002: 6). Collapsed into nature, and frozen in a supposedly pre-contact moment, Indigenous subjects are called upon "to perform an authentic difference in exchange for the good feelings of the nation ..." (Povinelli 2002: 6). As Povinelli points out, this scenario "inspires impossible desires" among Aboriginal people "to be this impossible subject" (loc. cit.). The many photogenic images of 'Rainforest Aborigines' harvesting bush tucker, erecting traditional dwellings, weaving baskets, carving shields and swords, identifying stone fish traps, and painting up in 'traditional design', which adorn Wet Tropics Management Authority (WTMA) posters and fill the pages of the Authority's newsletter, *Rainforest Aboriginal News*, graphically illustrate Povinelli's observations. Moreover, as Bender observes, "freezing time allows the landscape or monuments [as well as the people] in it to be packaged, presented and turned into museum exhibits" (1999: 26).

In keeping with the concepts of Indigenousness and difference presented in the nomination document and in supporting reports, this imagery of 'traditional Aboriginal culture' contrasts with the other image of Aboriginality presented in the WTMA newsletter, that of 'people with politics'. Negotiating Aboriginal involvement in the management of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area and lobbying for the renomination of the region for its 'cultural' values are the other recurrent stories, which appear in issues of the newsletter. These stories and images not only reflect an increasing self-consciousness about what passes as 'culture' (as opposed to 'politics'), but they also signal how Indigenous people in the region have oriented their "sensual, emotional and corporeal identities" (Povinelli 2002: 8) towards the images of Aboriginal culture identified and promoted in the listing of the Wet Tropics. In bringing culture into view in this way, Aboriginal people are caught in one of the paradoxes created by Euro-Western ideas about culture. For it to be perceived as authentic and uncontrived, Aboriginal culture must remain "concealed from the actors themselves" (Weiner and Glaskin 2006: 10). Aboriginal self-consciousness of culture must thus conceal the conditions of this visibility if culture and a particular Aboriginal 'exo-identity' are to be seen as non-reflexive and naturally-given aspects of Indigenous life. Given this 'impossible standard of authentic traditional culture' (Povinelli 2002), it is perhaps not so surprising to hear Aboriginal people state that they've "lost their culture". Certainly, it is difficult to know what has been lost or gained when dealing with Anglo-Australian fantasies about indigeneity and difference.

It is arguable whether renomination of the Wet Tropics for its so-called 'cultural values' will seriously counteract this view of 'natural culture', particularly given the current hegemony of 'nature'. Indeed, it appears that the wet tropical rainforest of north-east Queensland have already been nominated and listed for its cultural values. As far as the Australian Government, and many scientists, conservationists, and members of the public are concerned, the cultural value of this area lies in its nature, and it is this specific cultural reading and construction of the concept of nature that is given priority and is preserved through listing. Contrary to what many people believe, Aboriginal people have not been left out of this picture of pure nature. Rather, they and their 'culture' are collapsed into this view of nature and presented as part of the evolutionary record of the region. Speaking of the

depiction of Brazilian Indians in Xingu National Park as 'part of nature', Jim Igoe suggests that this construction presents the Indians with "opportunities for alliances with international conservation organizations" (2004: 145). Similar opportunities exist in North Queensland, although if the environmental history of efforts to 'save' the Daintree forest from developers and loggers is anything to go by, it is clear that the interests of conservation groups and Indigenous people are not always politically aligned.

It is also arguable whether UNESCO's *Global Strategy*, advocating the inclusion of more 'living cultures' and 'traditional cultures' as the means to a 'balanced, representative and credible World Heritage List', will necessarily emancipate Aboriginal people from their discursive identity as 'endangered authenticities'. As the emphasis upon 'living' and 'traditional' cultures suggests, the nomenclature and objectives of the global strategy serve to reproduce the 'impossible' subjectivities espoused in the nomination documents for the Wet Tropics. As Adam Kuper observes, under the new label of 'indigenous peoples', the United Nations has restored to life the "ghostly category" of 'primitive peoples and societies' of 'classical anthropological discourse' (Kuper 2003: 389). In its attempt to stabilise and globalise the meanings of nature, culture and heritage, the Convention sidesteps the thorny issue of who is indigenous, traditional, or 'living' for that matter. As such, no distinction is made in the Convention between Indigenous and other cultural values. Moreover, in confining its administrative interactions to member States only, UNESCO ensures that First Nation peoples and local communities have no direct dealings with the World Heritage Committee (Sullivan 2004: 51) and are thus sidelined in consultations and negotiations leading to the nomination of a site.

THE LEARNING CURVE OF THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST

The creation of the Wet Tropics points to the power of words and ideas to both limit and make possible certain truths about the world, as witnessed by the now widely-accepted and valorised 'reality' of rainforest, which has all but erased previous depictions of the same phenomena as vilified and dangerous spaces. Significantly, the listing of the Wet Tropics for its 'natural values' signalled a stabilisation of the meanings ascribed to this area, effectively neutralising alternative meanings, and all but emasculating political contestation. If the listing represented a stabilisation of environmental meanings, it also signalled a continuity of meaning for those intrinsically identified with this space. In this respect, the nomination documents point to the difficulties encountered by science to divest itself of its Enlightenment views of nature and culture, which in the twenty first century do not appear as illuminating or as progressive as they once did. Equally, it appears that it is just as difficult for Anglo-Australian settler society to free itself of its colonial ideas about otherness, ideas I should add, which were fed by scientific notions of the day. With its emphasis upon the built environment, it also seems that the Convention itself is incapable of embracing 'modern' identities and what might pass for so many people as 'modern heritage' in a globalised world (see UNESCO 2003b).

In Australia, the Wet Tropics do not represent an isolated and outdated instance of the 'hegemony of nature'. Indeed, of the sixteen World Heritage properties in Australia, only one (the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens) is listed solely for its 'cultural' values, while eleven sites are listed for their 'natural' values alone. As a number of authors have noted (see Titchen 1995; Lennon 2000; Lennon *et al.* 2001; Sullivan 2004), the listing of Australia's so-called 'natural' properties, and continuing denial and disregard for the other values associated with these places, reproduces many of the issues discussed here with respect to the Wet Tropics. If the most recent (2003) listing of the indigenously-named Purnululu National Park solely for its 'natural values' is anything to go by, one wonders if the Australian Government has learnt any lessons from the World Heritage List.

CHAPTER THREE – WORLD HERITAGE AS A GLOBAL PUBLIC GOOD? A CASE STUDY FROM THE ISLAND OF KOMODO

These volcanic islands are inhabited by a population of around 5,700 giant lizards, whose appearance and aggressive behaviour have led them to being called 'Komodo dragons'. They exist nowhere else in the world and are of great interest to scientists studying the theory of evolution – UNESCO World Heritage Centre

As stated in many UNESCO publications, a central tenet of the World Heritage Convention is the belief that “World Heritage sites belong to all the peoples of the world, irrespective of the territory on which they are located” (UNESCO 2005b: 2). In promoting the idea that certain examples of natural and cultural heritage have ‘outstanding universal value’, the Convention elevates particular forms of heritage to the level of a global public good. As Ismail Serageldin observes, “conserving cultural heritage and promoting cultural identity, to the extent that it is not at the expense of minority cultures within the same society, fall into the category of public goods” (Serageldin 1999: 254). As stated by UNESCO, the overarching benefit derived from this global public good is “that of belonging to an international community of appreciation and concern for universally significant properties that embody a world of outstanding examples of cultural diversity and natural wealth” (UNESCO 2005b: 5). This international community ‘joins hands’ under the auspices of the Convention “to protect and cherish the world’s natural and cultural heritage” (loc. cit.).

The internationalisation of cultural heritage is not a new phenomenon, and has been going on for centuries, if not millennia. Throughout the period of British colonialism, for example, the removal of tangible cultural heritage from distant colonies for display in metropolitan museums was often justified by the colonial authorities in terms of the universal significance of the items to ‘mankind’ or for ‘posterity’. As the debate over the ‘Elgin Marbles’ illustrates, the acquisition and retention of such objects was also justified in terms of the perceived inability of the colonised, or some alien other, to look after their own culture heritage. In the case of the Elgin Marbles, this argument also lies at the heart of the controversy regarding their restitution to the Government of Greece (Morris 2006). As Morris points out, the Elgin Marbles case raises some challenging questions for modern museology:

Should western museums hold fast to their Enlightenment principles, putting all the world’s treasures under one (rather narrow) roof, or can they accept more pluralist interpretations and competing claims on the materials? (Morris 2006: 25).

Judging from the number of claims made by both governments and Indigenous groups around the world for the repatriation of looted treasures and cultural artefacts, it appears that this question is in the process of being answered.

The Enlightenment principles, which inform the practices of the British Museum and those of many other ‘western’ museums and art galleries, also lie at the heart of the notion of World Heritage. Repatriation and restitution on a global scale are not really issues, however, particularly given the fact that it is the 137 member state parties to the Convention that ‘look after’ heritage, and not an ‘imagined’ (Anderson 1991) international community. That said, as the following case of Komodo National Park illustrates, the aim of preserving ‘heritage’ for ‘mankind’ or for an ‘elite world community’ often has the effect of removing control from “particular owners” or a “particular traditionally associated community” (Sullivan 2004: 52).

In the operationalisation of the Convention, national governments serve to mediate the relationship between the global and the local, creating 'glocal' (see Robertson 1995) forms of heritage, management and public benefits. As a number of commentators observe, World Heritage listing is expected to bring benefits to the local stakeholders (see Harrison and Hitchcock 2005). World Heritage status is promoted as a 'top brand' in marketing terms, or is seen as a 'unique selling point' to attract tourists to an area. In addition to conferring economic value through increased tourism expenditure, listing can often lead to 'more protection' and 'more funding' for threatened sites (see Buckley 2002; van der Aa *et al.* 2005: 12-13). Furthermore, as van der Aa and others point out, for local people, World Heritage listing may be considered a "commendation for [their] successful preservation efforts" or they may view their occupation of an internationally-recognised area as an "honour" (ibid: 12).

Analysing the relationship between heritage and tourism, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett describes heritage as a "value-added industry" (1998: 150). According to Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, heritage organisations, such as the World Heritage Committee, "ensure that places and practices in danger of disappearing because they are no longer occupied or functioning or valued will survive" (loc. cit.). They do so by adding the values of "pastness, exhibition, difference, and, where possible, indigeneity" (loc. cit.). This reference to heritage protection as a form of value-adding alerts us to the existence of a different scale of values, other than the monetary one so often associated with heritage tourism and World Heritage 'branding' (Buckley 2002).

In the costs-benefit analysis of listing, it is also apparent that World Heritage designation is regarded by some as an "unwelcome reward" (van der Aa *et al.* 2005: 18). While listing may attract tourism, many World Heritage properties are not adequately prepared to deal with tourism and associated economic development. For example, soon after the 1997 listing of the 'Old Town of Lijiang' in China, "Lijiang was beleaguered by development" (Kugel 2006). As pointed out by Jeff Morgan, the Executive Director of the Global Heritage Fund, the local authorities "had no zoning, no planning [...] suddenly the first tourist hotels went in [...] soon there was so much building, 'it's not interesting anymore'" (cited in Kugel 2006). As Seth Kugel reports, the 'Old Town of Lijiang' is just one of a number of World Heritage-listed properties to illustrate how tourism and development are "often left unchecked" post-listing (Kugel 2006: 2). The National Geographic Society's 2004 'Destination Scorecard' for 115 of the 'world's great places', gives some indication of the management challenges facing so many World Heritage sites. In this survey, more than a quarter of the lowest scoring places on the 'Stewardship Index' are World Heritage-listed properties (Tourtellot 2004: 66-67)⁹. As the example of Lijiang and so many other listed properties illustrates, World Heritage listing often, paradoxically, threatens the very values it is meant to protect. In the case of Lijiang and other World Heritage sites over-run by tourism, loss of autonomy and the growing influence of outsiders are also important considerations in local opposition to World Heritage listing (see also van der Aa *et al.* 2005: 16). In the United States of America (USA), the issue of autonomy, expressed in terms of threats to sovereignty and related questions¹⁰ about the influence of the United Nations, has also affected the application of the World Heritage Convention on a national level (see Williams 2005). While there are strong 'anti-United Nations sentiments' in the USA (Williams 2005: 135), in the case of many other World

⁹ The World Heritage-listed properties, the Florida Everglades (USA), Angkor in Cambodia, Victoria Falls in Zambia, the Acropolis (Greece), the Pyramids of Giza, Great Smoky Mountains (USA) and Venice in Italy, were among the twenty seven places awarded low scores on the Index. Evaluation of the 'world's best known places' by over 200 specialists was based on six criteria pertaining to cultural, environmental and aesthetic integrity (Tourtellot 2004: 60).

¹⁰ These are concerns, which still exist despite the World Heritage Convention's commitment to fully respect the sovereignty of the states on whose territory respective sites are situated, as stated in its Article 6 (UNESCO 1972: 4). As such, World Heritage listing of sites on their national territory is "without prejudice to national sovereignty or ownership" (UNESCO 2005).

Heritage contexts, 'outside influence' is most apparent in the bureaucratic edifice and professional network built around and emanating from the Convention.

Indeed, if there is an international community it is manifest in the array of advising UNESCO scientists and other experts who, like the member parties, play an important role in shaping the contours of nature and culture at each site. In some cases, as Graeme Evans points out, financial aid for conservation at World Heritage sites is contingent upon the input of 'Western experts' (2005: 44). As evident in Komodo National Park and many other World Heritage sites, this international class of experts "displace the paternalistic control exercised by local [government] agents" (Evans 2005: 45). In speaking about the relationship between 'the expert and the local' in the context of heritage protection, Sullivan observes that the language used by the growing body of heritage professionals is not only increasingly inaccessible to most people, it also:

[...] tends to represent them as passive recipients of heritage practice and as people to be manipulated or educated to appreciate and conserve heritage rather than being seen as its prime creators and owners (Sullivan 2004: 51).

In the case of Komodo National Park, we can readily track the historical impact and wide-ranging effects of this 'international community' of heritage professionals and scientific experts upon a remote island in the eastern reaches of the Indonesian archipelago.

'HERE THERE BE DRAGONS'¹¹ – DISCOVERING DRAGONS AND THE CREATION OF MEDIA-GENIC MEGAFUNA

The scientific 'discovery' of the world's largest terrestrial reptile, the 'Komodo dragon' (*Varanus komodoensis*), by P. A. Ouwens, the Curator of the Zoological Museum in Bogor in 1912 (Auffenberg 1981; Ciofi 1999), set in motion a history of regional regulation, national legislation and international conservation measures aimed at protecting the dragon and its habitat, restricted to the islands of Komodo, Padar, Rinca, Gili Mota and Oewadi Sami in the Komodo archipelago, and on the western tip of Flores¹². According to Walter Auffenberg, the first official decree prohibiting the hunting and capture of the dragon was issued by the Sultan of Bima in 1915, upon petition from the Netherlands Indies Society for the Protection of Nature (1981: 349). At this time, and perhaps for some centuries earlier (Needham 1986: 53), Komodo and the surrounding islands were part of the sultanate of Bima, based on the nearby island of Sumbawa. The decree, while confined to the boundaries of the sultanate, was in effect until 1924 when Komodo and the western part of Flores was placed under the jurisdiction of Timor and became the Self Government of Manggarai. In 1927 a new ordinance was approved by the Dutch appointed Resident of Timor making it illegal to catch, hunt, take the skins and eggs, or disturb the nests of the Komodo dragon (Auffenberg 1981: 349; Hitchcock 1993: 304-305). On the recommendations of two German scientific societies, the Netherlands East Indies Government declared Komodo an official wilderness research area in 1928¹³. A further ordinance was passed in 1930, when a fine of 250 Florins was introduced for the illegal hunting and capture of the lizard. In 1931, the central government in

¹¹ As Claire Ellis observes, early maps "were made out with a simple note – "Here be Dragons" – warning people of the island's inhospitable nature" (1998: 19).

¹² While Auffenberg recorded Komodo lizards on the island of Padar in the period 1969-1972 (1981), the recent '25 Year Master Plan for Management, 2000-2025' for Komodo National Park states that the dragons may have "gone locally extinct" on Padar (PHKA and TNC 2000 Vol. 2: 21).

¹³ Following expeditions to Komodo, the two societies to petition the government at this time were the *Senckenbergische Naturforschende Gesellschaft Frankfurt* [The Senckenberg Nature Research Society, based in Frankfurt] and the *Frankfurter Verein für Geographie und Statistik* [The Frankfurt Society for Geography and Statistics] (Auffenberg 1981: 349).

Jakarta introduced protective legislation, 'Regulations for the Protection of Wild Animals' (Auffenberg 1981: 349), while in 1940 new hunting regulations for areas outside of Java were enacted. The upshot of this legislation is that Komodo Island was designated a 'managed game reserve' (WCMC 1994).

Concerned about the number of Komodo dragons killed and captured on various 'scientific expeditions' or slaughtered for their skins during the 1930s, a number of European scientists approached the government to establish further reserves to protect the dragon. Indeed, in 1939 the Dutch Resident of Timor estimated that "several dozen to several hundred" dragons had been shot on Komodo in the course of deer hunting expeditions (Auffenberg 1981: 350). More accurately, Auffenberg states that since the mid 1920s more than 500 dragons have been removed from Komodo (Figure 5), with at least 80 of these collected by museums (1981: 350).

Responding to the conservation concerns of scientists, in 1938 the Self Government of Manggarai declared the islands of Rinca and Padar 'nature reserves'. As part of the declaration a warden's position was established, but not actually filled until 1968 and then it only commenced operating in the reserved area in 1971 (Auffenberg 1981: 349). At this time, and in keeping with the 'game reserve' status of Komodo Island, the Nature Conservation and Wildlife Management Office in Bogor (on the island of Java) still maintained an annual harvest limit of five dragons, out of an estimated population of 5,000, though as Auffenberg points out, this was exceeded on several occasions (1981: 350, 352). In 1970, a new 'managed game reserve', Way Wuul, was established in western Flores, while in 1977 Komodo was accepted as a 'biosphere reserve' under the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme (WCMC 1994).

The game and nature reserves on the islands of Komodo, Rinca and Padar, together with the island of Gili Mota, became part of Komodo National Park (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 1: 36), established by Ministerial Decree in 1980. More than any other protective measure taken in the past, with the stroke of a pen the 1980 declaration transformed many of the everyday behaviours and traditional practices of local people within the new Park borders into illegal or highly regulated activities. This situation was exacerbated with the 1984 expansion of the Park's boundaries to include the 'games reserves' of Way Wuul and Mburak in western Flores, the protected forests of Mbeliling and Nggorang in the same region, and the surrounding marine areas.

Notwithstanding the criminalisation of many local activities that accompanied the 1980 and 1984 declarations and extensions, Komodo National Park, like other national parks in Indonesia at this time, did not receive a solid legal standing until 1990, when new conservation laws were passed. Up until 1991, when the redeclaration process was completed, all Indonesian national parks owed their existence to a confusing series of edicts, designations and decrees (including reversible ministerial decrees) dating from Dutch colonial times. In 1990 the Park was nominated by the Government of Indonesia and accepted for inscription on the World Heritage List in 1991 as a 'natural' property based upon its 'superlative natural features' (criteria iii) and as the 'habitat of a threatened species' (criteria iv), the Komodo monitor. As indicated in the original nomination document, the IUCN technical evaluation report and subsequent listing of the National Park, 'nature' included the Park's 'rugged' landscape (Figure 6), but was confined to the endangered 'dragons' (Figure 7), the only acknowledged endemic inhabitants of this 'dramatic space'.

The current 25-year management plan for Komodo National Park, effective from 2000, proposes further extensions to the landscape boundaries of the Park, to include the island of Gili Banta and further marine areas. It also recommends the establishment of 'buffer zones' in the north-east and south-west sections of the Park (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 1: 36). The proposed extension will increase the size of the Park from 1,817 square kilometres to 2,321

square kilometres (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 1: 36). The proposed extensions are, in part, driven by the IUCN evaluation of the original nomination by the Government of Indonesia, which stated that with “the increasing tourism and the singular focus on the Komodo dragons” there is a need to “broaden the interest of visitors to other natural attractions (particularly the marine environment)” (IUCN 1991: 27). Acting upon the IUCN recommendations, in 1995 a ‘rapid ecological assessment’ was undertaken by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). This assessment concluded that ‘limited eco-tourism and research’ are the “only true sustainable uses” of the terrestrial portions of the Park (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 1: 36). As such, the assessment recommended an extension of the Park’s borders to include marine areas with high biodiversity values and “high aesthetic values” (loc. cit.).

Up until the mid 1990s, the “singular focus of the [P]ark”, and that of the previous regulations and decrees, was on the “very impressive and remarkable animal – *Varanus komodoensis*” (IUCN 1991: 27). As far as the IUCN were concerned, the challenge facing the Park in the future was “to determine its [the Komodo dragon] particular importance to science and to conservation in the global context of other islands” (loc. cit.). As these comments suggests, up until this time the value of the Komodo dragon to the ‘international community’ and to the general public had largely been that of a scientific curiosity. Through the popularisation of scientific expeditions to the island in the pages of *National Geographic* (Burden 1927a; Broughton 1936), various travel accounts (e.g. Schilling 1957; Attenborough 1959), and in tourist guidebooks (Dalton 1978), the ‘dragons’ have been transformed from evolutionary oddities into ‘media-genic megafauna’ (Freeman and Kreuter 1994). In the words of the IUCN assessors, Komodo dragons are “dramatic or symbolic life forms” (1990: 28). In the following pages I explore how the World Heritage listing of Komodo National Park set in motion a reevaluation and representation of this dragon-focused view of nature. As I argue, the ‘scientific’ redefinition of ‘nature’ in terms of current ideas about biodiversity and ‘balance’ has serious social and cultural implications for the approximately 3,267 individuals living within the Park and for a further 16,816 people living in villages directly surrounding the Park (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 1: 5).

CULTURE WARS, PART I

In his account of the American Museum of Natural History scientific expedition to Komodo and Padar Islands in 1926, the leader of the expedition, W. Douglas Burden, describes the forty residents of the village of Komodo as ‘convicts’ (Figure 8). He goes on to characterise the villagers as “a degenerate lot of diseased people, that have reached such a degraded state that they don’t seem capable of curiosity” (1927b: 103). In contrast, Burden valorises the “wilderness of romantic Komodo” (Figure 9) and concludes, “Komodo is a place ‘where every prospect pleases, and only man is vile’” (1927b: 103). Burden’s depiction of the Komodo islanders arguably represents the first shot fired in the twentieth century in the ensuing ‘culture wars’ aimed at vilifying the local population. As I discuss later in this chapter, Burden’s distinction between a ‘vile’ humanity and the ‘beautiful scenes’ afforded by nature on Komodo Island is a trope consistently reproduced in the history of this region as a protected area.

While Burden believed that the arrival of his yacht was a historic first for the inhabitants of the island, according to Auffenberg there were at least four previous scientific expeditions to the island in the period of 1910-1926 (1981: 363). As stated in the title of his book, Burden’s account conjures up the idea of Komodo Island as a ‘lost world’. Yet, other accounts indicate that Komodo, and the neighbouring islands of Sumbawa and Sumba, were historically caught up in regional geo-politics, and from the 1600s were very much involved in the machinations of Dutch colonisation in this part of eastern Indonesia.

In an article based primarily upon the linguistic work of the Dutch missionary Father Jilis Verheijen on the ‘people and language’ of Komodo (1982), the anthropologist, Rodney

Needham, provides a deeper view of history than the scientific accounts of 'dragons' dating from 1912. According to Needham, traders from southern Sulawesi had long visited the island of Sumbawa and the surrounding region (1986: 53). Indeed, archaeological finds of coins and pottery at nearby Warloka in western Flores point to inter-island trade in the region dating back to at least the eleventh century (ibid: 52).

According to the historian Leonard Andaya, around 1530 the Makassar-based state of Gowa started to expand and conquer a number of neighbouring polities. Between 1618 and 1623 the state of Gowa absorbed the kingdoms of western Sumbawa, and by 1633 had conquered the Sultanate of Bima in eastern Sumbawa (Needham 1986). The expansionist and mercantile aspirations of Gowa to become the major trading power in eastern Indonesia were counteracted by the Dutch and their Buginese ally, Prince Arung Palakka. As this comment suggests, the Dutch, and the other Europeans interested in the Indonesian archipelago at this time, represented powerful allies who could be utilised by rival indigenous rulers in their efforts to secure greater control over people and land. This was a tactic that was used throughout the archipelago for a number of centuries, as warring communities forged alliances with, and enlisted the assistance of, the Europeans in their efforts to overcome their rivals. It is clear that the Europeans often encouraged political conflict and social divisions among the local population so as to divert local attempts of mass rebellion or suppress unified resistance to their presence.

The defeat of Gowa in 1669 and associated reprisals throughout southern Sulawesi forced many Makassarese, as well as Bugis people, to flee the region and resettle on other islands, including the island of Sumbawa. The decline of Gowa's status as a regional power enabled the rise of other local polities, notably the Sultanate of Bima. By 1662, the Sultan of Bima had claimed the island of Sumba against the Dutch. Historical accounts suggest that by the 1840s, and perhaps even earlier, the island of Komodo was also included within the realm of Bimanes rule (Needham 1986: 53). As mentioned in the previous section, the Sultan of Bima continued to rule over Komodo until the 1920s.

The historical record for eastern Indonesia suggests that rivalry and hostility between local polities was both widespread and commonplace. As Susan McKinnon concludes, "intervillage warfare was a persistent fact of life" (1991: 7). A number of historians draw our attention to the fact that the acquisition of slaves was a significant driving force, and certainly one of the outcomes, of these conflicts. As Andaya remarks:

The slave trade in the east was an old one, consisting mainly of those seized in raids on enemy villages being made to labour in the victor's own village, with some being sold to foreign traders (1991: 83).

Slaves were one of the principal trade items in local and more regionally based exchange networks. The trade in slaves, which also involved the Bugis and the Chinese in addition to a network of local operators, increased dramatically with the arrival of the Europeans, most notably the Dutch, who required slaves to work on their plantations throughout the archipelago. There is strong evidence to suggest that the demand for slaves created by the Dutch exacerbated the incidence of inter-village warfare in the region (Andaya 1993; Needham 1983). Certainly, Dutch attempts to capitalise on and control the trade through a permit system placed greater pressure on the populations of more remote areas, who represented easier targets for those involved in the slave trade, removed as these areas were from more direct Dutch influence (see Andaya 1991).

Indeed, Verheijen reports that in a local "legend of the foundation of the village of Komodo" (1982: 47, 49), the founding villagers are said to have been attacked by 'pirates' from the island of Butung in south-eastern Sulawesi. Among the earliest historical sources referring to the population of Komodo are also references to 'slave traders' attacking the local

community, so that by 1847 the islanders were forced to flee the island and seek refuge in Bima (Verheijen 1982). Needham suggests that these refugees possibly lived in Bima for “some decades” (1986: 65). At the same time, there are reports of ‘pirates’ from the Komodo Strait attacking villages on the nearby coast of Sumba and capturing people as slaves (Needham 1986: 53). While Needham states that in 1855 Komodo was reported to be “uninhabited” (loc. cit.) as a result of ‘pirate’ attacks (see also Zollinger 1856: 243), he also suggests that the harbour on Komodo Island, strategically located half-way between Flores and Sumbawa, would have been regularly used by slave traders from Sumba and Ende (loc. cit.). It is apparent that for some of the Komodo islanders the move to Bima was a temporary measure, and certainly by the 1920s there are indications of people once again living on the island (see Burden 1927b: 103).

The historical record indicates that during the rule of the Sultan of Bima the island of Komodo was used as a ‘place of exile’ for political recalcitrants and criminals (Needham 1986: 53). In a similar vein, Verheijen suggests that the island may have been a settlement for ‘slaves and debtors’, although as Needham points out, there is no record that these “outsiders remained on the island after their period of banishment” (loc. cit.). It is these latter accounts of Komodo that obviously informed Burden’s depiction of the people of Komodo as ‘convicts’.

While the historical record paints a picture of a dynamic and changing political environment, one characterised by the rise and fall of local sovereignties and the inter-island movement of political refugees, immigrants, pirates and slave traders, the Dutch ethnographer Verheijen speaks of a distinctive Komodo people with an independent language. As discussed in the following sections, until the publication of Verheijen’s monograph in 1982¹⁴ it was popularly believed that the entire population of Komodo Island originated from elsewhere or were the descendants of ‘convicts’, while the language spoken on the island was commonly seen as a “mixture of other tongues” (Needham 1986: 54)¹⁵. Verheijen’s work (and that of Walter Auffenberg) is doubly significant in that it provides us with a view of social life on the island immediately prior to the establishment of Komodo National Park. As the anthropologist Gregory Forth comments, Verheijen’s monograph is a “most timely and invaluable contribution” (1983: 57) at a point in history when both the language and the people of Komodo are under threat from conservation measures intended “to protect the island and at least some of its inhabitants” (1983: 58).

THE ‘DISCOVERY’ OF THE ATA MODO

Verheijen alludes to a history of human occupation of Komodo Island spanning some 2,000 years (1982: 256). This latter point is confirmed by Walter Auffenberg, who, in his discussion of interactions between humans and Komodo monitors, speaks of the “earlier, indigenous Neolithic inhabitants of Komodo” and their burial practices to ward off interference of the corpse by the lizards (1981: 315). Auffenberg’s observations are based upon the preliminary results of archaeological excavations on Komodo Island undertaken in the late 1960s by Adi Sukadani of Airlangga University, Surabaya (see Auffenberg 1981: 350, fn 3; Blower *et al.* 1977).

¹⁴ As Forth points out, Verheijen’s 260 page monograph is a major achievement given that Verheijen was only able to conduct research on Komodo “for no more than a few weeks in 1977 and 1982” (1983: 57).

¹⁵ Notwithstanding the publication of Verheijen’s book in 1982, in the 1983 publication, *Linguistic Atlas of the Pacific Area*, Komodo is one of the few islands in Indonesia identified as an ‘uninhabited area’ (Wurm and Hattori 1983: Vol. 2: 40).

Presenting a 'Komodo narrative of the establishment of the village 'Modo', Verheijen identifies the original occupiers of the island as the 'Ata Modo' or the 'people of Komodo'¹⁶. The island itself is known as 'Tana Modo' by local residents (Verheijen 1982: 2). According to this narrative, some time after the Ata Modo founded the village in the distant past, people from Sumba, Bima (Sumbawa), Manggarai, Ambon, Kapu in western Manggarai, Sapé (Sumbawa), Wélak (western Flores) and southern Sulawesi (Bugis) also came to live in the village of Modo (see Needham 1986: 54). These early visitors to Komodo were invited to stay by the Ata Modo and were granted usufruct rights in designated areas of land on the island. Gregory Forth explains how the people from Sumba acquired land rights:

[...] the first Sumbanese man to land on Komodo was a 'medicine man' who helped a woman in delivery, as a result of which both she and her child survived the birth. Because of this, the Sumbanese were invited to stay on Komodo, and a part of the island, the region called Wau, was given to him (Forth 1988: 52).

As Forth comments, before the arrival of the Sumbanese "the original inhabitants were supposed to have been unfamiliar with the normal method of delivery" (1988: 52), a theme also encountered in other areas of eastern Indonesia. On the subject of birth and origins, the Ata Modo believe that they and the Komodo dragon are descended from the same ancestors (Ellis 1998: 74-75). In the origin narrative for the Ata Modo clan group, the 'spirit woman', *San Naga* (also referred to in some material as the 'Dragon Princess' or 'Putri Naga') married an Ata Modo man named *Umpu*¹⁷ *Najo* and they produced twins. The "first baby was a Komodo dragon [a female named *Sabayi* or *Ora*], while the second was a human [the male child *Si Gerong*]" (Ellis 1998: 75; Erdmann 2004: 43). As discussed in later sections, this narrative takes on a broader political significance within the context of current management objectives for Komodo National Park.

Verheijen identifies the language spoken by the Ata Modo as 'Wana Modo' (1982: 2). In this language, the Komodo dragon is referred to as '*ora*' (Verheijen 1982: 115)¹⁸. According to Verheijen's detailed linguistic analysis, *Wana Modo* is a distinct language with original and independent characteristics (see Needham 1986: 54). Reflecting Komodo's history of settlement, migration and immigration, the original language of Komodo (also spoken on the nearby island of Rinca) incorporates vocabulary from a number of other languages, primarily those from the Bimanese and Manggarai language groups, as well as Sumbanese, Malay / Indonesian, Buginese, Bajo and/or Makasarese terms (Needham 1986: 56; Forth 1988: 52). Of these languages, Verheijen concludes that the language of Komodo has the greatest linguistic affinity with Manggarai, spoken in western Flores (Verheijen 1982: 40)¹⁹.

While in 1926 Burden speaks of the population of the village of Komodo as consisting of "about forty" individuals (1927b: 103), Verheijen states that in 1930 a 'semi-official census' stated that there were 143 people living in the village (1982: 2). In 1977, when Verheijen visited the island, the population numbered 505 individuals (Needham 1986: 54). At the time

¹⁶ In my interviews with the village head of Kampung Komodo in October 2005, the original Ata Modo occupants are described as having 'long ears' and being 'short' in stature.

¹⁷ In the Komodo language, *umpu* is the kin term for all males in the second ascending generation (Verheijen 1982).

¹⁸ As indicated in Verheijen's wordlist, the term '*ora*' is cognate with the terms used in a number of nearby Austronesian languages, including Manggarai ('*hora*'), Kambera ('*lawora*'), Rote ('*nggora*'), and Ngadha ('*ghora*') (1982: 115).

¹⁹ In his review of Verheijen's monograph, Forth states that on "purely lexical grounds ... Komodo [language] is closer to eastern Sumbanese than is that language to either Manggarai or Bimanese" (1983: 58).

of Verheijen's research the village of Modo (aka Komodo village) was comprised of 69 houses, the nearby settlement of Nggaro had seven houses and a further four houses were established at Liang (also known as 'Kampung Kechil' in Auffenberg's study), later to become the official site of the National Park's ranger station and tourist facilities. Auffenberg indicates that, in the period 1969-1971, there were also settlements at Lawi and Sabita (Kampung Lawi and Kampung Sabita, aka Bitaq in *Wana Modo*) (1981: 7)²⁰. While not mentioned by Verheijen in his study of Komodo Island, two villages, Rinca and Kerora, are located on the island of Rinca, and another village, Papagaran, is situated on the island of the same name (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 1: 13)²¹. According to Ellis, Kampung Rinca was "established after Kampung Komodo, but still well before the gazetting of the [P]ark" (1998: 78). Ellis states that in 1930, 250 people lived in Kampung Rinca, while in the late 1990s there were about 700 residents (loc. cit.).

Of the eighty-five families comprising the population of the three settlements identified by Verheijen on Komodo, forty were originally from villages in the Manggarai region of western Flores, twenty-five were from Bima and Sapé in eastern Sumbawa, six were from Sumba and the remaining fourteen families originated from other places within eastern Indonesia (Needham 1986: 54-55). Of these eighty-five families, eight 'family heads' had immigrated to Komodo Island since the end of the Second World War (loc. cit.). While Verheijen's discussion of 'immigrant families' may give the impression that there were no Ata Modo people living in the village of Komodo in 1977, Needham indicates that some of these 'immigrants' married local Komodo people or have Ata Modo relatives. In interviews I conducted in October 2005, some of the residents of Kampung Komodo identified themselves as the descendants of the original union between an Ata Modo woman and the first Sumbanese man to arrive on the island. A 1987 report by the Indonesian anthropologist I Gusti Ngurah Bagus identifies 18.4% of people living within Komodo National Park as 'Indigenous', with Bajo and Bugis people respectively comprising 33.3% and 27.6% of the total population (Bagus 1987: 175). As discussed in the next sections, the issue of indigeneity lies at the heart of management perceptions of people and culture within the Park.

Verheijen himself speaks of a 'Komodo clan' and distinguishes this group from the "founding clans from Sumba", Wélaq (western Flores), Ambong (Ambon) and Kapu (western Flores) (1982: 4). According to Ellis, one of the other founding clans on the island is comprised of people from Sapé. These people were not granted rights in land by the Ata Modo but instead "received the rights to the gebang palm trees, from which a food staple similar to sago is made" (1998: 73-74). As indicated on a detailed map of Komodo appended to Verheijen's monograph (Map 2), each of these five clans is associated with a circumscribed territory. The territory of the Komodo clan is the most extensive and occupies the western half of the island, while the lands of the four other clans are located in the south-eastern (Sumba clan), north-eastern (Ambong and Kapu clans) and central eastern (Wélaq clan) sections of the island. Interestingly, the village of Komodo is located in the territory identified as that of the Wélaq clan, which claims the smallest territory of all the clan groups on the island.

²⁰ In interviews I conducted in October 2005, residents of Kampung Komodo also stated that previously there was also a small settlement and gardens at Gunung Ara (in the Komodo language *Ntodoh Puah*) and Tanjung Kuning (*Ntodoh Dato*).

²¹ The Nature Conservancy 'Natural History Guide to Komodo National Park' states that the village of Kerora was established in 1955 by "immigrants from [nearby] Warloka village" in western Flores, while Papagaran is said to previously have been a "temporary settlement for fishermen" (Erdmann 2004: 13). Prior to 1998, when the borders of the national park were extended, the village of Papagaran was situated outside of the park (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 2: 55).

Furthermore, Komodo looks back onto well over two centuries of continuous Bimanese influence, an influence that has resulted in the conversion of the islanders to Islam (Needham 1986: 64). While Kampung Komodo is identified as a 'Muslim village', as Claire Ellis points out, "like many ethnic groups within Indonesia, the descendants of the Ata Modo have retained their ancient beliefs" (1998: 74). In his 1991 report on 'Conservation of the Komodo Dragon and Forest Management', Rafael Karjon observes that the people of Kampung Komodo believe in three 'supernatural forces':

*Ina*²² *Kama*, who protects the people and the whole island; *Ina Babu*, who protects the Komodo dragon and its twin [sibling], the *Ata Modo*; and *Ina Hadija*, who protects the water sources and the whole community (cited in Ellis 1998: 75-75).

According to Ellis, "rituals and offerings are made to these three [beings] to ensure that harmony continues" (1998: 75).

In keeping with the two thousand or so year occupation history of the island, Verheijen's map indicates a number of former settlements (*kiling*) and a multitude of named garden and fishing areas on and around the island. In addition to these sites, Verheijen identifies grave sites (*boa*) and at least six 'sacred' places (*mboho*). Contrary to the official view expressed in later management plans and eco-tourism strategies that water is 'scarce' on the island (see Hitchcock 1993: 306), Verheijen identifies 32 named water sources (*banu*) (either springs or pools of water) on the island, as well as 25 named water courses (*walu*). Covered with hundreds of named locations and areas, whether sacred places, former settlements, garden areas, fishing locations, springs and wells, named geographic features (such as rivers, mountains, valleys, bays, islands, and points), as well as clan territories, Verheijen's map clearly indicates that Komodo Island is far from the barren landscape commonly depicted in tourist guides and in National Park documents.

As Verheijen's map and monograph indicate, the "superlative natural features" of the island, consisting of "rugged hillsides of dry savanna", "pockets of thorny green vegetation" (IUCN 1991: 23) and "high altitude monsoon forests" are very much the "combined works of nature and of man" (UNESCO 2005a: 83). As Blower *et al.* observe, large areas of fire climax grasslands are "probably due to deliberate burning for hunting purposes" (Blower *et al.* 1977: 25). Indeed, Auffenberg states that repeated burning is one of the most extensive habitat modification practices on the island (1981: 316). Verheijen gives some idea of how the Komodo Islander's traditional way of life is not only well adapted to local conditions, but is also instrumental in producing these conditions (see also Hitchcock 1993: 308).

Prior to the establishment of the National Park, the subsistence and cash economy of the Komodo islanders consisted of some cultivation (mainly bananas, maize, cassava and sweet potato), animal husbandry (chickens and goats), the collection of woodland products for sale and local use (notably tamarind and edible nests of swiftlets, and firewood), hunting (primarily deer for its meat and hides), the collection of marine products (both sea-grass and beche-de-mer products are exported) and fishing. This latter activity, using cast nets, scoop nets, handlines, traps, outrigger canoes, and fishing platforms (in Indonesian *bagan*), provides the villagers with their main source of protein and certainly involves the "whole male population of Komodo" (Verheijen 1982: 5-13; Hitchcock 1993: 309). According to Verheijen, sago (*mbutaq*) obtained from the *sowang* or gebang palm (*Corypha utan*) constitutes the staple food source for the islanders. Verheijen identifies extensive groves of *sowang* (in the Komodo language) at eight different localities around the island (1982: 10). Sago meal

²² In the Komodo language, *ina* is the kin term applied to mother, mother's sister and father's brother's wife (Needham 1986: 60).

(*kuwang*) was also obtained by the villagers from the 'pinang' palm (*Arenga pinnata*) and a species of cycad (loc. cit.). Local people also tapped the lontar palm (*Borassus flabellifer*) to produce palm juice and distilled palm spirit.

In terms of the local and regional economy, it appears that there was some attempt in the 1920s to commercialise the skin of the Komodo monitor. Auffenberg states that 100 Komodo monitors were shot on the island of Rinca and a similar number on Flores in 1926, while a further 65 lizards were also shot for their skins at about the same time (1981: 315)²³. According to sources cited by Auffenberg, Komodo monitors were also obtained by Chinese merchants because of the alleged medicinal properties of their tail fat (loc. cit.). Auffenberg's and Hitchcock's material identifies outsiders, notably Chinese hunters and traders, as the groups involved in the commercial hunting of the monitors in the 1920s. In addition to these beliefs about the medicinal powers of dragon products, there is some suggestion that the "dragon mythology of the Far East was inspired by traveller's accounts of the giant lizard" (Hitchcock 1993: 305). As previously stated, the people of Komodo believe that "the dragons are the islander's siblings and that, if one of these animals is injured, then its relatives, who have taken the form of human beings, will also become ill" (Hitchcock [citing Bagus 1987] 1993: 305)²⁴. In this respect, Ellis reports that:

The Ata Modo believe that if they do not look after their twin brother they will bring danger to themselves. Hence, in the past, after every hunt or fish catch a portion of meat was left for the Komodo (1998: 75-76).

While Hitchcock suggests that these beliefs explain why the dragons were "never hunted by the islanders" (1993: 308), Auffenberg states that in the 'Lessa Sunda Islands', largely in response to attacks on livestock, Komodo monitors are "hunted with dogs and speared, caught in baited snares and traps, and killed by poisoning carrion with insecticides" (1981: 316). However, Auffenberg's examples of local people hunting Komodo monitors appear to be confined to western Flores.

The cultural beliefs of the Komodo islanders regarding the Komodo monitor, the perceived impact of local people upon the natural habitat and viability of the dragon population, together with questions about the origins of the islanders, lie at the heart of recent scientific attempts to redefine nature and bureaucratic efforts to manage culture within the context of the National Park.

'NEW NATURE'

In 1977, as part of the preparations for the 1980 establishment of Komodo National Park, a management plan was drawn up by a "multinational team of experts under the auspices of the United Nations" (Hitchcock 1993: 310). The authors of the plan were scientists interested in the zoology and botany of Komodo. This plan, for the period 1978-1982, was the first of a series of management plans produced for the Park (see PHPA 1988; TNK 1995; PHKA and TNC 2000). With conservation of the Komodo monitor as its primary focus, the initial plan recommended that the Park area be split into a series of zones. According to the 1977 Plan, on the island of Komodo the area around Kampung Komodo and the Park administrative and

²³ As Auffenberg points out, the "large and numerous osteoderms in the skin" (1981: 315) of the dragons prevented their commercialisation.

²⁴ Hitchcock also reports that the "Bimanese claim that the giant lizards used to live in Sumbawa until they were driven out by a local folk hero known as La Hami" (1993: 305), while Auffenberg comments that in Manggarai Province "I heard one story that explained that many years ago the oras originally moved to Komodo through a long tunnel that connects the two islands under the surface of the sea" (1981: 316).

tourist facilities established at Loh Liang were designated 'intensive use zones'. Cultivation by the villagers would be confined to the intensive use zone, while other subsistence activities, including 'hunting and tree-felling', would be regulated (Blower *et al.* 1977). 'Wilderness zones', on the other hand, provided for 'limited tourism', while 'sanctuary zones' were restricted to authorised Park personnel and researchers (see Blower *et al.* 1977; IUCN 1991). As Park management at this point of time was directed towards conservation of the dragons, and thus focused upon the terrestrial elements of the Park, the 1977 management plan still allowed for unregulated fishing by the local population. Indeed, the restrictions placed upon terrestrial human activities served to focus villager's subsistence and commercial activities upon the marine environment, in the process creating or exacerbating the so-called 'population pressure problem' of the Park.

While prepared by biophysical scientists, as Hitchcock points out, the 1977 management plan "made various proposals that would have an impact on the lives of the islanders" (1993: 310). Concerned by the size of the human population within the Park, the plan advocated the relocation of three settlements on the island of Rinca to the nearby coastline of Flores. The Plan also proposed a registration scheme to prevent further immigration and advocated a prohibition on the erection of new 'local' dwellings in the Park (Hitchcock 1993: 311). Ultimately, the authors of the management plan hoped that those islanders remaining in the Park "would eventually become engaged in the work of the [P]ark" (Hitchcock 1993: 311), and thus cease their 'destructive' practices. In this sense, the 1977 plan introduces the idea of 'education, awareness and alternative livelihoods' for the islanders, a notion that is picked up with greater vigour in later management plans as a 'sustainable' solution to the problems posed by the presence of local people in the Park.

The ideological emphasis in the 1977 management plan is upon restricting or eliminating the impact of humans on the environment and thus restoring nature to its proper balance. This is apparent in the many proposals to limit or eradicate human-Komodo monitor interactions, and thus return both dragons and people to their natural habitats. Notable among these proposals to restore 'prey / predator relationships' is the recommendation to cease baiting and feeding of the dragons with goats purchased from the local community. Notwithstanding the concern of scientists about the 'artificial' nature of this practice, it is apparent that this activity was still undertaken by Park rangers as late as 1990 when the IUCN assessment team visited the region (IUCN 1991)²⁵. Emphasising the 'wild' and 'dangerous' nature of the Komodo dragon is a critical dimension of these proposed restoration activities and associated scientific ideas about the 'normal state of nature' (Budiansky 1995: 71). As such, these restoration activities are aimed at distancing dangerous dragons from defenceless human populations. Linking nature with risk, danger, wildness and even savagery has a long history in Western thought (see Budiansky 1995; Schama 1995; Hell 1996), and certainly resonates with the National Geographic-style stereotypes of Komodo from the early to mid-twentieth century (see Burden 1927a; Broughton 1936).

In line with the idea of nature 'in balance', and in keeping with attempts to restore it to this 'natural' state, the management plan made several recommendations to curtail and ultimately stop the hunting of deer in the Park, one of the key prey species for the Komodo monitor. According to the IUCN assessment, the issue of 'deer poaching', as it is commonly called in management documents, was actively pursued by the Park director at the time with the cooperation of both the police and the military (1991: 26)²⁶. Associated with the 'deer

²⁵ Ellis states that in 1988, "feeding was cut back and permitted only on Wednesdays and Sundays", the two days of the week that experienced the highest tourist numbers (1998: 84). Later, feeding was reduced to one day a week and in 1994 the practice was stopped altogether.

²⁶ As documented in a TNC report on 'Enforcement and Protection of Komodo National Park', men caught 'deer poaching' within the park have been sentenced for up to three years in jail (Pet and Subijanto 2001).

poaching' issue, the plan also identifies local burning of grasslands on the island of Komodo as a threat to the Komodo monitor and its primary prey species.

Notwithstanding the considerable impact of the 1977 management plan upon the local human communities within and adjoining the National Park, the plan portrays a somewhat confined view of nature, albeit one regarded as 'out of balance', focused upon the 'dragon' and its terrestrial habitat. In keeping with the plan's objective to restore nature to its balanced state, it appears that at the time of the World Heritage listing in 1991 on-ground management activities in the Park were largely devoted to law enforcement and the provision of guided tourist facilities (WCMC 1994). While Komodo National Park was listed as a Biosphere Reserve in 1977, the implications of this different reading of the environment was not readily apparent in the Park until the early 1990s. At this point in time, not only was nature redefined (once again), but it was also privatised in the process. It is apparent that these changes were largely driven by the World Heritage listing of Komodo National Park and growing international concerns about the loss of nature in the Park.

UNESCO's 'Man and the Biosphere Programme', launched in 1970, signalled a new global vision of nature in terms of the idea of 'biodiversity' and the need to halt the loss of it. Paradoxically, the discourse of biodiversity is linked to globalisation and the rise of corporate environmentalism (see Katz 1998)²⁷. As Luke observes, by the 1970s the Enlightenment idea of 'nature' as "untouched and undisturbed expanses" appeared obsolete, indeed, 'dead' (1995: 12). In drawing public attention to the impact of humans on nature in the form of wholesale extinctions, "industrial pollution, greenhouse gases, chemical contamination, and radioactive wastes" (Luke 1995: 12), science played an important role in bringing about the 'end of nature' (McKibben 1989).

In a world no longer replete with unexplored regions, where historically science pushed the borders of the unknown, and confronted with the reality that few, if any, environments were undisturbed, nature has undergone an 'involution' (Katz 1998: 46).

Natural spaces have been reworked to produce greater 'internal sub-divisions' (loc. cit.). Biodiversity, biosphere reserves, biodiversity 'hotspots' and bioprospecting are some of the discursive and material products of this redefinition and involution of nature. Accordingly, conservation efforts have shifted from an emphasis upon nature as a quantity (i.e. untouched expanses 'hoarded' for their "pristine appearances and organic presences") to focusing upon the 'quality of nature' in terms of biodiversity, and the idea of rare or endangered flora and fauna.

Rainforests and reefs are among the many 'hotspots' in the world where the biodiversity battles are being waged and won or lost depending on one's position in the matrix of relations involved in the production and preservation of nature. As Katz points out, the rise of 'biocentrism', wherein nature is viewed as a biodiversity bank, among other things, has seen the resurgence of 'preservation' as a means of protecting these public 'assets' (1998: 48). Various state and national instruments, together with international conventions, such as the World Heritage Convention, are employed to secure these valuable resources for future generations. In the 'new nature', constant scientific surveillance is necessary to survey, inventory and guard the ecological values of these diverse but threatened spaces (Luke 2003: 14, 19).

The establishment of more than 480 biosphere reserves since 1974 is one of the 'main lines of action' adopted by UNESCO to minimise biodiversity loss. From the 1970s onwards the

²⁷ The pursuit of diversity within the context of globalisation is not confined to the earth's biota. As Lechner and Boli point out, globalisation was also seen as a 'threat' to cultural diversity (2005: 135).

earth's fauna and flora was subject to increasing scientific scrutinisation in an attempt to map the natural parameters of this bio-diverse world. As Katz points out, the redefinition of nature in terms of biodiversity not only set in motion a global program aimed at documenting the earth's environmental riches but, as evidenced by UNESCO's Biosphere Programme, it also went hand-in-hand with the reemergence of ideas about the preservation and restoration of nature. What Katz calls the 'new enclosure movement' (1998: 47) entails setting aside 'discrete patches of nature' (loc. cit.) in the form of 'park enhancement districts', 'world wildlife zones', 'biosphere reserves', and so on. This strategy of 'bio-accumulation' and the idea of investing in nature for the future also encouraged new forms of corporate environmentalism and the "increasing privatisation of public environments" (Katz 1998: 47). In Indonesia, nation-wide legislation specifically aimed at protecting biodiversity was first passed in 1990²⁸, while in Komodo National Park, Katz's observations about the 'private productions of space and the preservation of nature' have been a reality for the past ten years.

In 1995, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), a US-based, transnational, private environmental organisation, joined with the Indonesian National Park Authority PHKA²⁹ to 'help' manage Komodo National Park (Michael 2001: 35). TNC is the latest in a long list of international Non Government Organisations, including the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Conservation International, and the Wildlife Conservation Society, to be involved in management of the Park since 1980. Promoted as the first example of 'collaborative park management' in Indonesia, TNC's involvement in Park management is justified by the organisation in terms of its global mission to "preserve plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on earth by protecting the land and waters they need to survive" (TNC 2002: 1). Through its multi-million dollar portfolio of properties purchased around the globe, and underwritten by corporate donations and individual contributions, TNC operates "the largest private system of nature sanctuaries in the world" (cited in Katz 1998: 59). As Noel Grove observes, "to cut down on management and overhead costs, [TNC-owned] property was often turned over whenever possible to responsible federal and state agencies for protection" (cited in Luke 1995: 14). In other situations, TNC works with partner organisations to establish nature preserves or, as is the case in Komodo National Park, 'assists' in saving "species and biotic communities that stood in danger of disappearing under human pressures" in existing protected areas (see Luke 1995: 14; Katz 1998: 59).

While TNC presents its mission as 'transnational', conserving the biodiversity of Indonesia for the "well-being of humankind" (TNC 2002: 1), officials from the Indonesian Department of Agriculture and Forestry cite a "lack of government funds" and the resulting "no or poor park management" as the primary reason for this new arrangement. Through the money it receives from its donors, such as the Packard Foundation and Sekisui Chemical Company, TNC supposedly offers the Government of Indonesia a way out of their financial dilemma, while at the same time 'assisting' it with its conservation commitments³⁰. In the case of Komodo National Park, this marriage of private interests, corporate funds and government responsibility is formalised in a Memorandum of Understanding between the parties, and is operationalised in the name of a "pathbreaking model for saving Indonesia's national parks" (TNC 2005a), the 'Komodo Co-Management Initiative' (KCMI). In 2005, The Nature

²⁸ Law No. 5 of 1990 concerning Conservation of Living Resources and their Ecosystems.

²⁹ Management of national parks in Indonesia is the responsibility of the Director General for Nature Conservation and Forest Protection in the Department of Agriculture and Forestry (*Direktorat Jenderal Perlindungan Hutan dan Konservasi Alam, Departemen Kehutanan dan Perkebunan*).

³⁰ As reported in a World Bank publication, in 1996 TNC provided US \$250,000 annually and "by including ecotourism and other investments, TNC expects to invest US \$5 million over the next five years" (Wells et al. 1999: 27).

Conservancy announced the start of the KCMI with the transfer of its conservation program in Komodo National Park to a “new eco-tourism development enterprise, PT Putri Naga Komodo” (TNC 2005a).

As heralded in TNC promotional literature, Komodo National Park is also the “pilot site to test new park financing mechanisms” (TNC n.d. a: 1). These new financing mechanisms refer to the Joint Venture company, PT Putri Naga Komodo (PNK), established between TNC and an Indonesian tourist entrepreneur (TNC 2002), to implement the 30-year Indonesian Ministry of Forestry concession to “manage tourism in Komodo National Park” (loc. cit.)³¹. To kick-start the new ‘eco-tourism development enterprise’, PT Putri Naga has obtained bridging funding from the World Bank’s Global Environmental Facility. The Nature Conservancy has stated that it will match the US \$5 million grant obtained from the World Bank’s private sector financing arm, the International Financing Corporation (TNC 2005a). According to a TNC media release, most of their Komodo Field Office staff, based in Labuan Bajo, have “moved over to work with PNK” (TNC 2005a). As part of the collaborative management framework currently being put in place, a ‘government-mandated advisory group’ called the ‘Collaborative Management Council’, will be established. In addition, a ‘new broad community-based entity’, the ‘Community Consultative Council’, comprised of representatives from stakeholder groups, is planned (TNC 2005a). According to The Nature Conservancy’s Bali-based Coral Triangle Center, by the end of the grant period in 2012, the “Park will be generating sufficient eco-tourism revenues to sustain ongoing management and conservation work” (TNC 2005a).

TNC’s partner in PT Putri Naga Komodo, Mr Feisol Hashim, who holds 40% of the shares in the joint venture company, is often described in TNC promotional material as ‘local’ or one of the ‘local stakeholders’³². While implying that Mr Hashim was born, bred and resides in the area, ‘local’ here actually refers to the fact that TNC’s partner owns one of the islands (Pulau Mauan) within Komodo National Park (as well as land outside of the Park)³³. As acknowledged in TNC documents, Mr Hashim has a “vested interest in the area” (TNC 2002: 5). Apart from appropriating the identity of one of the Ata Modo’s ancestors for the name of its joint venture company, TNC’s vision for the other ‘locals’ in the National Park is that they “will be trained as tour and dive guides [...] and will be able to supplement their income by designing and selling handicrafts” (TNC n.d. a: 1). TNC’s vision for ‘local people’, ‘eco-tourism’ and ‘biodiversity protection’ constitutes the content of the latest management plan for the Park, *The 25 Year Master Plan for Management, 2000-2025, Komodo National Park* (PHKA and TNC 2000).

As stated in the 2000 Plan, biodiversity protection is now the primary goal of management, signalling a major shift in emphasis from the previous ‘dragon focused’ plans. In this remaking of nature, the environmental significance of Komodo National Park has been extended to the point where WWF and Conservation International identify it as a “global conservation priority area” (Singleton *et al.* 2002: 7). This change in significance also

³¹ According to a TNC-commissioned ‘Environmental Assessment Study’, undertaken as part of the compliance requirements for the World Bank’s private sector financing arm, the International Finance Corporation, for a US \$5 million bridging grant to ‘kick-start’ PT Putri Naga Komodo’s new ‘eco-tourism development enterprise’ (TNC 2005a), Mr Hashim’s tourism company is called PT Jaytasha Putrindo Utama (Singleton *et al.* 2002: 3).

³² In an article discussing the TNC-sponsored trip to the Galapagos World Heritage site, involving Indonesian government officials at the local, regional and national level, Mr Feisol Hashim is also described as the “ASEAN Travel Association President” (Ivèreigh 2002: 27).

³³ While Park regulations state that “there will not be any hotel or resort development inside the Park” (TNC 2002: 7), one of the greatest concerns expressed by local people is that through the collaborative management agreement a hotel will eventually be constructed on Pulau Mauan.

introduces a new role for the National Park as a “genetic / species storehouse with which to replenish and recolonise devastated coral habitats elsewhere in Indonesia and the wider Indo-Pacific region” (Singleton *et al.* 2002: 8). TNC’s promotion of Komodo National Park as an “exceptional storehouse of both terrestrial and marine biodiversity” (ibid: 3) signals the “conversion of nature into an accumulation strategy” (Katz 1998: 47). In keeping with the logic of corporate environmentalism, biodiversity is depicted as an ‘asset’, while nature is referred to as a ‘bank’ or ‘fund’ where organisations like TNC make ‘sensitive’ and ‘sustainable’ investments (see Singleton *et al.* 2002).

In this more inclusive view of nature, introduced animals and translocated native species, such as wild boar, Timor deer, horses, buffalo, macaques, as well as introduced plant species, are all regarded as part of the Park’s ‘rich biodiversity’, and thus afforded protection. It is apparent from the plan that *Homo sapiens* is not regarded as part of the region’s biodiversity. Interestingly, dogs and cats, both of which are linked to the local residents in the Park, are the only animals identified in the management plan as ‘exotics’ that pose a threat to the biodiversity of the region (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 1: 21, Vol. 2: 67)³⁴. As stated in the 2000 plan, one of the primary objectives of management is to “reduce both threats to the resources and conflicts between incompatible activities” (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 1: 5). As these comments suggest, the reinvention of the Komodo archipelago as an area of “rich biodiversity”, with one of the “world’s richest marine environments” (TNC n.d. b: 1), has serious consequences for local people.

CULTURE WARS, PART II

As discussed in the previous section, the implementation of the first management plan for Komodo National Park had a significant impact upon local communities resident in the Park. For example, on the island of Komodo itself, local houses and gardens at Loh Liang were demolished and obliterated with the establishment of the Park’s administrative centre and tourist accommodation facilities on this site in the 1980s. On the island of Rinca, unable to prove that they existed prior to the area becoming a reserve (i.e. prior to 1928 when Komodo Island was first declared an official ‘wilderness reserve’), the villages of Loh Baru and Tambora were declared illegal and removed (Ellis 1998: 78). The operationalisation of the latest plan in the past five years continues the process of disenfranchising and depicting local residents as ‘ignorant’, ‘destructive’, ‘illegal’, and ‘polluting immigrants’. Paradoxically, this process of disempowerment and marginalisation is couched in terms of the latest development buzzwords – ‘alternative livelihoods’, ‘market transformation’ ‘environmental awareness programs’, ‘education partnerships’ and ‘communication strategies’. While community ‘engagement’ is expressed in terms of the language of modernisation, the fundamental reasons for the need to implement these programs and strategies are explained in debatable scientific terms.

As in previous plans, the 2000 management plan identifies the presence of resident human communities as a critical problem and their activities as a major threat to the Park’s fauna and flora. The 2000 plan identifies the human population of the Park as “already over the carrying capacity of the area” (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 2: 66) and states that ‘human population pressure’ is “leading to degradation of the terrestrial resource base” and “overharvesting of marine resources” (ibid: 67). There are constant references in the plan to the exponential increase of the local population, citing the figure of thirty people living on Komodo Island in 1928 and the current (i.e. 1999) number of 1,169 people living in Kampung Komodo (ibid: 55). Similar claims are made about the population of Kampung

³⁴ A similar situation emerged in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve, established in Botswana in 1961. As Adam Kuper reports, “environmentalists complained that residents were keeping donkeys and goats that interfered with the game and that they were engaged in poaching” (2003: 393).

Rinca, said to have increased in size from 250 people in 1930 to 835 individuals in 1999 (loc. cit.). Little is said, however, about decreases in village size (according to the statistics presented in the plan, the population of Kampung Komodo was practically cut in half in the three year period between 1996-1999), or stability in population size (e.g. the population of the village of Kerora remained stable in the same three year period)³⁵. Given that the plan does not cite its sources for these population figures, and chooses to ignore other population data, particularly Verheijen's material on the 1930 and 1977 population numbers for Komodo, it is difficult to assess the so-called scientific validity of statements made in the plan about exceeding carrying capacity or the alleged environmental impacts of population pressure. The scientific value of the statistics presented in the plan and their analysis is further questionable given the fact that no longitudinal community study has ever been conducted and, as such, the census figures cited in the management plan only cover a three-year period from 1996-1999. As the Plan constantly reminds the reader, "little is known of the early history of the Komodo islanders" (ibid: Vol. 2: 57), while cultural sites within the Park are "not well documented [...] and there are many questions concerning the history of human inhabitation on the island" (ibid: Vol. 1: 17). This perceived lack of detailed information about the history and culture of the communities in the Park, and the existence of considerable misinformation about them, stands in stark contrast to the many reports and studies undertaken on the fauna and flora of the protected area. Ignorance of local people and their traditions is one of the outcomes of the construction of nature promoted by TNC, scientific experts and the Park Authority. As this comment suggests, the way in which nature is construed also delineates the limits and possibilities of culture.

As a number of authors have identified, the notion of environmental preservation promulgated by The Nature Conservancy is based upon the belief that nature can be "located, fixed and preserved outside of culture" (Katz 1998: 55). As Katz points out, the environmental strategy of The Nature Conservancy "perpetuates and hardens the boundaries [...] between agricultural and wilderness landscapes, to valorise only the latter as the vestiges of pure nature" (loc. cit.). In using science to construct and promote a view of the Komodo landscape as a natural artefact, people are either evicted from the nature now preserved by TNC, or else demonised as environmental destroyers. As indicated in the 2000 management plan, critical to this coupling of preservation and plunder are Malthusian scenarios that "resources are running out, that people are destroying the environment, and that these problems are exacerbated by unchecked population growth" (ibid: 56). In this scenario, the social, cultural, economic and ecological significance of local people's mode of production, their relations of production and their overall control of human reproduction is denied. These Malthusian notions of unchecked population growth pivot upon the construction of local people as both ignorant and immigrant.

In the 25-year, 3-volume, 385-page management plan, 14 pages are devoted to 'socio-economic and cultural conditions'. The section on 'education' paints a picture of an uneducated and semi-illiterate fishing community where the "average level of education in the villages of KNP is grade four of elementary school" (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 2: 59). In the management plan, the 'low level of education' of the villagers in the Park is seen as a major obstacle to 'economic diversification' among the local population (ibid: 66) and, as such, an impediment to the Government's attempts to financially attract people living in the Park to resettle elsewhere. There is also a strong suggestion in TNC's promotional and educational materials that the villagers' 'low level of education' lies behind their "destructive fishing practices and overfishing of the Park's marine resources" (TNC n.d. c: 1). There is little or no realisation that the implementation of previous management regulations, particularly the prohibition upon harvesting terrestrially-based staple foods such as the

³⁵ The latest available figures from 2001 indicate that there were 3,134 people living within the National Park – 1,118 people lived in Kampung Komodo, Papagaran had 992 residents, while the villages of Rinca and Kerora both had 1,024 residents each (Erdmann 2004: 11).

gebang palm, has directly contributed to the scenario today where the villagers are “wholly dependent upon marine resource utilization” for both their incomes and food sources (Figure 10), according to TNC-sponsored researchers (see Pet and Djohani 1998: 18). Indeed, the current management plan attempts to rewrite the long human occupation and economic history of the Park by stating that due to ‘poor soils’ and ‘limited fresh water sources and rainfall’, agriculture is not an option for the Park’s residents. As this statement indicates, the villagers’ aboriginal productions and agroforestry practices do not fit into the official view of field / food-crop agriculture as the only form of landed productivity, while the ‘barren’ features of the Park do not conform with the ideas presented in the plan of fertile anthropogenic landscapes. Accordingly, the management plan concludes “few are farmers and little land is used for agricultural purposes within the [P]ark” (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 2: 60). Denial of this element of the environmental history of the Park goes hand-in-hand with the numerous references in the management plan to 1928 as the starting point for the demographic history of the area. The effect of these erasures and this kind of revisionism is to create an ahistorical landscape, populated by recent resource raiders, engaged in nothing more than ‘extractive-economies’ (Peluso 2003: 212).

In the later part of the 1990s, the ‘awareness program’ implemented by The Nature Conservancy shifted its focus from the ‘richness and beauty’ of the region’s biodiversity, as was the case in the initial education campaign, to raising local awareness of the “[P]ark’s rules and regulations” (loc. cit.). Abandoning previous attempts to change local people’s ecological perceptions, TNC now focused its ‘awareness’ efforts on enforcing “the management aspects of the Park” (TNC n.d. d: 1). Central to the implementation of this ‘community program’ is the education of local people about the complex system of zones and buffer areas, which dictate and limit activities within the Park. As I discuss in the following sections, these new zones and areas reduce local people’s livelihood possibilities to a narrow range of lawful practices.

While the previous plan outlined three zones, the 2000 Master Plan for Komodo National Park introduces seven new zones (see Map 3)³⁶. Five of these new zones are designated ‘no-take zones’, while the terrestrial regions identified as part of the ‘core zone’ are also ‘no-visit areas’. While no land mass percentages are given in the Master Plan, it appears from zoning maps in the Plan that more than half of Komodo Island and at least half of Rinca Island is zoned ‘core’. The entire island of Padar and most of the remaining terrestrial area on Komodo and Rinca Islands, together with a 500 metre wide sea fringe, are designated as a ‘wilderness zone’. This zone is a ‘limited-visit’ tourist area requiring special permits. The four ‘official’ villages in the Park, Komodo, Rinca, Kerora, and Papagaran, are contained within the ‘traditional settlement zone’ (Figure 11)³⁷. This zone corresponds with the limits of the existing built environment for each of these three villages. In this zone, burning, the use of fertiliser, firewood harvesting, the harvesting of sand or limestone, and the keeping of dogs and cats is strictly prohibited, while water use, sewerage and water disposal, and the use of pesticides is ‘strictly regulated’. As Hitchcock points out, the establishment of administrative and tourist facilities at Loh Liang in the 1980s has meant that the Komodo islanders have had to “share their water with the new hostels” (1993: 313).

³⁶ They are: core zone, wilderness zone with limited tourism, tourism use zone, traditional use zone, pelagic zone, special research and training zone and traditional settlement zone (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 1: 44).

³⁷ While all of these villages are situated in the park, they do not belong to the same government administrative unit. The villages of Rinca and Kerora are included within *Desa Pasir Panjang*, while the villages of Komodo and Papagaran constitute administrative units in their own right, namely *Desa Komodo* and *Desa Papagaran* (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 2: 57).

The activities of villagers within the Park are restricted to miniscule areas of land and sea designated as part of the 'traditional use zone'. In this zone the collection of firewood, harvesting of traditional staple foods, such as sago from the *gebang* palm, capturing legally protected species and "snakes, turtles, birds, dolphins, whales, horses, deer or water buffalo" is strictly prohibited (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 1: 46). Technology permitted in this zone is restricted to "traditional tools" such as "machete, knife, sickle, pole, seine net, hook, line, etc." (ibid, Vol. 2: 141). Use of these tools is "licensed by the Head of Komodo National Park" (loc. cit.). Further regulated fishing by the villagers is permitted in the 'pelagic use zone'. Surrounding the complex system of zones in the National Park is a 'limited take and utilisation' buffer zone.

According to an information sheet produced by The Nature Conservancy, the new zoning system in Komodo National Park "allows for traditional use by Park inhabitants while at the same time the most valuable and sensitive locations are protected" (TNC n.d. e: 1). What constitutes 'traditional use' by the villagers is based upon an eighteen-month survey of marine resource utilisation recorded in the course of 38 'enforcement patrols' within the Park in the period 1996-1997 (TNC n.d. g; PHKA and TNC 2000; Bakar 1996). To date, no research has been undertaken regarding the villagers' 'traditional use' of terrestrial areas and resources. In view of the limited research into the 'socio-cultural conditions' of the Park, from the point of view of 'traditional use' the zoning system partitions the Park in a fairly arbitrary manner. For local people, the new zoning system transforms what is an inhabited environment into a 'dartboard' of pristine 'natural' areas, which not only limits or prohibits their future use and occupation but also gives priority to tourist access and use of the Park. As this last point suggests, these 'dartboards of nature' are "often constructed and overseen by non-residents whose livelihood is not dependent on the preserved environment" (Katz 1998: 55). Indeed, in the management plan, tourism is depicted as an 'eco-friendly' activity and is associated with minimal environmental impact, as opposed to the high impact, 'destructive' practices of local people. Locking up biodiversity in a complex zoning and buffer system, it is clear that management of Komodo National Park is now focused upon preserving nature outside of culture, or in spite of it. This last point is particularly apparent with regards to the Park Authority's official policy on immigration.

Under the 2000 management plan, immigration into Komodo National Park is strictly prohibited. Contrary to local traditions where 'immigrants' and in-marrying spouses acquired usufruct rights, today marriage to a Park resident does not confer any settlement or use rights within the Park (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 2: 148). In the same way that Park restrictions on terrestrial activities have placed greater pressure on marine resources, prohibiting immigration has led to increased human sedentarisation, again exacerbating the 'problems' the plan seeks to ameliorate.

In the Master Plan for the Park, immigration is seen as the source of the 'exponential' population increase and resulting human pressure upon the Park's biodiversity. The "steady influx of migrants into the area" (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 2: 64) is also held responsible for the importation of destructive fishing methods and modern external influences, such as television and radio, plus an increase in associated 'material wants'. Furthermore, immigration is directly linked to the loss of 'traditional customs', language and ethnic identity (ibid: 64-67). The 2000 management plan identifies "the majority of the people in and around KNP" as fishermen originally from "Bima (Sumbawa), Manggarai, South Flores and South Sulawesi" (ibid: 57). While the plan acknowledges that the Ata Modo are the "original people of Komodo" (loc. cit.), it further states that "there are no pure blood people left and their culture and language is slowly being integrated with the recent migrants" (loc. cit.). In her book, 'Land of the Komodo Dragon', Claire Ellis goes so far as to state that "recent immigration has swelled the population within the [P]ark and virtually extinguished the Ata Modo" (1998: 77). It seems that for the people of Komodo no sooner had their culture come into view than it was deemed to have disappeared. This notion of an 'extinguished' people is

promoted in the three-volume guide for visitors to the Park. The TNC-sponsored publication on the 'Natural History Guide to Komodo National Park' states, "people once inhabited that area [Gunung Ara on Komodo Island] several hundred years ago. However, the people of Komodo Village are thought to have settled there less than 100 years ago" (Erdmann 2004: 11). In keeping with the pre-dominant view that all of the residents in the Park are 'immigrants', the guide concludes, "the first settlers of Komodo Village were exiles from Bima" (loc. cit.).

Reflecting The Nature Conservancy's preservationist view of nature as either valorised pristine areas or demonised expendable environments, the current plan separates the population of the Park into a near (if not already) extinct indigenous minority and an endangering immigrant majority³⁸. While previous management plans depicted all of the residents of the National Park as originating from elsewhere, coming to the region as 'exiles', 'convicts' and 'resource raiders', the current plan acknowledges the existence of an 'original' Komodo culture, independent and pre-dating the subsequent and relatively recent waves of immigrants that settled on the island.

As this suggests, the idea of authentic identities and customs presented in the current management plan is based upon the place and temporal depth of people's origins. Insofar as the management plan and associated guidebooks recognise the resident communities within the Park, it privileges indigenous status over immigrant identities, and prioritises traditional and relict connections in contrast to contemporary living ones. As previously indicated, villages established in the Park in the mid 1950s were deemed to be 'non-traditional' and their occupants subsequently resettled outside of the Park. The upshot of this policy decision is to focus residence within the Park at four locations, whereas in the past, villagers established fishing camps and temporary garden huts at a number of places within what is now the National Park.

In origin narratives from Komodo, the historic arrival of people from Sumba, Sumbawa, Flores, and Ambon is presented as an essential development in the foundation of the village of Modo and is a critical element in the emerging sense of a common culture and a collective community identity. When coupled with the written historical record, these origin histories point to a long tradition of human movement and settlement in this region. Contrary to the image presented in the management plan, migration in this area is not a recent response to a situation of scarce resources or growing population pressure elsewhere. In other words, the history of Komodo is also a history of successive migrations.

As McWilliam (2002: 18) and others have observed, 'orders of precedence', based upon relative priority in time or place, constitute a fundamental form of social organisation throughout eastern Indonesia. Origin narratives "provide one of the significant and dynamic arenas for negotiating status and the order of relations between socially defined groups" (loc. cit.). The demonisation of immigration and immigrants in the Plan, and the associated valorisation of the Ata Modo as the 'original people', has certainly cast new meanings upon existing orders of precedence.

Using the plan's acknowledgement of an 'original culture' as a strategy to strengthen their claims to traditional land rights and, in part, reclaiming ancestral identities appropriated by TNC as the name of its joint venture company, some individuals from the village of Komodo have taken it upon themselves to challenge the common management scenario that the Ata Modo have 'virtually vanished' (Ellis 1998: 71) in a "tide of immigration" (loc. cit.). The

³⁸ As Adam Kuper points out, the propositions that the "descendants of the original inhabitants of a country should have privileged rights, even exclusive rights, to resources ...[and] immigrants are simply guests and should behave accordingly ... are popular with extreme right-wing parties in Europe" (2003: 390).

UNESCO publication of the *Putri Naga* or 'Dragon Princess' account and other local narratives is part of this self-conscious 'discovery' and promotion of Ata Modo identity and culture (Mansur and Hilly 2000) (Figure 12). Mindful of the Park Authority's ultimate objective to resettle all of the villages within the Park, one which is in keeping with TNC's preservationist efforts to "evict people from nature" (Katz 1998: 59), the people of Komodo Island have consciously intertwined their future with that of the Park's media-genic star attraction, the Komodo Dragon. According to Ellis:

Several people witnessed two adult Komodo dragons climbing out of the sea at Sape, in neighbouring Sumbawa, in the early 1980s. Around this time, government officials were discussing clearing the [P]ark of human inhabitants. The Sape people, familiar with the beliefs of the Ata Modo, interpreted the sight of the animals coming ashore as a verification of the link between them and the Ata Modo. It was perceived as a sign of support from the Komodo dragons for the people's claim to remain on the island. Since they were kin, if the people were made to leave, so would the Komodos (1998: 76).

As these comments indicate, the Komodo islanders have politically equated their forced removal from the Park with the extinction of the animal that not only gives its name to the Park, but also constitutes the Park's 'raison d'être' for listing as a World Heritage natural property.

The islanders' battle for cultural survival is also apparent in the tension between them and the Park Authority regarding feeding of the Komodo lizards. As previously mentioned, from the inception of the Park in 1980 and up until 1994, Park rangers regularly fed the 'dragons' with goats purchased from the local community. As Hitchcock points out, these purchases constituted "one of the major sources of income" for the villagers on Komodo (Hitchcock 1993: 314). The 'ritual' feeding of the dragons for the benefit of tourists neatly dovetailed with the islanders' belief that they have a kinship obligation to "look after their twin brother" and provide *ora* with a portion of each catch (Ellis 1998: 75). The Park Authority's decision to cease the 'goat-gobbling' (Ellis 1998: 84) spectacle on Komodo was based on the scientific fashioning of nature as 'wild' and 'pristine'. According to this construction, feeding the dragons was regarded as 'ecologically suspect' (Hitchcock 1993: 314) and was certainly seen as disturbing the balance of nature. From the point of view of the Komodo islanders, however, rather than restoring the balance of nature, the intervention of science has threatened the very survival of this nature. Komodo islanders state that the dramatic decline in the number of Komodo dragons on the island soon after regular feeding stopped is due to starvation (in 1997 the population of dragons on the island was recorded as 1,722, a year later only 1,061 lizards were recorded) (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 2: 21)³⁹. Not only have the Park rangers ceased to bait and 'feed' the dragons, but Park regulations prohibit the islanders themselves from providing food to the *ora*. As these and other restrictions in the name of 'conservation' exemplify, the World Heritage listing of the Park and its current management plan ignore the ongoing connections between the local population and 'nature', and disregard the values that local people attach to the Park's so-called 'natural heritage'. In this respect, Komodo National Park is not a solitary example. In Indonesia, Wall and Black identify similar problems with the listing of Borobudur and Prambanan in central Java. While further afield, Sullivan speaks of similar exclusions in the listing of the Khmer city of Angkor (2004 :50). While the representation of two of the "world's great religions", Buddhism and Hinduism, connect these sites, common to all three sites is the imposition of a global culture of heritage protection upon local traditions and practices. As Sullivan observes, the

³⁹ Walter Auffenberg recorded a population of 2,348 dragons on Komodo Island in 1970. The Park Authority states that "the decline appears to be due to high mortality rates in the young and juvenile classes", but also suggests that fluctuations in population size may be an "artefact of the methods employed" (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 2: 21).

methodology of modern heritage conservation, with its emphasis upon scientific measurement, classification and evaluation, “can inadvertently mummify or destroy aspects of value by disregarding the less tangible and subtler elements of continuity” (2004: 50).

It is apparent from the current management plan that the Ata Modo and the other ethnic groups in and around the Park have failed the authenticity requirements for preservation entailed in the methodology adopted by The Nature Conservancy. Their cultural beliefs about *ora* are diminished as ‘folk tales’, their traditional customs are reported to be “dwindling” at a rapid rate, local heritage is reduced to the status of a handful of ‘cultural relicts’ (WCMC 1994), and it appears that they have also lost their ability to engage in “sustainable fish culture” (loc. cit.). According to a TNC fact sheet on ‘alternative livelihoods’, “for generations, villagers living in an around Komodo have carefully harvested the sea’s riches in sustainable ways” (TNC n.d. f: 1). However, it appears that nowadays these very same people are engaged in “overfishing and destructive fishing practices” (loc. cit.). It seems that while TNC is adept at recognising and saving biodiversity around the world, it does not appear able to identify a range of traditional community fishing activities as anything but ‘destructive’ or specifically distinguish who, out of the more than 20,000 people living in and around the Park, is responsible for such practices, if anyone. Through the ‘Komodo Fish Culture Project’, The Nature Conservancy aims to “steer” local people towards a “thriving mariculture industry” (TNC n.d. f: 1). In keeping with the translocal vision of TNC, this project will also “protect one of the world’s most biologically diverse and productive marine environments” (loc. cit.). In Komodo National Park, the burden of deferred consumption of the assets of this ‘biodiversity bank’ is firmly placed upon the local population, raising questions about who actually benefits from this World Heritage-inscribed, UNESCO-listed biosphere reserve.

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY: A POSTSCRIPT FROM KOMODO NATIONAL PARK, 2005

Back in 1981, when the social science researcher, Michael Hitchcock, visited the newly formed Komodo National Park, it didn’t appear that the Komodo islanders were really benefiting from the environmental and tourism successes that often come with the establishment of a protected area. Indeed Hitchcock concludes that, “overlooked by the authorities and lacking the appropriate skills and education, the islanders have been unable to participate in the new developments” (1993: 313). Hitchcock suggests that the islanders’ marginalisation partially stems from the fact that the Park’s planners were “primarily concerned with environmental conservation rather than the needs of the local population” (loc. cit.). Apparently, the problems posed by the presence of people within the Park were to be solved by “resettling several villages outside the reserve” (loc. cit.).

As Jim Igoe observes, along with many other commentators, “the historical creation of parks often involved the eviction of local people” (2004: xi). An inkling of the global magnitude of this ‘management’ practice is found in the UNESCO-sponsored overview of ‘Human Use of World Heritage Natural Sites’ (Thorsell and Sigaty 1998). While the authors of this study report that “the majority of natural World Heritage sites [73 out of 126 ‘natural’ and ‘mixed’ sites], have no resident human population” (ibid: 3), examination of these supposedly ‘natural’ sites reveals that substantial human populations, in some cases numbering tens of thousands of people, live immediately adjacent to these protected areas. One of the more obvious conclusions to be drawn from this material is that people lived in these spaces prior to their declaration as a protected area, whether as a World Heritage property, conservation reserve, or national park. In the 47 ‘natural’ World Heritage sites where resident human populations have not been rendered invisible by the convenience of a line on a map and ahistorical statistics, the degree to which their presence and involvement in shaping an

anthropogenic landscape is acknowledged by national governments and global environmental organisation varies dramatically.

P. J. Fowler gives us some idea of this variation in the UNESCO report on 'World Heritage Cultural Landscapes, 1992-2002' (Fowler 2003). Of the 730 properties inscribed on the World Heritage List by 2002, only thirty are listed as 'official' cultural landscapes (Fowler 2003: 14). After examining the listings for 'natural', 'cultural' and 'mixed' properties, Fowler found that at least 70 other sites could readily be identified as cultural landscapes according to the World Heritage Convention (ibid: 60). While Fowler observes that the pre-1992 listing of some World Heritage sites precluded their nomination as a 'cultural landscape', he can only surmise that the reasons why state parties have not seized upon "the new opportunity presented by the creation of the category 'cultural landscape' [...] may well be economic and personnel [ones]" (ibid: 60). In solely focusing upon financial and logistical obstacles, Fowler appears oblivious to the politicisation of nature, culture and heritage that surrounds the listing process, leading one commentator to label World Heritage a "political football" (Sullivan 2004: 51). As such, Fowler ignores the powerful discourses about an 'untouched nature' in which the idea of a cultural landscape appears as an oxymoronic concept.

As these comments suggest, the creation of a World Heritage area or a national park imposes more than just new cadastral boundaries and regulatory regimes. The 'eviction of local people' that Igoe and countless others have commented upon is one of the more disturbing and long-lasting effects of the intersection of a number of discourses focused upon 'the environment'. In this sense, the creation of a park also imposes scientific frameworks about species and ecosystems, environmentalist notions about nature conservation and protection, elitists ideas about heritage and culture, developmental ideologies about communities and customs, bureaucratic concepts regarding planning and management, and state-sanctioned assumptions about property and people's rights. As Sullivan and others point out, in this situation relying upon "national or local government systems to encourage local involvement and the fostering of traditional practices is often unrealistic and counter-productive" (2004: 51). In the case of Komodo National Park, local involvement at the behest of the Park's authorities, the national government and the transnational environmental organisation The Nature Conservancy also proved to be an alienating and disempowering experience.

As reported by the 'Awareness Officer' of the Indonesian NGO Yayasan Pusaka Alam Nusantara⁴⁰, established by The Nature Conservancy as part of its 'environmental education program', the 'globally good' intentions of the Park Authority have met with indifference from the local communities within and adjoining the Park (1996: 5). For local people "the protected area is deemed an imposed regulation that puts constraints on their livelihood" (Bakar 1996: 28). Indeed, the officer concludes that:

During the sixteen years since the establishment of Komodo National Park it has not yet been evident that the local communities play an active role in support of conservation efforts. The population in general remains indifferent to the cause, and even presents a potential threat to the ecosystem" (loc. cit.).

To combat this 'indifference' and 'vitalise' community participation, the Indonesian environmental NGO recommends, "the local community must be made to recognise that they are to gain greater benefits from the Park if they comply with conservation policies" (Bakar 1996: 29). Notwithstanding the considerable financial and logistical effort of the national government and The Nature Conservancy to develop alternative livelihoods, "not in conflict with conservation values" (loc. cit), it is clear that the local community regard these

⁴⁰ The 'Nusantara Natural Heritage Organisation'.

'Integrated Conservation and Development Projects' (ICDP) (Wells *et al.* 1999) as a 'bad' idea. While a recent World Bank publication identifies TNC's "dive tourism, mariculture, and pelagic fishery enterprises launched with private-sector collaboration [as having] good job-creation prospects in the communities involved in destructive fishing" (Wells *et al.* 1999: 27), the reality in the Park is quite different. As people from the village of Komodo observed in 2005, they are "still waiting" for some of these ICDPs to start, while others, such as the seaweed-farming project, were rejected by the community as "inappropriate for local conditions". In the case of the only functioning ICDP, TNC's much-lauded 'Komodo Fish Culture Project', a commercial fish hatchery established outside of the Park at Loh Mbongi in 2003⁴¹, this has yet to be 'handed over' to a "local business, a local institute, or to a local fisherman's cooperative" (TNC 2002: 3), as promised by TNC⁴². This ICDP already has a questionable conservation history, particularly given that wild broodstock for the project was obtained from the Park waters (Mous and Meyer 2003: 6) and 'wild-caught' fish are purchased on a regular basis to replace sick and dead stock (TNC 2002: 3). It is also questionable how this enterprise will directly benefit residents within the Park given that "no aquaculture development is envisaged within the national park boundaries" (Mous and Meyer 2003: 13).

Notwithstanding TNC's efforts to develop marine ICDPs and for all its talk of "capacity building for the local community" (Wells *et al.* 1999: 101), it is apparent from speaking to Komodo islanders that there is considerable local resentment and resistance to the external imposition of 'alternative livelihoods' in the name of a globally-defined conservation good⁴³. The attitudes and perceptions of the Komodo islanders in this regard are based upon their direct experience of another 'alternative livelihoods' project, one suggested in the first management plan for the Park (see Blower *et al.* 1977).

The 1977 plan proposed that local people, with an age-old tradition of fishing and aboriculture, become souvenir wood carvers and small-scale jewellery producers, selling their products to the growing number of tourists visiting the Park each year. However, as Hitchcock observes, the islanders "lacked a strong craft tradition, having obtained the goods they needed in the past through trade with the Bimanese" (1993: 314). The "generalist skills of the Komodo Islanders are well suited to local conditions and, unlike neighbouring Bima, there are hardly any specialist artisans" (*loc. cit.*). While the idea was originally proposed in late 1970s, it wasn't until the late 1990s, with TNC's push for the development of 'alternative livelihoods' within the Park that some people in the village of Komodo started to craft tourist souvenirs. Today, Komodo islanders identify this enterprise as a locally-driven initiative in contrast to the 'foreign' ICDPs promoted by TNC and the Park authorities. While addressing some of the 'community development' aspirations of the ICDP concept, it is apparent that the local souvenir industry does not sit well with the stated biodiversity conservation objectives of the ICDP approach and the Park management plan (Wells *et al.* 1999: 1; PHKA and TNC 2000).

⁴¹ Loh Mbongi is situated 6 kilometres north of Labuan Bajo. According to a TNC report, the "Tahija Foundation donated 150,000m² of land in Lok Mbongi to The Nature Conservancy for the purpose of construction of the hatchery" (Mous and Meyer 2003: 7). The report does not mention the tenure arrangements regarding the marine component of the hatchery.

⁴² On 1 July 2005, the Loh Mbongi aquaculture facility was transferred to a Bali-based commercial fish company, PT Karamba (TNC 2005b: 5, 38). PT Karamba has a 'grouper cage' operation in Lombok, a number of mud-crab production projects and, through its sister company, is involved in the tuna export business (TNC 2005b: 38).

⁴³ There is also considerable local and regional opposition to TNC's co-management role in Komodo National Park (see KSDA 2002).

The raw materials needed by local people, for example, timber, pearls and mother-of-pearl shell, are all protected by Park regulations. Komodo islanders thus have to collect and/or purchase all handicraft materials from sources outside of the Park. Locking local people out of the Park in this sense has had the effect of displacing people's exploitation elsewhere, in this case, to those environments adjacent to the Park. Rather than fostering economic independence and promoting financial gain, local wood carvers and jewellery makers are dependent on others to secure the items they need for their 'alternative livelihood' or, alternatively, they run the risk of incurring the wrath of other communities through their 'poaching' activities outside the Park.

It is also the case that in the past couple of years the nature of tourism in the National Park has changed⁴⁴. Certainly, the Bali bombings in 2002 and 2005 have had a dramatic impact on the number of tourists visiting the Park, particularly as Bali is the international gateway for air and sea travel to Komodo. For some years now, the tourism trend has been for shorter visits to the island, usually only a couple of hours in duration. Most, if not all, tourists choose not to overnight at the facilities established at Loh Liang on Komodo Island. Rather, they purchase dive / dragon packages from tour operators in Labuan Bajo, Sumbawa or Bali and visit the island on fully equipped tour boats (Figure 13). These boats not only provide visitors to the Park with all their food and drink requirements, but they also provide the tourists with on-board accommodation. With the cessation of the ferry services to Komodo from Labuan Bajo and Sapé some five years ago, tourists have few options now but to purchase these packaged tours to the National Park. As a result, the main Park tourist facility at Loh Liang has deteriorated through lack of use and regular maintenance. By October 2005, a number of the 'eco-friendly' accommodation huts had collapsed as a result of white ant infestation, leaving only one (itself in a state of disrepair) building available for overnight tourist accommodation⁴⁵.

Most tourists these days spend their two to three hours on the island walking to and from the 'dragon' viewing area at Banu Nggulung, before boarding their tour boat to go snorkelling or diving on the coral reefs elsewhere in the Park⁴⁶. With the Park management plan emphasising the region's marine biodiversity and the many 'pristine' diving opportunities awaiting visitors, it is not so surprising that tourism in the Park is increasingly focused on the marine environment⁴⁷. In this scenario, the opportunities for local people to sell their handicrafts to tourists are extremely limited. This situation is further exacerbated by the fact that the Park Authority prohibits local sellers from entering the Loh Liang tourist complex and soliciting visitors. In order to sell their artefacts, the twenty or so men and boys who walk from Kampung Komodo to Loh Liang upon seeing the arrival of another tour boat, are reduced to a pariah status, confined to a hot and dusty area just inside the Park's gateway. From personal observation, tourists hurry past this 'un-natural' area, eager to see the dragons and also avoid the chorus of pleas from the islanders to purchase their artefacts.

⁴⁴ In 1995/1996, Komodo National Park recorded 28,991 visitors, with international tourists comprising around 90% of these visitors (Goodwin *et al.* 1997: 20-24). Of the 24,159 visitors who travelled to Komodo Island in this period, nearly 25% chose to overnight at the Loh Liang facilities (Goodwin *et al.* 1997: 20).

⁴⁵ Park rangers at Loh Liang informed me that I was the first person to overnight at the facility for several months and that because of the short duration of tourist visitations to the island they no longer order food for the tourist 'cafeteria' at the complex.

⁴⁶ I interviewed a number of the tour operators in Labuan Bajo and was informed by them that most tourists only spend "two to three hours on Komodo Island" and that it was "very unusual" for tourists to overnight.

⁴⁷ In a survey of the ten tour operators in Labuan Bajo, shop-front advertisements and promotional offers overwhelmingly featured 'dive trips' and 'snorkeling'. Strange as it may sound, only one operator referred to 'dragon viewing' in its on-road signage.

While a study on alternative livelihood preferences conducted by TNC states that “villagers from Kampung Komodo expressed an interest in tourism activities” and also requested assistance from the Park Authority for handicraft development and “in training to become Park staff” (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 1: 69), it appears from the experience of Komodo islanders that tourism and training are not the gilded pathways to “economic prosperity” promised in the Plan. This is not so surprising given that the kind of tourism promoted in the Plan, so-called ‘eco-tourism’, is depicted as “visiting natural areas to view and enjoy the plant and animal life with minimal or no impact on the environment” (loc. cit.). Contrary to information posted on TNC’s website, there is little, if any, evidence of TNC “establishing ecotourism as a means of sustainable income for local villagers”. Furthermore, given the aforementioned response of Park staff to the involvement of local people in tourism, and the general view espoused in the Plan of the resident communities as ‘poorly educated’, the suggestion of training local people to become rangers appears as nothing more than the Plan paying lip-service to the developmental mantra of ‘capacity building’ and ‘community engagement’ promoted by TNC.

Judging by conditions at the Park’s main visitor centre at Loh Liang, it appears that lip-service is also paid to the idea of managing the World Heritage-listed values of Komodo National Park. While baiting and feeding the dragons officially ceased more than a decade ago, based on my observations in October 2005, Park staff at Loh Liang feed their kitchen refuse and food scraps to a resident group of lizards on a thrice daily basis. In addition, Komodo lizards, as well as wild pigs and deer, scavenge in the open rubbish pit established less than 100 metres away from the staff kitchen. In the absence of a patrol boat, the Park’s rangers are largely confined to the ranger station, except on those occasions when a charter boat arrives with tourists. Tourists to Komodo Island are prohibited from venturing outside of the Loh Liang facility by themselves. While this regulation is justified by reference to the ‘dangerous’ nature of the dragons, it also produces some useful economic outcomes. To view the dragons at Banu Nggulung or undertake one of the ‘nature walks’ on the island, visitors are required to pay for the services of a ranger to guide them on these outings. Payments from guided walks, together with the entrance fee, camera / video surcharge, and any overnight accommodation charges, comprise the main source of tourism-generated revenue in the Park. On guided tours around the Loh Liang facility rangers readily use forked sticks to prod supine dragons into action for the benefit of camera-wielding tourists. Increasingly, the human-habituated Komodo dragons found lying around and underneath the raised staff canteen at Loh Liang are the only lizards seen by tourists. The cessation of the goat-gobbling spectacle at the official dragon-viewing area has resulted in the creation of ‘natural’ dragons, too ‘wild’ to hang around the viewing area to satisfy the curiosity of irregular visitors.

In late 2005, on-ground ‘management’ of the natural values of the park, in particular protection of the endangered Komodo monitor, certainly contravened key elements of the current management plan, while the daily practices of park staff stood in stark contrast to the many signs erected around the facility reminding visitors to remove all rubbish from the Park. Indeed, if my stay at Loh Liang is anything to go by, on-ground ‘management’ of Komodo National Park amounts to nothing more than feeding the dragons, guiding fee-paying tourists to and from the dragon viewing site for a couple of hours per day, and paying the odd visit to Kampung Komodo to see what is happening there. In many respects, Komodo National Park can be viewed as a live, *in situ* exhibition, which creates the effect and experience of ‘real’ nature, somewhat reminiscent of W. Douglas Burden’s life-like display of the ‘Dragon lizard group’ at the American Museum of Natural History in New York (see Figure 5).

The reality of so-called ‘management’ stands in stark contrast to the rhetoric of management produced by The Nature Conservancy through its internet website, its Bali-based, ‘Coral Triangle Centre’, and its reams of glossy information sheets, media releases, assessments, reports and other publications. In this respect, TNC is highly successful in its management

of the virtual environment of Komodo National Park. Certainly, Komodo National Park highlights the disjuncture that exists between the discourse of management (see Pannell 1997), with its emphasis upon natural values, biodiversity, habitat conservation, and collaborative partnerships, and the day-to-day drudgery of cleaning toilets, emptying rubbish bins and controlling the movement of people to and from designated visitor destinations. While some may argue that bridging this discontinuity between discourse and *de jour* practices is simply a matter of translation, made possible by more funds and resources, the truth is that the role of national environmental agencies and international conservation organisations in managing nature in the new millennium increasingly revolves around image management and the manipulation of the eco-tourism experience. Like the creation of an Indigenous culture, in order for the nature produced by these forms of political ecology to be perceived as environmental realism, the anthropogenic conditions of its production must be concealed or back-grounded. As this suggests, the highly mediated 'naturalisation' of nature is an overtly political act, which consumes its own agency and motivations.

Based on the experience of Komodo National Park, serious questions need to be asked about the identities of the producers and consumers of this nature. For example, 'from whom' and 'for whom' is TNC 'saving the last great places on Earth' (TNC logo). Given the numerous references in TNC-produced material about the 'destructive fishing practices' of local people, the answer to the first part of this question is obvious. As Katz points out, TNC "works in partnership with national environmental organisations to block all 'human interference' with the environment it protects" (1998: 59). In Komodo National Park this last point is evident in TNC's arguments that the "carrying capacity of the park for permanent population is currently exceeded" and that villagers within the Park should "move to adjacent larger islands" to restore balance to the Park's ecosystems (Singleton *et al.* 2002: 9). While the evidence strongly supports the claim that the preservation efforts of TNC "insistently evict people from nature" (*loc. cit.*), as the example of Komodo National Park illustrates, only certain kinds of people are affected. 'Eco-tourists' and the 'nature lovers' from around the world who underwrite TNC's international biodiversity investments are certainly not amongst those evicted from nature. While some have referred to the development of environmentalism as a form of 'green imperialism' (Grove 1995), the kind of environmentalism practiced by TNC today constitutes a modern-day form of mercantile colonialism, with the self interests and motivations of those involved in this private corporation concealed by a feel-good mantle of global green altruism. Notwithstanding current talk of post-colonialism and multiculturalism, as Masao Miyoshi argues, "colonialism is even more active now in the form of transnational corporatism" (1996: 79).

This analogy with the likes of the Dutch East India Company, operating in this region some three hundred years ago, is even more fitting when the nature of TNC's 'partnership' with the Government of Indonesia is taken into consideration. The granting of the multi-million dollar tourism concession in the Park to TNC's joint venture company, PT Putri Naga Komodo, enabling this corporation to "develop the Park as an eco-tourism destination and to collect entrance fees" (TNC 2002: 5), aptly illustrates how these 'partnerships' serve as gateways for the privatisation of nature. In keeping with the analogy of mercantile colonialism (and the logic of modern global capitalism), nature, like the sought after resources of the old world plundered in the past, is regarded as a universal commons⁴⁸. And, as Cordell (1989, 1993) and others have identified (see Ganter 1994), those local people erased by the concept of a 'public space exploited by private interests' bear the full brunt of the 'tragedy of the commons' (Hardin 1968).

As this talk of privatisation and the tragedy of the commons suggests, the issues here revolve around local ownership, security of tenure, and 'resource sovereignty' (Howitt *et al.*

⁴⁸ Similar ideas about the existence of a universal common underwrite the notion of World Heritage.

1996). In TNC's Edenic vision of nature, only exotic biodiversity or endangered species belong or are acknowledged as having a rightful place in Komodo National Park. At best, the current management plan talks about the possibility of granting limited 'use rights' to human residents in the Park via a system of permits and licences (PHKA and TNC 2000, Vol. 2: 141). If there is a sense of local ownership conveyed through the management objectives of the Park, it is in regard to the environmental 'problems' identified in the Park, rather than to ownership of the Park itself. At the present time, local communities appear to have less rights and less say in the day-to-day management of the Park than The Nature Conservancy and its internationally based investors. Indeed, it is difficult to know what villagers have to say about the imposition of the 'Komodo Community Management Initiative', particularly as their opposition to and contestation of the new regime is reduced to 'community indifference' or is identified as requiring an intensification of 'socialisation activities' in TNC's reports on 'stakeholder consultations' (see Bakar 1996; TNC 2003).

Using nature preservation as the "measure and arbiter" (Katz 1998: 57) of rightfulness and of what constitutes a global good, produces an ugly environmental politics. It also produces a landscape of 'nature cemeteries' (Luke 1995: 17), for the most part, off limits to the living. In the context of Komodo National Park, the production of these very un-natural spaces, wiped clean of culture, is further reified by the World Heritage listing of the Park solely for its natural values. In many respects, the World Heritage status of the Park serves to legitimate the memorialised view of nature preserved by TNC. Listing also elevates TNC's global efforts to create nature theme parks, where the presence of biodiversity provides "entertainment value" (Luke 1995: 20) for its investors, to the level of a common public good. In the pursuit and delivery of this global public good, it is apparent that certain articles of the World Heritage Convention are disregarded or paid lip-service to by the Government of Indonesia in their partnership with TNC. As a signatory to the Convention, the Indonesian authorities have a formal obligation to give recognised World Heritage a "function in the life of the community" (see Article 5 of the World Heritage Convention, UNESCO 1972) and are encouraged to "ensure the participation of a wide variety of stakeholders [...] in the identification, nomination and protection of World Heritage properties" (UNESCO 2005: 3). In the context of the management of Komodo National Park, the local community is depicted as a dysfunctional element of World Heritage, while from the point of view of the Park's residents, stakeholder participation in protection measures is largely characterised by prohibitions, penalties and penal sentences⁴⁹.

As evident in Komodo National Park, The Nature Conservancy and the World Heritage Committee are assisted in their efforts to 'save' nature for (certain kinds of) humanity by an international array of scientists and other experts. The officials and the many experts who comprise the UNESCO network are part of an international elite. As David Harrison observes, members of this elite group "may deliberately or unwittingly influence which built, natural or cultural sites are selected for possible inclusion on the World Heritage List" (2005: 8). As governments and regional authorities increasingly look to World Heritage listing as a means of delivering economic benefits and a much-sought after international status from global tourism, expert input and advice is accorded greater political currency and leverage. In this commonly found scenario, as Harrison concludes, "'supervision' by experts sometimes comes to mean domination by experts" (2005: 8-9). In the case of so many World Heritage sites in 'developing countries' conservation advice not only comes from 'experts', but it also comes from former colonists (see Evans 2005: 44).

⁴⁹ As reported by TNC-sponsored researchers, Pet and Subijanto, in 'Enforcement and Protection of Komodo National Park', in the period 4 March 2000-1 March 2001, 38 men from villages within and surrounding the national park were given jail sentences, ranging in length from 6 months to 3 years, for 'deer poaching' and 'illegal fishing' activities (2001).

This relationship between 'experts', the state and nature conservation has a long history. As Richard Grove points out, the origins and growth of environmentalism "depended on the emergence of a coterie of professional scientists" (1995). Today, just as was the case in the past (Grove 1995: 12), the prescriptions of scientists regarding nature are commonly subordinated to the needs of nation-states. Unlike the past, however, nowadays they are also constrained by the interests of transnational environmental organisations, like The Nature Conservancy, or are subject to the requirements of global instruments, such as the World Heritage Convention. Perhaps the greatest restraining factor stems from the methodologies of science engaged in the cause of nature conservation. As Graeme Evans observes, the cultural monument-nature conservation approach to heritage, which underscores the Convention, appears "unable to reconcile the very real conflicts and tensions between State intervention and compliance with international agency criteria, and local / regional governance and community concerns" (2005: 39).

As these comments suggest, the international presentation and 'performance' of heritage is "linked to power: the power to impose a view of the world" (Harrison 2005: 9). Preserving heritage, whether natural or cultural, for the sake of posterity, humanity, biodiversity, or as a response to development, endangerment, destruction, or some other form of postulated 'global good', runs the risks of reinstating many of the values and relationships identified with the far-flung projects of colonialism. In the next section, I explore the construction and preservation of some of these colonial projects as World Heritage.

CHAPTER FOUR – THE CONVENTION AND WORLD HISTORY

Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations – UNESCO World Heritage Centre

One of the commonly heard criticisms of World Heritage listing is that it sanitises the past and museumifies social practices. Moreover, in attempting to protect heritage from perceived damaging or threatening external forces, listing often overlooks or negates the fact that many heritage sites are the products of “local responses to and engagements with regional, national and global political, cultural and economic dynamics” (Adams 2005: 153). In the past five years or so, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of World Heritage sites listed which specifically allude to and identify the ‘fusion’, ‘interchange’, ‘interaction’ or ‘integration’ of different values and cultures as justification for inscription. Some of these ‘encounters’ are further linked to ‘international trade’ (e.g. the Historic Centre of Macau listed in 2005) or are described as part of an early phase of ‘globalisation’ (e.g. the Historic Quarter of the Seaport City of Valparaiso listed in 2003). While some of the ‘heritage’ produced from these encounters – e.g. railways, villages, towns, cities – is identified as ‘colonial’, rarely if at all, are the interactions between Europeans (mainly the British, Portuguese, and the Spanish) and locals characterised as such. Prior to 2000, it appears that former European colonies in South America, Africa, and Asia largely, though not exclusively, nominated ‘natural’ properties, such as the Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (listed in 1979), pre-historic ‘cultural’ sites, such as the Joya de Ceren Archaeological Site in El Salvador (listed in 1993), or pre-colonial monuments, such as the Taj Mahal in India (listed in 1983). As the example of the Taj Mahal illustrates, however, the advent of European colonialism in its various temporal and spatial manifestations around the world did not signal the onset of a history of cultural interchanges. World Heritage sites, such as the Taj Mahal, the Borobudur Temple Compounds in Indonesia and the Khami Ruins National Monument in Zimbabwe, point to a long history of cultural interactions and exchanges between the local and the global. Indeed, while sometimes not officially recognised in the listing process, many World Heritage properties are truly global sites as a consequence of their placement within colonial and pre-colonial histories. As Maddern argues with respect to Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island National Monument, these sites are not just illustrative of important chapters in national histories, but they also represent a “defining moment in world history” (2005: 25).

In this section of the report, I examine to what extent the World Heritage List has developed beyond a representation of colonialism as a celebration of past glories or quaint old buildings. With particular reference to the World Heritage site of the Military Fortress of Suomenlinna (listed in 1991) and one of the most recently listed properties, the Historic Centre of Macau (listed in 2005)⁵⁰, I report on two very different depictions of the ‘colonial experience’. Focusing specifically on ‘colonial’ World Heritage sites raises some interesting questions as to whose values and whose heritage is preserved and promoted at these transnational, multicultural locations. And, perhaps more importantly, particularly given the history of colonialism, it also queries who and which historical events are forgotten in this process.

⁵⁰ As part of a comparative research project examining several World Heritage sites, I visited both of these properties in October and November 2005.

THE MILITARY FORTRESS OF SUOMENLINNA: A CASE OF POST-COLONIAL REMEMBERING?

The sea fortress of Suomenlinna (Figure 14) is built on a number of islands located at the entrance to the harbour of Helsinki in Finland. As one of Finland's first World Heritage sites, the fortress was listed in 1991 as a 'cultural' property under criterion (iv), and is thus identified as "an especially interesting example of European military architecture of the time" (UNESCO World Heritage Centre website). Often referred to as the 'Gibraltar of the North', this site is "one of the largest sea-fortresses in the world" (The Estate of Olof af Hällstrom 2004: 4). Information brochures for the site proclaim the fortress as a "national monument" and "one of Finland's cultural treasures" (Suomenlinna Sveaborg 2005).

Visitors to the Suomenlinna Visitor Centre, completed in 1998 to mark the 250th anniversary of the fortress, can take in a wide-screen audio-visual presentation of Suomenlinna's history, dubbed the 'Suomenlinna Experience'. They can also examine the many detailed bi-lingual (in the national languages of Finnish and Swedish)⁵¹ exhibits, which plot the chronological development of this significant example of military architecture. Unlike many other World Heritage sites visited in the course of this research project (see also Williams 2005), the Suomenlinna Visitor Centre clearly identifies the site as World Heritage, provides detailed informed about the values the property is listed for, and also contextualises this information with a display on the World Heritage Convention. Within the grounds of the fortress are also several museums, which display "Finland's defence and war history" (Suomenlinna Sveaborg 2005). In addition to these displays and interpretive material, visitors are given an information brochure, available in several European languages, and can purchase more comprehensive accounts on the history and architecture of the fortress in the visitor centre bookshop. Included in these more comprehensive accounts is the official guidebook, UNESCO-World Heritage endorsed 'Look at Suomenlinna-Sveaborg: The Island Fortress off Helsinki' (The Estate of Olof af Hällstrom 2004). Apart from stopping at the visitor centre, visitors are also encouraged to experience the fortress by taking one of a number of marked walking tours of the restored and well-preserved complex.

As a visitor to this World Heritage site, one readily learns that the construction of the fortress began in 1748 and that, up until thirty years ago, the edifice was still used by the military (Suomenlinna Sveaborg 2005). Sveaborg was named in 1750⁵². In the period 1748-1808, the fortress and the area which was later to become the independent republic of Finland in 1918, were ruled by the King of Sweden. As stated in one of the available information brochures, as part of a military alliance and defence plan with France, the fortress was constructed by Sweden to counter the growing threat from Russia. It also represented a "last attempt [...] to reclaim the land it had lost to Russia at the turn of the century" (Suomenlinna Sveaborg 2005). While considered to be 'impenetrable', Sweden surrendered to Russia in a siege of the fortress in 1808. From 1808 until the October Revolution of 1917, Finland came under the 'hegemony' of the Russian Empire (Suomenlinna Sveaborg 2005). In 1855, Sveaborg, as a Russian fortress and garrison town, was attacked by Great Britain and France in one of the battles of the Crimean War (1853-1856). While the bombing of the fortress had "no military significance" for Great Britain and France, it became apparent to the Russians that "ancient Sveaborg was hopelessly outdated (The Estate of Olof af Hällstrom 2004: 47). In the aftermath of Finnish Independence in 1917, the fortress was renamed

⁵¹ For visitors not speaking either of the two national languages of Finland, dense and overly long photocopied texts are available in English, German, French, Russian and Japanese as an alternative to the detailed interpretive displays panels in the visitor centre.

⁵² While officially named Sveaborg by Sweden, the fortress was also known as *Viapori* in the Finnish language (The Estate of Olof af Hällstrom 2004: 32). Apparently, when the Russians occupied the fortress in 1808, the name, *Viapori*, was also used by them.

Suomenlinna (in the Finnish language, 'Fort of Finland'), and was briefly used as a prison camp to hold some of the 80,000 prisoners of war resulting from the civil war of 1918 (The Estate of Olof af Hällstrom 2004: 49). In the period 1919-1973, Suomenlinna was a Finnish garrison town.

The year 1973 marked the end of a 225-year long military epoch as administration of the fortress was handed over to the civil Governing Body of Suomenlinna. This body has been responsible for the restoration work and developments at the fortress site to the present date. Today, Suomenlinna is identified as "a monument, a cultural centre, a borough and a tourist attraction" (The Estate of Olof af Hällstrom 2004: 49). As a borough, Suomenlinna is the year-round home to a population of approximately 850 people and contains a "kindergarten, primary school, shop and library" (The Estate of Olof af Hällstrom 2004: 50). The fortress complex also operates as a 'labour colony' with 80 or so inmates, who carry out most of the restoration work at the site (The Estate of Olof af Hällstrom 2004: 50). The military tradition of Suomenlinna, however, still continues at the site as part of the fortress houses the Finnish Naval Academy.

As this brief account illustrates, the history of the fortress is inextricably tied to the history of Europe and the geo-political battles for power between Sweden and Russia, and later between Russia, France and Great Britain. In this respect, the region that became Finland in 1917 is presented as the geo-political borderlands and expendable stage upon which these battles for European supremacy were sometimes fought. This history of military domination and defeat involving Europe's super-powers of the day is also presented at the sea-fortress of Suomenlinna as 'Finland's history'. This said, little information is provided about the role of local people in this history of colonisation and counter-occupation. Indeed, given the emphasis upon the military achievements of Sweden and Russia, the fortress can be readily interpreted by visitors as a monument to Finnish oppression and their marginal role in the region's political history.

As a monument to Finland's history, the fortress is also made to stand as a visual marker of the beginning of this history. There is no information presented at the visitor centre about the identity of those people occupying the area prior to Swedish control some 600 years prior to the establishment of the fortress, or any sense that a local history existed prior to the construction itself. While more than 2,000 men were involved in the original building of the fortress, making it the "biggest construction project ever undertaken by the Swedish realm" (The Estate of Olof af Hällstrom 2004: 36), their identities are not revealed in the displays at the visitor centre. With its emphasis upon the technicalities and principles of fortification of the day, and its presentation of history as the story of kings and queens and their various political machinations on the chessboard of Europe, the World Heritage site glorifies one of the more monumental expressions of the 'colonial experience'. In doing so, the World Heritage site conceals some of more shameful episodes associated with the expansion of empires and kingdom building.

As the historian Simon Schama reminds us, not all landscapes are "places of delight", nor are all memories "pastoral picnics" (1995: 18). Yet, notwithstanding the brutal nature of Suomenlinna history, little of the horror and suffering that Schama alludes to is depicted in this sanitised vision of Finland's past. Indeed, there is little suggestion that the historical occupation of Finland by Sweden and Russia is a colonising act. In this sense, Suomenlinna, as a World Heritage cultural property, is not alone. The World Heritage List is replete with properties that celebrate and protect colonial monuments, but not necessarily the pained memories associated with the production of these architectural glories. As Fowler points out (2003: 53), while the World Heritage List acknowledges the incidence of global warfare in the form of fortifications, urban defences and naval ports, it has yet to recognise 'war landscapes'. And, I would add, truly depict the other, less picturesque, legacies of a colonial heritage.

At Suomenlinna the erasure of this less picturesque history is materially achieved by the restoration of the fortress complex itself. Ongoing restoration work at the fortress is undertaken to satisfy the authenticity and integrity requirements of the World Heritage Convention. As stated in the Convention's operational guidelines, the "physical fabric" of properties nominated under the 'cultural' criteria (i) to (vi), "should be in good condition, and the impact of deterioration processes controlled" (UNESCO 2005: 22). At Suomenlinna restoring the fortifications in keeping with their current status as "monument, a cultural centre, a borough and a tourist attraction" (The Estate of Olof af Hällstrom 2004: 49) has effectively obliterated the material scars of more than three hundred years of warfare. In this respect, the Military Fortress of Suomenlinna is not alone. As Uzzell and Ballantyne point out, there are "many museums around the world where the sartorial elegance of the soldiery and the impressiveness of the instruments of war assumes as much if not more significance than their purpose and effect" (1998: 156-157). In these contexts, like Suomenlinna, war is reduced to a simple story about the application of military technology and industrial developments to the slaughter of thousands, if not millions, of people. As Uzzell and Ballantyne conclude, "as we go back in time we seem to be more willing to ignore suffering and treat events in a more disinterested way as if they come from a 'foreign country'" (1998: 157). In part, this social 'forgetting' of temporally distant and shameful events is driven by the transformation of sites associated with war and conflict from memorials and places of remembrance to tourist attractions and day-trip destinations. However, battlefields, massacres sites, and the ground zero of mass destruction events, in which unspeakable atrocities, horror and tragedy are constitutive elements, do not readily provide visitors with an "entertaining day out for all the family" (Uzzell and Ballantyne 1998: 165). While 'dark tourism' is identified as a "growing phenomenon in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries" (Lennon and Foley 2000: 3), it is apparent that heritage interpretation at these 'fatal attractions' often presents "a sanitised form of truth which will not upset, offend or challenge" (Uzzell and Ballantyne 1998: 165). This last point is particularly evident in the way that history is interpreted and presented at the Military Fortress of Suomenlinna.

For all the talk of military engagements, there is little sense of the Suomenlinna site as a contested cultural domain in a presentation that largely celebrates Swedish and Russian military history. Indeed, what is interesting about Suomenlinna is the way in which the military achievements of Sweden and Russia, and their varied historical occupation of the region, have not been downplayed or rewritten to opportunistically serve the ends of contemporary Finnish nationalism. Perhaps, this says something about the uncertain and unfinished nature of Finnish nationalism or about the error of assuming the existence of an ethnically independent and historically de-contextualised Finnish identity. Unlike the World Heritage site of Stonehenge, where there is no doubt about the fact that "it belongs to the nation and falls under the guardianship of English Heritage" (van der Aa *et al.* 2005: 18), Suomenlinna, while nominated by the Government of Finland, strongly points to its 'shared heritage'. And while the World Heritage site of the Tower of London monumentalises the rock-solid stability of England's constitutional monarchy, Suomenlinna points to the ebb and flow of power and illustrates the rise and fall of powerful empires and long-reigning kingdoms in this part of Europe.

The identity of Suomenlinna as a pivotal focal point in the histories of at least three European nations raises some interesting questions about whose heritage it is, who should protect it, and if it is a 'shared heritage', to what extent does the Convention recognise multilateral nominations. As to the question of whose heritage it is and who should protect it, the World Heritage listed site of the Statue of Liberty and the associated immigration museum on Ellis Island provide us with some insights and possible answers. This site certainly represents one of the more iconic World Heritage properties to symbolise a multicultural heritage and transnational citizenship. As a site associated with the entry of an estimated twelve million migrants into the United States of America, the Statue of Liberty site challenges the more sedentary and stable readings of history associated with so many of the cultural heritage

properties on the List. As Joanne Maddern points out, “migration histories necessarily emphasise geographical connectivity and rhizomatic networks that transgress the borders of individual nation-states” (2005: 25). Symbolic of a period in global history, and linked to internationally diverse memories, the Statue of Liberty is truly a World Heritage site. However, as Maddern reports, there is a constant tension in the way that the history of the site is mobilised in support of American nationalism or used to promote a more polysemic and universalistic reading. Mindful of these tensions and the new social history, which highlights ‘spatial interconnections’, Maddern advocates, “World Heritage Sites must become spaces of inter-cultural dialogue [...] and should aim to promote themselves as transnational rather than national spaces of citizenship” (2005: 32).

Following on from Maddern’s comment, and returning to the subject of the nomination process, the Convention allows for, and has already accommodated, a handful of multilateral nominations for transnational properties, including the Wadden Sea Conservation Area (van der Aa *et al.* 2005), the ‘Frontiers of the Roman Empire’ (2005), and ‘The Belfries of Belgium and France’ (2005). As the 2005 listing dates for these properties allude to, these nominations reflect a recent trend towards a more thematic and integrated approach to natural and cultural World Heritage. As Fowler suggests, the concept of ‘cultural landscape’, acknowledged in the operational guidelines for the World Heritage Convention since 1992, allows for the expression of theme-based cultural heritage, rather than just the monument-based examples that dominate the World Heritage List (2003: 57). In this respect, linking Suomenlinna to the already listed (1990) Historic Centre of Saint Petersburg, the World Heritage Naval Port of Karlskrona in Sweden (listed in 1998), and the Historic Centres of Stralsund and Wismar in Germany (listed in 2002), as part of a broader geo-political ‘military cultural landscape’ (see Fowler 2003: 58), would make far greater thematic sense. Judging by the properties inscribed on the World Heritage List to date, it appears that ‘historic centres’ have traditionally occupied some of the broader thematic spaces suggested by Fowler.

THE HISTORIC CENTRE OF MACAU⁵³

The World Heritage List features a number of sites inscribed as ‘historic centres’, ‘districts’, ‘zones’, and ‘quarters’. These include the historic centres of Quebec (1985), Mexico City (1987), Brugge (2000), Vienna (2001) and Valparaíso (2003). Of the 628 cultural properties currently inscribed on the World Heritage List, 56 of these are identified as some form of ‘historic centre’. With seven listed historic centres each, Italy and Mexico have the highest number of such sites out of all the member parties to the Convention. Distributed throughout the ‘old’ and ‘new world’, as the term suggests, these centres largely comprise all that remains of ancient, medieval, Moorish, renaissance, or colonial settlements, now enclosed by a more recent and modern built environment. While perhaps not as comprehensive as the many listed ‘historic villages, towns and cities’, historic centres have greater thematic integrity than those sites identified as ‘historic monuments’ within existing built enclaves. Listed in 2005, Macau is one of the latest additions in the acknowledgement of historic centres as World Heritage sites. This tradition dates back to 1980, with the listing of the Historic Centre of Rome. Macau is not only the most recent historic centre listed, but it also represents the first nomination of this kind from the People’s Republic of China.

Situated on the south-east coast of China, sixty kilometres from Hong Kong, for many of the fifteen million visitors to the area, the Macau Peninsula is a brief break and ferry ride away

⁵³ As if to emphasise its colonial past, the World Heritage Centre has retained the original spelling of the name of this former Portuguese outpost “Macao”, rather than adopt the name used by the present-day Macau Government.

from the shopping and bustle of Hong Kong, or an opportunity to gamble in the many casinos which flank the city. Surrounded by high-rise buildings, non-descript concrete blocks, and flashy hotel complexes, the Historic Centre of Macau “provides a unique testimony to the meeting of aesthetic, cultural, architectural and technological influences from East and West” (UNESCO World Heritage Centre website 2005). In an acknowledgement of its strategic importance in the development of international trade, the Historic Centre of Macau is identified as a cultural heritage property of ‘outstanding universal value according to four of the Convention’s ten criteria. Inscribed as a location which favoured; (1) “an important interchange of human values” (criterion ii), (2) bears a unique testimony to the ‘earliest’ and ‘longest-lasting’ encounter between China and a European colonial power, in this case Portugal (criterion iii), and (3) represents an outstanding example of architectural ensemble linking the original Chinese port with the Portuguese city (criterion iv), the Historic Centre of Macau is also recognised in terms of its “association with the exchange of a variety of cultural, spiritual, scientific and technical influences between Western and Chinese civilisations” (criterion vi) (ICOMOS 2005a: 61-62).

The ICOMOS evaluation of the site reiterates the history of the development of the Historic Centre of Macau presented in the original nomination document (ICOMOS 2005a). According to this document, the site of Macau was a fishing village long before the arrival of the Portuguese in 1557. The name of Macau derives from the Ma Kwok temple, built in the fourteenth century. This temple, together with the fifteenth century temple for the Goddess A-Ma, comprised two of the more prominent architectural forms that existed among the small settlements of seafaring merchants, fishermen and farmers, prior to the arrival of the Portuguese. The early Portuguese settlers, looking to establish Macau as a ‘bastion of Christianity’, as well as a trading post, erected timber and clay houses in the Inner Harbour area of Macau. While none of the original dwellings survive today, some of the Catholic churches and chapels established in the early colonial period (the 1500s and 1600s) form part of the Historic Centre of Macau. In the early seventeenth century the Portuguese constructed a series of forts against other Western powers, notably the Dutch, who attacked Macau in 1622 (Boxer 1969: 111). One of the surviving forts from this period, the Mount Fortress (constructed in 1626), is enclosed within the central area of the historic settlement of Macau. In the mid-seventeenth century, the settlement of Macau was divided into a Portuguese sector in the south and a Chinese enclave in the north. In 1849, Portugal declared Macau a ‘free port’, enhancing Macau’s role as a trading base and attracting foreign companies to the enclave. In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Catholic Church built a number of new churches and restored some of the earlier ones. It was towards the end of the nineteenth century that Macau, unable to compete with Hong Kong as the region’s finance and trade centre, became a popular recreation destination for foreigners. Some of the buildings constructed at this time, such as the Dom Pedro V Theatre, the Military Club, and the Vela Vista Hotel, are listed as part of the architectural ensemble of historic Macau. Apparently, during this time the Chinese built a number of temples (also included within the World Heritage area) and started the process of land reclamation. In 1974, Macau was established as a ‘Chinese territory’ under Portuguese administration, and later in 1999, it became a ‘Special Administrative Region’ (SAR) under Chinese Sovereignty (ICOMOS 2005a).

The World Heritage property consists of two separate ‘core zones’, with buffer zones surrounding each of these areas (Map 4). The boundaries of these buffer zones are identified as coinciding with the early nineteenth century limits of the territory of Macau. While these ‘buffer zones’ may play an important role in separating the Historic Centre of Macau from encroaching development, they are not included within the boundaries of the listed World Heritage property. A series of architectural forms and urban spaces, including squares, churches, chapels, temples, a fort, a lighthouse, gardens, cemetery, ruins, old walls, colonial government buildings and residences comprise the World Heritage focus of the two core zones (Figure 15). The heritage buildings within these zones, including three

historic Chinese temples, are either the property of the SAR Government or, in the case of the St Josephs complex, the Dom Pedro V Theatre, and the Holy House of Mercy Building, are owned by the Catholic Church and a private institution. Day-to-day management of the Historic Centre is the responsibility of the newly formed Heritage Environment Management Council. Members of this council include both government representatives, management boards for each of the individual heritage properties and community associations. The involvement of these community associations points to the varied organisations and different sectors of the population with an interest in the Historic Centre. For instance, the buffer zones are home to some 36,000 people, and these areas combine both commercial and residential use (Figure 16). These zones also contain an array of significant architectural forms. The buildings include traditional Chinese pawnshops, small Chinese shrines, traditional shop-houses, military structures, some churches and chapels, plus the old commercial district and other public spaces (ICOMOS 2005a). On the other hand few, if any, residents inhabit the 25 buildings and squares identified as the key architectural heritage of the core zones. While not places of permanent residence, some of the churches and temples are still used for religious purposes. Other heritage buildings operate as venues for public events, house various government departments and private foundations, or function as a public amenity (e.g. as a library or a museum), visited by locals and tourists, alike. As Evans points out, “conservation, property gentrification [...] and corporate investment in architectural heritage has ensured that there are very few living communities in the touristic centres of Venice, Florence, or fashionable museum quarters of London, Paris and Madrid” (2005: 39). Unlike the ‘sterilised’ cultural heritage areas that Evans refers to, the Historic Centre of Macau largely avoids this effect of heritage conservation and tourism by the fact that interspersed amongst the largely empty architectural legacy of the East-West encounter is a thriving residential and commercial Macanese community.

While local people and protected places intermingle in the core zones, it is also the case, however, that these two zones are dominated by overtly Portuguese architectural forms, while the buffer zones are predominantly comprised of readily identifiable ‘Chinese’ structures. As this suggests, Portuguese architectural forms dominate and are prioritised in the World Heritage listed historic precinct. This emphasis upon Portuguese heritage is also evident in the history of the site presented in the nomination document and promoted in the official World Heritage brochure for the site. For all the talk in the nomination and listing documents of the ‘meeting’ of cultures, long-standing cultural ‘encounters’, the ‘interchange’ of values and the ‘exchange’ of influences, the Historic Centre of Macau also reflects the separation and segregation of these two cultures.

In many respects this ‘dual culture’ (Macau Government Tourist Office 2005: 2) is evident in the nature of visitations to the identified architectural focal points of the World Heritage property. Based on my own experience as a visitor (and also researcher) to the area during the staging of the 4th East Asia Games in Macau, it was apparent that domestic Chinese visitation is focused upon the A-Ma Temple in the south-west section of the centre, and to a lesser extent upon the other ‘Chinese’⁵⁴ temples within the historic precinct, while international Western visitors tended to congregate around the many Catholic churches and chapels dating from the period of Portuguese colonialism. Both groups seem to converge upon the Ruins of St Paul’s and the nearby Senado Square. This is not so surprising given that Senado Square is the shopping centre of Macau, while the Ruins of St Paul’s have a widely-recognised iconic value. Referred to as the ‘Acropolis of Macau’ and as an ‘altar to the city’ in the official four-page World Heritage brochure for the site (Macau Government Tourist Office 2005: 3), government tourist promotions regularly employ the image of the

⁵⁴ While the official broadsheet visitor brochure produced by Macau Government Tourist Office generically identifies the temples in the Historic Centre of Macau as ‘Chinese’, this label belies the range of religious traditions and beliefs, including Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism and local folk cults, associated with these temples and shrines.

ruins to symbolise Macau not just as a World Heritage site, but as an area in its own right. For example, at the opening ceremony of the 4th East Asia Games on the 29 October 2005, an illuminated and larger-than-life reproduction of St Paul's Ruins formed the centrepiece of the celebrations and 'the dazzling displays' (Macau Sunday Morning Post 30 October 2005). Notwithstanding the religious history of the ruins, and present-day signs reminding visitors of this association, it is clear that this Catholic edifice has been secularised in the service of the Macau tourism industry. It thus represents a form of 'neutral' urban space, stripped of the traditional conventions and observances associated with the handful of 'working' churches and chapels within the World Heritage area. While some of these churches still function as places of worship, most have been transformed into religious museums and tourist attractions (Figure 17). This apparent secularisation of religious places is perhaps a reflection of the fact that today less than five percent of the 490,000 people who inhabit the peninsula identify as Catholics (Macau Government Tourist Office 2002). The Catholic legacy of the Portuguese is thus more readily apparent in the many heritage classified chapels and churches that comprise the Historic Centre of Macau, than it is in the contemporary religious observances of the local population.

While the Macau Government Tourist Office identifies the Historic Centre of Macau as a "living representation of the city's historic settlement" (Macau Government Tourist Office 2005: 2), this representation is dominated by a monument-based vision of cultural heritage. This focus upon 'quaint old buildings' functions to distract visitors to the Historic Centre from questioning or pursuing the other histories hidden behind these facades. Like so many other listed historic centres, Macau "offers the perfection of the restoration as a remedy for the imperfections of the past" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 9).

While not a 'historic centre' itself, recent events at the World Heritage site of Stonehenge epitomise the way restoration, driven by ideas about authenticity and integrity, attempts to conceal the imperfections of the past. Listed in 1986, the megaliths of Stonehenge and Avebury, together with a number of associated Neolithic sites, are surrounded by the accretions of more than five thousand years of human history. Over the centuries, some of the stones of the Stonehenge monument have fallen down, others have been carried away to be used for building purposes or to repair farm tracks, while visitors to the site have effected their own modifications. As stated on the English Heritage website, in the recent past "it was quite normal to hire a hammer from the blacksmith in Amesbury and come to Stonehenge to chip bits off". A similar fate befell the stones comprising the circle of Avebury. Many of these stones were broken down during the seventeenth century to use as building materials for the expansion of the village. As these observations indicate, the material forms we identify as Stonehenge and Avebury today are the products of quite varied historical use. This use reflects the shifting significance accorded these two stone complexes by local communities in the past. It also reflects the fact that the idea of heritage, and the associated ethos of preservation, is a recent phenomenon. As Lord Chorley, Chairman of The National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty, observes:

Until the twentieth century, the survival of these monuments [Britain's World Heritage sites] in the face of Viking invasions, civil war, enemy bombardment, periods of rapid industrial development and profound demographic change, has been largely a matter of chance (1992: 356).

Perhaps nowhere else in the United Kingdom is this observation most apparent than at Stonehenge (Figure 18a). Today, Stonehenge stands in a sheep paddock criss-crossed with fences and hemmed in by two major roads, the A303 and the A344 (Figure 18b), while the stone circle of Avebury is enclosed within a village dating back to Saxon times, and like Stonehenge, is surrounded by roads and traffic. In 1993, the British Parliament's House of Commons Public Accounts Committee described the situation at Stonehenge as 'a national disgrace'. Responding to political outcry and public concern, the 2000 Stonehenge World

Heritage Site Management Plan outlines a strategy to “conserve and manage the site for future generations” (English Heritage website 2006). Known as the ‘Stonehenge Project’, this program of remedial action will “rescue this iconic World Heritage Site from the noise and clutter of the twenty-first century and give it the dignified setting it deserves” (The Stonehenge Project website 2006). The ‘restoration’ of Stonehenge will remove existing roads, return ploughed fields to a “green and pleasant landscape” of open grassland, recreate the conditions for improved biodiversity and a “wide variety of wildlife”, and ‘reunite’ Stonehenge and its surrounding monuments in their ‘natural’ chalk downland landscape setting (The Stonehenge Project website 2006). In restoring Stonehenge to its ‘splendid isolation’, the Stonehenge Project aims to recreate the ceremonial landscape of the Neolithic era, thus enabling visitors to “fully appreciate Stonehenge’s dramatic landscape setting” (English Heritage website 2006). This restoration process will also erase much of the previous human activities and achievements that have shaped and formed the landscape we see today. With an emphasis upon pure and original forms as a measure of authenticity, it is apparent that these elements of the past do not constitute a heritage worth protecting or preserving for future generations. The proposed interventions at Stonehenge reflect a growing trend in the production of heritage where experts and agencies attempt to rectify the errors of the past. Increasingly, visitors travel to World Heritage sites to experience a heritage production that is actually better than “the historical actuality it represents” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 8). As we see with the example of the Historic Centre of Macau, and many other listed properties where heritage realism is produced, tourists can now travel to an actual destination and experience the virtual place of a colonial past.

In official texts the colonial encounter in Macau is presented as a sanitised series of rich cultural exchanges and productive trade interactions. Government tourist literature specifically identifies the so-called ‘intangible’ outcomes of this “spontaneous blend of different cultures” (ICOMOS 2005a: 61) as ‘religious tolerance’, ‘cuisine which is a fusion of culinary traditions’, and the development of the Creole language *Macquista*. There is no suggestion in any of the interpretive material produced by the Macau Government Tourist Office that the arrival of the Portuguese, and the ensuing colonial experience in the ‘City of the Name of God in China’, involved acts of atrocities, religious persecution, or the usual forms of oppression associated with the expansion of the Portuguese sea-borne empire in other parts of Asia (Boxer 1969), such as Goa and Malacca, referred to in the nomination documents as ‘relevant sites of comparison’. As Boxer points out, ‘religious conversion’ in the Asian outposts of the Portuguese empire was often at the point of a sword, or when not involving physical violence, certainly involved “discriminatory and coercive measures” (1969: 68).

This silence about some of the less picturesque forms of colonial impact is also evident in a number of UNESCO-sponsored publications on ‘cultural landscapes’. Once again ‘colonial cultural heritage’ is reduced to “chapels and churches” (Mujica 2003: 85), and is thus not regarded as one of the ‘challenges of conservation’. Or, alternatively, it is not even mentioned at all (Droste *et al.* 1995). As Hernández Llosas points out, the ‘church and chapel’ view of heritage in places like Latin America and Asia not only restricts our reading of the legacy of colonialism, but it also serves to elevate this period as “the local past, history and heritage” (2004: 148). Elements of this process are evident in the way that history and heritage are construed in the Historic Centre of Macau. While the A-Ma Temple is acknowledged in the nomination document and tourist brochures as existing prior to the arrival of the Portuguese, in the official history of the Historic Centre of Macau, Chinese culture is portrayed as taking a historical back seat to the monumental achievements of the colonists, until at least the onset of the twentieth century (see ICOMOS 2005a: 59).

This last point once again brings us back to the questions of “what is heritage all about... [and] whose heritage is it?” (Hernández Llosas 2004: 148). As some commentators on the politics of World Heritage have noted, “often the ways in which [a] community values the

place are different from the reason it is listed [for], and sometimes in conflict with it" (Sullivan 2004: 52). Sullivan presents the example of the World Heritage property of Angkor, where the 1992 listing and subsequent management plan ignored the social and contemporary values regarded as of great importance to the local community. Indeed, as Sullivan reports, listing of the property in terms of a 'past civilisation' denies the traditional and continuing links the local community has with the complex (see Sullivan 2004: 50, 52). Sullivan's comments highlight one of the other dualistic tensions associated with many World Heritage properties. That is, the relationship between universal and local values. All too often, as the examples cited here indicate, global culture displaces local culture. In the global diffusion of World Heritage-related values, the values local people attach to listed properties are either not acknowledged or are regarded as an obstacle to management. As the previously-cited examples of the Wet Tropics and Komodo National Park illustrate, the very nomination of an area for its natural values creates a space which necessarily excludes society and culture. Moreover, as the Military Fortress of Suomenlinna and the Historic Centre of Macau highlight, history is also effaced in this displacement of the local by the global. Not only is local history purged of its darker moments or even erased in this process, but it is also the case that the world's history is reconstructed and reworked to tell the international story of the World Heritage List.

HISTORIC CENTRES ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST: RESTORING AND REBUILDING WHAT?

In many World Heritage 'historic centres', such as Macau, where the past has been restored and preserved as an enclave of colourful, colonial buildings, the issue of exclusion relates to memory, the politics of forgetting and the creation of a collective amnesia. As the recent rebuilding of Dresden's Frauenkirche dramatically illustrates, the restoration of the built environment damaged as a result of war, or other acts of communal violence, can also be seen, somewhat paradoxically, as the destruction of memory. In the case of Frauenkirche, reduced to rubble by Allied bombers in early 1945, the post-war response to the issue of what to do with these ruins was quite varied. As Jacob points out, "East Germany's communist leaders were reluctant to restore a building identified with values contrary to their own" (2005: 18). Some local councillors wanted to remove the rubble to make way for offices and new public structures. Many in the community believed that it was "better to leave the ruins untouched [as] a lasting reminder of the terrible bombing raid" (*loc. cit.*). With the decision taken in 1990 to rebuild the church, financial contributions from Britain to assist the restoration work were seen by some as an attempt to efface the memory of the raids, while others saw the donations as a sign of reconciliation (Jacobs 2005: 18).

A similar situation to Dresden's Frauenkirche existed with the World Heritage-listed, Historic Town of Mostar, in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Most of the Historic Town and the old bridge of Stari Most were destroyed in the 1990 conflict. The bridge was recently rebuilt and many of the edifices in the old town have been restored or rebuilt with the contribution of an international scientific committee established by UNESCO. Like Dresden's Frauenkirche, the reconstruction of Mostar is heralded by some as a "symbol of reconciliation, international cooperation and of the coexistence of diverse cultural, ethnic and religious communities" (UNESCO World Heritage website).

The destruction of historic places and the desecration of sacred spaces are often seen as inevitable outcomes of war. For example, Liisa Malkki observes that throughout the 'mythico-historical' accounts of her Hutu informants, and in media reports of later violence in Burundi in 1993, there are numerous reports of violations to "the most holy and valued places" (1995: 292). The violence that Malkki records against these sacred and revered spaces is also reported in a number of the regional conflicts in Indonesia. In the first two weeks of the conflict in Maluku, for example, 23 mosques and 16 churches, including the

oldest church in Indonesia, were partially or totally destroyed (Pannell 2003). While in the former state of Yugoslavia, “sacred and beautiful places” were deliberately targeted with the intention of “removing them so completely as to erase the evidence that people of another religion or ethnicity had once lived in a particular place” (Woollacott 2001: 14).

In the literature on the anthropology of landscape or the ethnography of place, these kinds of dismembered places and distorted spaces barely rate a mention. However, the destruction and disfigurement of these places is not simply the result of wanton acts of vandalism or the inevitable collateral damage associated with a zone of conflict. Malkki makes a similar point when she argues that the techniques of killing and the bodily sites upon which violence is enacted are neither haphazard nor accidental. Rather, as Malkki demonstrates, highly elaborated techniques of cruelty are already “symbolically meaningful”, in much the same way that the convergence of violence upon specific places is already directed by certain “symbolic schemes” (1995: 92).

As a number of writers have commented, identity and history are often expressed in spatial terms. For example, Benedict Anderson’s work reveals how in the Netherlands East Indies ethno-typologies were often spatialised, so that people and place became immutably fixed in the emerging cartography of colonial knowledge of the other. This ‘grammar’ of ethnic-racial typologies, most apparent in the census, reached its denouement in the convergence of the census with the Mercatorian map. As Anderson remarks, “by a sort of demographic triangulation, the census filled in politically the formal topography of the map” (1991: 174).

In the entangled ‘ethnoscape’ (Appadurai 1990: 7) of difference enacted both in space and as space, it is easy to see how a person’s ethnic affiliation is readily understood in terms of an association with place, i.e. ‘Chinatown’. This is a point made by Neil Jarman (1993) in his discussion of the militarised landscape of Belfast. As Jarman remarks:

The violence that marked the beginning of the Troubles was expended on property as much as on people. Boundaries between differing faiths were reinforced by the firing of homes [...] Dereliction became the hallmark of the interfaces (1993: 111).

As the histories of Northern Ireland, the Former Republic of Yugoslavia, and the Middle East graphically demonstrate, the politics of identity and power articulates itself through space and is, primarily, about space. If this is the case, then one would expect that the listing of disfigured places might reveal something about these disparate histories and contradictory geographies of identity and difference. While war and conflict mark (some would say characterise) human history, the World Heritage Convention struggles to recognise the dehumanising and destructive nature of this heritage in its listing of the material sites of social meaning and memory.

Malkki refers to the imaginative labour of mapping social memory as ‘worldmaking’ (1995). She suggests that making the world in this manner often recasts identity and history. This ‘recasting’ is evident in the violence enacted upon spaces like Dresden’s Frauenkirche and Mostar. What once were holy venues or valued community places are replaced by disordered and disfigured spaces. Often, however, the erasures associated with this spatial disfigurement are in themselves transformative, reshaping old landscapes and creating new spaces. In the process, what once was sacred is rendered profane, and what might appear as mundane space is transformed into a sacred site. This complex process of spatial erasure and transformation is evident in Rwanda where, in the aftermath of the 1994 ‘genocide’, ordinary buildings physically deformed by the violence have become national memorials to the tens of thousands of people killed in or around them (Brittain 2001: 3). Thus, notwithstanding the apparent lack of physical form, the significance of these spaces continues to be remembered and recalled.

In the same way that Annette Weiner argues that there are some objects which are never exchanged because of their acknowledged capacity to authenticate cosmology (1992), then there are some places which, regardless of their disfigurement or, in some cases, complete obliteration, continue to be socially recognised as important loci for the convergence of memory and meaning. In other words, some places invite commentary and people tell stories about them. Again, similar to Weiner's 'inalienable possessions', these places are not isolated 'memory palaces' (Yates 1966). Rather, their uniqueness derives from those cultural traditions, which link these sites into a wider netscape of memory.

As these comments suggest, and as Paul Carter (1987) reminds us, space is not simply a backdrop or stage upon which significant events take place or are inscribed upon. Landscapes and places are implicated in dynamic social processes of memory-making and forgetting, as well as being one of the products of these ongoing processes. In Massey's terms, space is part of "an ever-shifting social geometry of power and signification" (1994: 3). This is brutally evident in places like Bosnia and Herzegovina which, to paraphrase Edward Said (1993: 7), can be regarded as 'geographies which struggle', disturbing the notion of space as somehow inherently fixed or settled.

Rather, than regarding these violated spaces or disfigured places as 'non-places' (cf. Augé 1995) or aesthetic blights on the landscape, readily shunned or removed in the first wave of rebuilding a community or creating a new nation, these 'troubled' spaces occupy an important place in the social consciousness of a people. As the Rwanda example suggests, the violations enacted on place not only stand as powerful memorials of violent events and histories but they can also give shape to ongoing social processes of reformation and reconciliation.

In light of the preceding discussion, we can ask the question, how does a society remember its past or configure its future? In the context of recent theatres of war in Europe, Africa, and Asia, this is not an academic question but is one, which has widespread social and political implications. In the post-war period in many of these war-torn places, with the emphasis upon reinstating fundamental amenities, such as health, water, sanitation, housing, etc., and redeveloping the built environment, this question takes on an added impetus.

In war-torn and transformed landscapes, identifying what constitutes the cultural heritage of a group or a nation is not an obvious or simple matter. The issue here is not purely a matter of determining how to memorialise a tragic past in spatial terms, though this is a significant consideration. Often, efforts to monumentalise events and experiences in this way understate the fact that social memories are conveyed and sustained through embodied, spatialised experiences. The issue here is how to preserve this progressive and engaged sense of place and, at the same time, recognise enduring commemorative spaces.

An examination of the World Heritage List reveals a notable lack of places and spaces associated with and defined by war and conflict. Indeed, as previously stated, spaces disfigured, even obliterated by war and conflict do not readily meet the criteria and conditions for 'outstanding universal value' under the World Heritage Convention. While such places may signify monumental events in world history, structurally they do not conform to the ideas of intact heritage defined by the Convention. The emphasis upon restoration as a means of maintaining the integrity and authenticity values of a site necessarily precludes the listing of many war-related properties, resulting in a situation where the World Heritage List practically ignores a significant dimension of human history and heritage.

AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE AND THE COLONIAL EXPERIENCE

The issue of recognising a 'heritage that hurts' (Uzzell and Ballantyne 1998) is one that many former colonies are still grappling with as they come to terms with and try to reconcile some of the more shameful episodes in their recent past. In Australia, for example, while the legal recognition of native title attempts to redress contemporary Aboriginal dispossession resulting from the colonial imposition of the concept of terra nullius, for the most part this colonial past remains a 'hidden history' (Bird Rose 1991). When Aboriginal cultures are acknowledged as part of the 'nation's heritage' or are recognised as World Heritage, it is not because they have somehow survived more than 200 years of European colonisation. Unlike Macau, there are few instances in Australia of restoring and preserving the architectural products of the encounter between Indigenous people and European colonists. Comparison with Macau and other former colonies inscribed on the World Heritage List has obvious implications for future nominations by the Government of Australia involving Indigenous cultural heritage. It is certainly time to rethink the relationship between heritage and the 'colonial experience' if we are to progress beyond the view of Australian colonial landscapes as a picturesque artistic legacy, epitomised by the Heidelberg School (Taylor 1995), or the presentation of colonial spaces as surviving 'palaces' of empire, as epitomised by the recently-listed (2004) Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens.

If Macau represents one of the first and longest-lasting interactions between East and West, then the introduction of the 'Reserve System' by colonial authorities in Queensland in 1896 can make similar claims in the history of Indigenous and colonial encounters. Ostensibly established to 'protect' Aborigines from European and Chinese settlers and the alleged debilitating moral influences of these two societies (Meston 1895: 24), the Queensland system was the first of its kind in Australia and variations of it were soon enacted in other states. So-called 'protection' entailed the mass and forced removal of Aboriginal people from their traditional homelands to one of the newly established settlements. Prior to the establishment of the Government's reserves, a number of church-run mission stations already existed, the first of these being set up in the 1870s in south-east Queensland (Department of Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement 1982). In the Wet Tropics region, Yarrabah⁵⁵ was established by the Church of England in 1892; Bloomfield River Mission was initially a government settlement established in 1886, but then taken over by the Lutheran Mission Council of South Australia in 1887; Mona Mona Mission was founded by the Seventh Day Adventist Church in 1913; while the government-run Hull River Aboriginal Settlement began operating in 1914 (loc. cit.). By 1948, 18 Aboriginal and Islander reserves, missions, and settlements had been established in North Queensland and on Cape York Peninsula alone (loc. cit.)⁵⁶. As previously mentioned, Yarrabah and Wujal Wujal (formerly Bloomfield River Mission), together with the Mona Mona Reserve, were incorporated into the boundaries of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area (DASETT 1987). While no longer reserves or missions, today Yarrabah and Wujal Wujal continue to support large Aboriginal communities, while Djabugay people are redeveloping the former mission site of Mona Mona.

Most Aboriginal people living in Queensland have some form of direct or mediated experience of the reserve system as part of what it meant to live under the Act in the nineteenth and twentieth century⁵⁷. Today, the architectural remains of the mission days at places like Yarrabah, Wujal Wujal and Mona Mona are salient reminders of the injustices of

⁵⁵ Yarrabah was formerly known as Cape Grafton and also as the 'Bellenden Ker Mission'.

⁵⁶ In the 1960s, Aboriginal Reserves were also established at Ravenshoe and Malanda in the Wet Tropics region.

⁵⁷ In its various manifestations, *The Aborigines Protection and Restriction of the Sale of Opium Act of 1897* controlled Aboriginal lives in Queensland until 1984 (Bottoms 1999: 87).

the reserve system and the determination of Aboriginal people to survive this regime⁵⁸. The Aboriginal memories and values accorded this experience and its physical expression are an integral dimension of the lived cultural landscapes of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

In 2000, the World Heritage Committee recommended for inscription on the List the 'Archaeological Landscape of the First Coffee Plantations in the Southeast of Cuba'. In doing so, the Committee recognised the "role of Indigenous people in delaying the establishment of plantations systems" (cited in Fowler 2003: 89) and further acknowledged "the sweat and blood of the African slaves who increased the wealth of their masters" (ICOMOS 2000: 73). The listing of this cultural property suggests that the physical remains of, and Aboriginal values ascribed to, the Queensland Reserve System for the 'protection, segregation and control' of Indigenous people could equally be recognised as evidence of the creation of a unique cultural landscape illustrating a significant stage in Aboriginal-European relations and throwing considerable light upon the cross-cultural history of the region.

The listing of the Cuban plantations represents a significant first step towards addressing the full extent of the legacy of colonialism on the World Heritage List. As my previous comments suggest, many of the historic centres inscribed on the List appear as heritage theme parks, where the colonial past is depicted as an inner sanctum of brightly coloured buildings. In attempting to bend a troubled cultural past into a seamless show of heritage, historic centres also manage to efface certain historic truths. There is some suggestion, however, that a cultural landscape perspective may explicitly recognise the full "history of a place and its cultural traditions" (cited in Fowler 2003: 56), and thus may also provide a more appropriate World Heritage vehicle for the inclusion of the horror and public tragedy often encountered on the "trail of social memory" (Schama 1995: 18). However, if the current repertoire of World Heritage-listed cultural landscapes is anything to go by, it would appear that the interpreters of the Convention are not ready, or prepared, to engage with this aspect of the world's history and heritage.

⁵⁸ Upon its closure in 1962, a number of the Mona Mona Mission houses were purchased by Aboriginal residents and relocated to the communities of Koah, Oak Forest, Kowrowa and Mantaka. Some of the mission buildings were sold to local farmers (Bottoms 1999: 80).

CHAPTER FIVE – ‘NATURAL’ CULTURAL LANDSCAPES: THE CASE OF VAL D’ORCIA, TUSCANY

There exist a great variety of Landscapes that are representative of the different regions of the world. Combined works of nature and humankind, they express a long and intimate relationship between peoples and their natural environment – ICOMOS, World Heritage Cultural Landscapes

Val d’Orcia in the province of Siena, Tuscany, is the most recently inscribed ‘cultural landscape’ on the World Heritage List. Val d’Orcia was originally nominated by the Italian Government on the basis of four cultural criteria (ii, iii, iv and vi). However, the placement of the valley formed by the Orcia River on the List in 2004 was eventually justified in terms of just two, (iv) and (vi), of the ten criteria outlined in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention for ‘outstanding universal value’. As such Val d’Orcia is described as an “exceptional reflection of the way landscape was rewritten in Renaissance times to reflect the ideals of good governance and to create an aesthetically pleasing picture” and as a landscape “celebrated by painters from Siennese School. In this last regard, the World Heritage inscription states that “images of the Val d’Orcia, and particularly depictions of landscapes where people are depicted as living in harmony with nature [...] have profoundly influenced the development of landscape thinking” (ICOMOS 2004: 136).

Val d’Orcia, together with a number of other World Heritage properties, including the ‘Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland’ (2000), the ‘Viñales Valley’ in Cuba (1999), the ‘Costiera Amalfitana’ and ‘Portovenere, Cinque Terre, and the Islands’ of Italy (both listed in 1997), the ‘Alto Douro Wine Region’ of Portugal (2001), and the ‘Loire Valley’ in France (2000), are all instances of ‘functional landscapes’ (Fowler 2003: 52). As ‘working agricultural landscapes’, which bring together “cultural and natural scenic values” (UNESCO World Heritage Centre website), these properties represent examples of the many agrarian-themed properties inscribed on the List. While these various properties are identified as outstanding examples of ‘wine-growing’, ‘tobacco-growing’, ‘stock-raising’, etc., to date there is no means of “rationally assessing in global terms [these properties] as agricultural landscapes in Europe” (Fowler 2003: 52). As Fowler points out, there is a “need for a thematic, comparative study of ‘ordinary’ agricultural landscapes” (loc. cit.).

The ‘agricultural’ landscape of Val d’Orcia consists of rolling hills above chalk plains. These plains are criss-crossed by cypress pine-lined avenues and are home to large elaborate farmhouses surrounded by fields of vines, olives and cereal crops (Figure 19). Out of this agricultural vista rise a number of conical hills, on top of which cluster fortified settlements (Figure 20). The larger hill-top settlements dating from the thirteenth century include Montalcino, Castiglion d’Orcia, Rocca d’Orcia, Minticchello, Radicofani, San Quirico d’Orcia and Pienza. The Historic Centre of the City of Pienza was World Heritage listed in 1996 as the first example of the Renaissance humanist concept of urban design.

The long history of human occupation of Val d’Orcia is evident in prehistoric archaeological remains. The valley also played an important role during the Etruscan period and in the development of the Roman Empire (ICOMOS 2004: 133). It appears that the region was abandoned agriculturally in the Middle Ages, however by the eleventh century the economy had revived and monasteries and villages were established in the area (ICOMOS 2004: 133). The rise of Sienna as a trading state in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries led to the expansion of its agricultural base. Val d’Orcia was colonised and the wealth of Siennese merchants was invested in turning the landscape “into productive farmland within an

innovative land tenure framework” (loc. cit.). Val d’Orcia was heralded as a “model of sustainable rural development” and paintings were commissioned to depict the life of ‘ordinary people’ in this landscape (loc. cit.). Val d’Orcia not only represented a prototype agricultural system, but it was also regarded as the incarnation of Renaissance ideas and aesthetics about ‘landscape beauty’ or *bel paesaggio*.

This ideal landscape was immortalised in Ambrogio Lorenzetti’s 1338-1339 fresco ‘Allegory of Good Government: the Effects of Good Government in the City and the Country’, extending over three of the walls inside the Town Hall (‘Palazzo Pubblico’) of Siena. As Frederick Hartt observes, the artist “wanted to bring in the entire territory, off to a distant horizon, in order to display the agricultural prosperity of the [Siennese] Republic” (1970: 93). In the vista of unfolding fortified hills and farms, peasants are depicted tending vines and harvesting grains. This bucolic country scene contrasts with Lorenzetti’s detailed depiction of the city streets, alleys and squares of Sienna, which forms the other focal point in this artistic portrayal of the allegories of ‘good and bad government’. In contrasting the city and the countryside, Lorenzetti depicts “the hard-won harmony between man and nature which makes not only the landscape of Italy but the art [...] different from any other in the world” (Hartt 1970: 11). As Hartt points out, Italian art of this period focused upon civic life which was “surrounded by a natural world which man is constantly trying to dominate” (ibid: 12). As Hartt concludes, prior to this particular depiction of city and country:

No such comprehensive panorama of the natural world and its human inhabitants is known to us from the entire previous history of art, and certainly nothing so ambitious was ever attempted later, save by the painters of purely informative historical decorative panoramas in the sixteenth century (1970: 91).

Indeed, the artistic tradition of landscape painting did not fully develop in Europe until the 1500s and early 1600s⁵⁹.

THE EUROPEAN TRADITION OF LANDSCAPE

The art historian, Walter S. Gibson, identifies “the most important and influential landscape tradition” (1989: xx) as originating in Antwerp in the early 1500s. This tradition is referred to as ‘world landscape’ (*Weltlandschaften*) and is distinguished by the representation of multiple viewpoints (or put another way, a lack of a one-point perspective), which firmly establishes its affiliation with the tradition of cartography. According to Gibson, landscape “could not exist as an independent category in art until it had been accepted as such by the public”(1989: xviii). In Europe, prior to 1500, landscape served as a backdrop for human figures and their activities. After 1500, it is possible to plot the emergence of autonomous landscapes – landscapes devoid of humans. Although in the case of the landscape traditions associated with Antwerp and Venice, human figures still featured, however, their relationship with the setting was reversed, with the landscape itself dominating the overall effect of the painting.

In the European context, there is a strong allegiance and overlap between landscape and map. Gibson (1989) links the rising popularity of landscapes with European voyaging and expansionism in the 1500s and concomitant improvements in cartography. Hand in hand with these developments, is a growing public enchantment with maps and globes as both a means of vicarious travel and, given the pictorial composition of many maps, as forms of wall decoration.

⁵⁹ Claude Lorraine (1604/05-1682) is often described as the ‘first great master of European landscape painting’.

The relationship posited between maps and landscapes approximates the Ptolemaic connection between geography, the representation of the 'whole known world' (Gibson 1989: 52) and chorography, which emphasises limited sections of the world or regions⁶⁰. Thus, regional maps were described as *landschaffen* or 'shaped lands' (Haber 1995: 38) and their production constituted an exercise in chorography. It would seem that prior to the late 1400s, there is no single term to describe pictorial representations of natural scenery. The term landscape came into use at this time as a way of designating the details, which made up the background of a painting⁶¹.

The perceived affinity between landscapes and maps is also captured in the word 'landscape' itself. Gibson informs us that in many European languages, the term signifies "a province, a district or, more generally, any extensive area of land" (1989: 53). As Haber points out, "the term 'landscape' combines 'land' with a word of ancient Germanic origin, the verb 'scapjan'" (1995: 38). In the evolution of Germanic languages, 'scapjan' became 'schaffen' though it still retained its original meaning, 'to shape' (Haber 1995: 38). As Haber observes, this shaping of the land was largely regarded as the outcome of "natural agents or forces" (1995: 38), and thus landscapes were seen as 'natural vistas' in their own right or were presented as a 'natural' backdrop to fore-grounded human activities.

The concept of landscape we are familiar with today is of landscape as a pictorial subject matter rather than as a geographical region. However, the regional connotation of the word landscape still persists in terms of the scope or prospect of the subject matter. Although the concept of landscape has been unhooked for some time from its original art associations (see Bender 1995; Hirsch and O'Hanlon 1995), there is still a dominant view of landscape as an inscribed surface, akin to a map or a text, from which cultural meaning and social forms can simply be read.

Susan Kuchler refers to the view of landscape as inscribed or associated surface as the "landscape of memory", wherein memories (or meanings) are somehow captured in or represented by the form of visual landmarks. Kuchler points out that in this view, the idea of landscape is not "affected by the project of its representation and remembrance" (1995: 104). Kuchler contrasts this view of landscape as the encoding of memory and meaning with the notion of "landscape as memory" (1995: 85). In this perspective, landscape is implicated in both the dynamic and interactive social processes of memory-making as well as being one of the products of these ongoing processes.

The historian Paul Carter is another scholar who takes issue with the idea of space as a backdrop or stage upon which significant events, such as European discovery or an Indigenous 'Dreamtime' take place. Similarly, Carter is critical of a view, which presents physical surroundings as merely this. As Carter points out in his book 'The Road to Botany Bay', what is symbolised is not 'the physical country' *per se* but "the enactment of [an already] historical space" (1987: 349). In other words, references to such things as physical country can only be made by means of the cultural representations of those things. Carter draws our attention to the importance of realising that a landscape, whether Indigenous or European, signifies more than just another way of representing or symbolising geographical entities or natural surroundings. Indeed, representation constitutes just one facet of people's

⁶⁰ The Dutch concept of *landschap* originally referred to a small area of land, which was viewed as an inset of a much larger region or context. The concept of chorography emerged as a way of representing and talking about this form of confined perspective. In this respect, *landschap* coincides with the German meaning of the word *Landschaft* (see Bender 1995: 2).

⁶¹ Gibson (1989: 53) records that it was common practice in contracts between artists and their patrons for a detailed inventory to be drawn up which referred to all of the elements, which would be incorporated into the final painting.

interaction with and experience of their environment. In many ways, the relationship of landscape to geographical object is akin to the distinction that art historian, Kenneth Clark, makes between nude and naked in art. To summarise Clark's argument, the nude in art is the naked human body clothed in culture (1956).

The work of Kuchler, Bender and Carter point to the idea of landscape as both an immanent and emergent cultural construct, which is informed by and, in turn, shapes historical experiences and social relations. Put another way, landscapes can be regarded as both the objects and effects of specific discourses. If landscapes are created by humans, then they are also contested, disputed and at times denied by them. In this sense, the idea of landscape can be regarded as a "concept of high tension" (Inglis 1977), often enacted at the interstices of history, politics and society. The extent to which the current World Heritage listed 'cultural landscapes' recognise this tension and identify it as a value worth protecting is quite debateable. Indeed, it is clear that the so-called 'cultural landscapes' recognised under the Convention to date conform with the sanitised and non-threatening heritage that characterises the many other cultural properties on the List.

WORLD HERITAGE CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

Since 1992, the World Heritage Convention's 'Operational Guidelines' have recognised the category of 'cultural landscapes' for inscription on the World Heritage List. By the end of 2002, 30 of the 563 World Heritage cultural properties had been listed as 'official' cultural landscapes. However, in a report on World Heritage cultural landscapes, Fowler argues that this number does not accurately reflect the fact that more than "one hundred cultural landscapes actually exist on the current World Heritage List" (2003: 7). These cultural landscapes haven't been formally recognised or renominated to date⁶².

Broadly speaking, the Convention defines cultural landscapes as properties that "represent the combined work of nature and of man" (UNESCO 2005a: 83). More specifically, cultural landscapes are defined in terms of three main categories, namely:

- (i) "a landscape designed and created intentionally by man";
- (ii) An "organically evolved landscape", which may be a "relict (or fossil) landscape" or a "continuing landscape"; and
- (iii) An "associative cultural landscape", which may be valued because of the "religious, artistic or cultural associations of the natural element" (UNESCO 2005a: 84).

Examples of World Heritage cultural landscapes include the religious landscape of Vat Phou in Laos, the pilgrimage landscape of the Kii Mountain Range, Japan, the vineyard cultural landscape of the Alto Douro Wine Region, Portugal, the archaeological landscape of the First Coffee Plantations in the Southeast of Cuba, the regal landscape of Ambohimanga, Madagascar, the industrial landscape of Blaenavon in the United Kingdom, and, of course, the artistic and aesthetic landscape of Val d'Orcia, Italy.

As these few examples indicate, the associations of a cultural landscape can be quite diverse, and many of the listed landscapes possess characteristics of more than one of the World Heritage landscape categories. Furthermore, the diverse nature of the cultural landscapes listed suggests that the concept itself, as defined in the Operational Guidelines

⁶² Interestingly, Fowler does not include the Wet Tropics in his 'wider view' of cultural landscapes on the World Heritage List, even though the official nomination documents for this area stated that: *The wet tropics of North-East Australia preserves the only recognised extant Aboriginal rainforest culture and is therefore a major component of the cultural record of an Aboriginal society which has a long continuous history in the nominated area for at least 40,000 years (DASETT 1987: 19).*

for the World Heritage Convention, can accommodate a range of cultural understandings and values, and not just European ones at that. This said, of the thirty cultural landscapes listed by the end of 2002, more than half of these (eighteen) were listed as 'category 2b landscapes' – as 'continuing landscapes' which retain "an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life, and in which the evolutionary process is still in progress" (UNESCO 2005a: 84). While properties are nominated in terms of one or more of the three main World Heritage landscape categories, cultural landscapes are also assessed and inscribed on the basis of the six 'cultural heritage' criteria⁶³, which apply to all potential World Heritage sites.

In Australia, only one World Heritage property, Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park, is listed as an 'official' World Heritage cultural landscape. Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park was renominated in 1994 as an 'associative' cultural landscape with attributes, which comply with World Heritage criterion (v) and (vi) for the assessment of outstanding universal value⁶⁴. Central to the significance of this 'associative cultural landscape' is the Indigenous philosophy of *Tjukurpa* (or the 'Law') and the 'ancestral heroes', which are regarded by *Anangu* (Aboriginal) Traditional Owners as giving form and meaning to the natural and social environment.

Associative cultural landscapes, like Uluru Kata Tjuta, make up a small percentage of the overall number of listed cultural landscapes. For example, as of 2002, only seven properties were what could be considered 'numinous inscriptions' (Fowler 2003: 28) or category 3 (iii) 'associative' cultural landscapes. Fowler observes that category 3 landscapes, specifically based upon criterion (vi), are "used only rarely" by nominating state parties. He further states that the already inscribed cultural landscape of Tongariro in New Zealand "set such a high standard [...] that extreme care is being taken with further claimants" (2003: 28). As Fowler points out using examples of failed or deferred cases, not all nominated cultural landscapes are able to meet the World Heritage Committee's criteria of 'outstanding universal value' and the additional requirements of 'authenticity', 'integrity' and 'distinctiveness' (2003: 23-25).

Since 1994, nominated properties are also required to take into account UNESCO's 'Global Strategy for a Balanced, Representative and Credible World Heritage List'. In part, this strategy represents an attempt to address the under-representation of 'living cultures' and 'traditional cultures' on the World Heritage List. Indeed, as Lennon points out, of the 690 properties on the List at the beginning of 2001, only seven were specifically listed for their Indigenous values, with four of these being in Australia (Lennon *et al.* 2003: 31)⁶⁵.

It could also be argued that the under-representation noted in the 'Global Strategy' reflects the way in which culture and heritage are regarded by different state parties, as well as indicating something about the politics and economics of heritage nomination and listing⁶⁶.

⁶³ Previously these six criteria were identified as 'cultural heritage' criteria and formerly presented as a separate criteria set, distinct from the four natural heritage criteria set. The 2005 Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention merge the ten criteria (UNESCO 2005a: 19).

⁶⁴ "(v) be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change; (vi) be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance" (UNESCO 2005a: 20).

⁶⁵ The four Australian properties are Kakadu National Park, Tasmanian Wilderness, Willandra Lakes Region and Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park (Lennon *et al.* 2001: 27).

⁶⁶ While there are 122 nation-state signatories to the World Heritage Convention (Lennon *et al.* 2001: 31), it is apparent from looking at sessions of the World Heritage Committee that issues of state party autonomy and resourcing also inform nominations.

Indeed, Fowler concludes that the concept of 'cultural landscape', as a mechanism for inscribing World Heritage sites of a 'non-monumental nature', "has not in fact so far been realised" (2003: 45).

This said, Aboriginal Traditional Owners of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area have long advocated that the area in question be renominated as a cultural landscape or as a series of integrated cultural landscapes. Preliminary research undertaken by Titchen (1995) and Horsfall (2002) suggests that the Wet Tropics could be renominated as either a 'continuing' (category 2b) or an 'associative' cultural landscape (category 3). It may also be possible to identify specific sites within this landscape(s) as having 'outstanding universal significance' on the basis of the six 'cultural heritage' criteria recognised under the Convention. As Lennon *et al.* point out, these sites could be seen as representing "selected concentrations of meaning or significance in a wider intellectual and cultural landscape context" (2001: 14).

VAL D'ORCIA RECONSIDERED

Given the historical associations of landscape, the concept of 'cultural landscapes' is both oxymoronic and, at the same time, insightful. In the artistic tradition of the concept, landscapes depicted 'natural' vistas and settings devoid of humans. Even those spaces, both intentionally and subtly 'shaped' by human action and intervention were rendered 'natural' in these pictorial depictions. This is apparent in Lorenzetti's depiction of country and city in the Siennese Republic. From the perspective of the city, the Tuscan countryside, including Val d'Orcia, constitutes a natural landscape. In this sense, Lorenzetti's contrasting images of country and city, nature and culture, resonate with contemporary constructions of the English countryside. As I discuss below, this particular view of nature, one in which nature is dominated by or harnessed to human achievement, is quite different from my previous discussions of nature as 'wilderness areas' or 'biodiversity-rich' regions.

Speaking of the construction of the Norfolk countryside, Charles Frake observes that 'man-made' features such as churches, villages and other objectively anthropogenic features of the landscape are readily identified as symbols of 'cultural heritage' (1996: 95). This part of the Norfolk countryside is regarded as a product of past activity that requires constant attention and intervention to "preserve and reconstruct what is valued in contemporary images of the past" (Frake 1996: 91). The values associated with this past are expressed in terms of antiquity, authenticity, distinctiveness, and continuity. In conforming to these images of the past, the built environment of churches, villages, bridges, towers and roads maintains the aesthetic qualities of the countryside. As Frake points out, the spaces between these ostensibly human products, including fields, hedges, dikes and the expanse of open water known as the 'Broad's', are unarguably part of a 'natural landscape', even though their 'actual' provenance may lie in "the hands of humans" (1995: 96).

And so it also seems to be the case in the world's latest 'cultural landscape' of Val d'Orcia. Similar to the aesthetics ascribed to the Norfolk countryside, the ICOMOS evaluation of this landscape emphasises continuity with past practices and the associated lack of change in this region. As stated in the Evaluation, the "comparative poverty and marginalisation of the area over the [last] four centuries has had the effect of sustaining traditional land-use patterns and structures" (ICOMOS 2004: 133). Indeed, these four centuries of neglect are identified as contributing to the "high degree of authenticity" of the valley landscape (ICOMOS 2004: 135). Val d'Orcia also appears to have been little affected by recent transformations to land management laws in Italy enacted since the 1960s (*loc. cit.*). Indeed, "the landscape seems to have created a strong cultural identity and people have chosen to remain on the land" (ICOMOS 2004: 132). As the ICOMOS evaluation concludes, the "landscape patterns have survived in the Val d'Orcia" (*ibid*: 133).

Acknowledging the well-preserved qualities of the landscape, the World Heritage-listing also required a degree of 'self-consciousness of culture' on the part of local communities in Val d'Orcia (cf. Sahlins 2000: 512). To some extent, this process was already under way prior to the 2005 listing, as more and more tourists from around the world flock to Tuscany to take in the 'rustico' ambience of the region. Certainly, the 1999 declaration of the valley as a Regional Park (*Parco Artistico Naturale e Culturale della Val d'Orcia*) served to identify and objectify local understandings of what passes as nature and culture in an increasingly interconnected world. For example, visitors can board the *Treno Natura* or 'Nature Train' to experience "breathtaking" views of the Tuscan countryside or they may opt to take one of several other identified 'itineraries'. As stated on the official Parco d'Orcia website, these itineraries take tourists "along ancient trails and through incomparable scenery, savouring the rich variety of flora to arrive in picturesque villages steeped in history and to meet the local people who are ready to welcome you to their corner of Tuscany". Judging by a tourist guide for the region written in the early 1900s, the construction of the Val d'Orcia countryside as 'natural' is not a recent phenomenon. In the words of the author of this tourist guide:

This valley...where ancient, verdant woodlands strewn with flint, stone and bronze axes bear witness to the first step taken by man; where the crumbling arches of a bridge recall the power of Rome; the castles the memory of feudal might, the "pieve" or parish churches the religious influence, in the 'grancie' the presence of the Hospitallers and everywhere the power of nature and the elements from the windblown treetops, to the pelting rain which overwhelms a village" (Fabio Bargagli Petrucci, cited on the Parco D'Orcia website, <http://www.parcodellavaldorcia.com>).

Apart from boarding the 'Nature Train', visitors can also participate in the international 'cultural' festival held each year at the hill-top, fortified town of Montalcino. Culture, in the context of the festival, is broadly identified in terms of food, music, theatre, dance, and art films, and more specifically, in terms of the region's iconic 'castles' (*castello*), 'plazas' (*piazza*), 'churches' (*chiesa*), and 'medieval towns' (*borgo*). As these extracts from the website for the Regional Park suggest, nature is synonymous with the rural countryside, while culture is evident in the artistic and architectural achievements perched above the surrounding *paesaggio*. As previously indicated, this contemporary construction of the Tuscan countryside traces its aesthetic ancestry to the artistic landscape traditions of the region. The presentation of cultural heritage in terms of monuments and old buildings also resonates with the values of 'Western heritage' and ideas about 'Western civilisation' (Sullivan 2004: 49) found throughout Europe, and it certainly conforms to the predominant view of cultural heritage preserved on the World Heritage List.

Notwithstanding this cultural heritage focus upon grand old buildings, Val d'Orcia is described as a 'living landscape' on the official Parco d'Orcia website, and this status is emphasised in the management plan for the Park. In this respect, the Plan identifies the:

[...] need to protect the natural and artistic heritage of the valley whilst guaranteeing an improvement in the local economy and the way of life of the people. At the same time it was necessary to achieve these intentions without turning the area into some sort of "museum" (Parco d'Orcia website <http://www.parcodellavaldorcia.com>).

The management regime for the region, together with Park regulations, thus limits extensive modern farming techniques. For example, new viticulture projects, regarded as incompatible

with the “traditional land-use pattern”, have been rejected by the Park authorities⁶⁷ (ICOMOS 2004: 135). Certainly, heritage tourism in the region promotes the ‘caught in time’ qualities the Park management plan strives to maintain. Tourism is focused upon *Agriturismo*, or ‘farmstays’, the commercialisation and promotion of ‘traditional’ agricultural products and handicrafts, and upon showcasing the tangible cultural heritage of the region. As Karen Thompson observes, ‘heritage products’ based upon the idea of ‘tradition’ or the ‘relics of former civilisations’ have “greater potential to generate revenue from international tourism” (2005: 100). In some instances, this particular emphasis upon the past may also be part of a locally driven, cultural renaissance.

Management also emphasises that “Val d’Orcia Artistic, Natural and Cultural Park is run by people who live and work in the area or are part of local administration” (<http://www.parcodellavaldorcia.com>). For the people who live and work in Val d’Orcia, the preserved ‘landscape patterns’ referred to in the World Heritage nomination and evaluation documents form the contours of their lived-in, day-to-day experience of this place as home (see Jackson 1995). While traditional artistic and contemporary tourism depictions suggest a landscape of confined cultural edifices surrounded by expanses of nature, it is the familiar and temporally enduring combination of these features as the source of “a comforting homely feel” (Ellen 1996: 11), which ultimately renders the entire countryside of Val d’Orcia as ‘natural’. It is this sense of being at home in a taken-for-granted world that largely informs the experience of naturalness and the local identification of this World Heritage ‘cultural landscape’ as ‘natural’.

The ‘organic’ values a community places upon its environment are not readily and sometimes not easily recognised in conventional heritage conservation frameworks. As Sharon Sullivan points out, these organic features and feelings “are often an unconscious part of [a] society’s values until they are challenged” (2004: 50). Even when challenged, it is not always the case that this intangible and often inarticulate sense of place is acknowledged as having heritage significance. While in some World Heritage properties, government officials and park administrators may place a “high value on ‘classical’ culture” and a “low value” on local culture (Black and Wall 2001: 132), the values cherished by a local group or community may not readily or wholly translate into those “elements assessed, analysed and certified by experts as having a certain degree of significance” (Sullivan 2004: 51). In the context of World Heritage, this process of translation, and its spatial articulation, is spoken of in terms of the “functionality and intelligibility” of a place or a landscape (UNESCO 2005: 84). It is a precondition for inclusion of a cultural landscape on the World Heritage List that the values of the nominated property can be delineated and made intelligible to others. As Layton and Titchen comment, some cultural landscapes are neither “susceptible to division into discrete areas”, nor are all of the values ascribed to them by the local community necessarily intelligible to outsiders (1995: 178).

Val d’Orcia appears to be one of those instances where the translation process is both incomplete and, to some extent, artificial. The inscription of the valley as a ‘cultural landscape’ over-rides the artistic traditions and contemporary expressions, which construe Val d’Orcia as both a natural and cultural space. The delineation of the entire region as a cultural space ignores historical and modern landscape aesthetics, where the “forms of man’s constructions and the spaces provided by geography seem to fit” (Hartt 1970: 11). Not as a homogenous cultural expanse, but one where hills are crowned with cities, villages, castles, churches and villas, surrounded by the Tuscan countryside. The countryside in this example is a ‘natural’ space ordered and made intelligible, however, in relation to the geo-political landscape of city-states, which emerged in the later part of Middle Ages (Hartt 1970:

⁶⁷ The Park of Val d’Orcia is managed by the five municipalities of Castiglione d’Orcia, Montalcino, Pienza, Radicofani and San Quirico d’Orcia, the Provincial Administration of Sienna, together with representatives of the private sector” (ICOMOS 2004: 134; <http://www.parcodellavaldorcia.com>).

12). From the point of view of a heritage expert, this mosaic of cultural centres and natural peripheries is the outcome of human actions and interventions over the span of hundreds if not thousands of years, and thus the entirety of this space constitutes a 'cultural landscape'.

While a number of heritage commentators welcomed the introduction of the World Heritage 'cultural landscape' concept insofar as it provided a means of acknowledging the intangible and "powerful religious, artistic or cultural associations of the natural element" (UNESCO 2005: 84), it is apparent that it is also a vehicle for the imposition of other people's values. In much the same way that the concept of art privileges western aesthetic sensibilities (see Price 1989), then it also seems to be the case that the operation of the Convention elevates certain cultural productions and aesthetic frameworks to the status of heritage worthy of international protection. One of the implications of this statement is that if the concept of World Heritage is to have any use whatsoever it requires the expansion of the notion of aesthetic experience beyond the cultural depth of field of heritage experts and Western heritage concepts, so as to acknowledge the aesthetic modalities of others. As illustrated by the case studies so far, some values are poorly recognised, while the World Heritage Committee appears to be unable to acknowledge other values altogether. This situation raises questions about the very function of World Heritage, and certainly necessitates a rethink of why list a property at all.

CHAPTER SIX – CONCLUSION: RECONCILING NATURE AND CULTURE?

Cultural heritage refers to monuments, groups of buildings and sites with historical, aesthetic, archaeological, scientific, ethnological or anthropological value. Natural heritage refers to outstanding physical, biological and geological formations, habitats of threatened species of animals and plants and areas with scientific, conservation or aesthetic value – UNESCO World Heritage Centre

In the opening paragraphs of this report, I prefaced my discussion of World Heritage with a reference to the Wet Tropics and the ongoing efforts of local Aboriginal people to renominate this area for its Indigenous cultural values. In the closing sections of this report, I would like to return to the issues surrounding the listing of the Wet Tropics as a means of highlighting some of the other lessons that can be learnt from the World Heritage List. Before returning to the Wet Tropics, let me allude to some of the lessons learnt from the List so far.

While the World Heritage List identifies properties in terms of their inscribed 'natural' and 'cultural' values, and the Convention's Operational Guidelines provide a set of criteria for assessing these values, it is apparent from an examination of a number of World Heritage sites that a range of ideas and understandings are expressed by reference to these two key concepts. Indeed, it is clear that what passes as nature, culture or heritage at the local level is not necessarily consistent with the meanings enshrined in and operationalised by the Convention. This conclusion is not so surprising, particularly given Marilyn Strathern's observation that:

[N]o single meaning can in fact be given to nature or culture in Western thought; there is no consistent dichotomy, only a matrix of contrasts" (1980: 177).

As illustrated by the World Heritage properties considered in this report, the Convention privileges particular constructions of nature and culture, and is used to promote certain interpretations of heritage and history. For many local people, the expression of this nexus of nature-culture-heritage-history often results in social marginalisation, spatial exclusion, temporal displacement and/or the replacement of their cultural values by globally sanctioned and officially sanitised ones.

In discussing the 'idea of nature-culture', Marilyn Strathern raises some interesting questions about the attribution of what is a product of a Western intellectual tradition to "the thought systems of other peoples" (1980: 176). Using the example of the Hagen people of Papua New Guinea, Strathern argues that often nature and culture cannot be "resolved into a single dichotomy" (ibid: 178). In a similar vein, she suggests that when speaking of other people's 'mental representations', nature and culture are not always the most appropriate extrapolations (loc. cit.). As Strathern concludes, "nature and culture do not exist in Hagen as categories" of order (1980: 218). Strathern's conclusions certainly question the universality of the idea of nature-culture, the necessary delineation of these concepts as binary opposites in Western thought, and the ready association of this dualism with gender distinctions. In this latter regard, the proposition that nature is to culture as female is to male is reminiscent of, and is obviously fed by, the perennial nature versus nurture argument. As this reference to old, but ongoing debates suggests, the nature-culture paradigm is not only widespread but is also quite resilient.

In her critique of the nature, culture, gender equation, Carol MacCormack points to the shifting meaning of nature and its varied doctrinal associations at different points in history.

Like Marilyn Strathern, she also warns social scientists against universalising our own cultural categories, “thus rendering ourselves deaf to alternative ways of structuring the world” (1980: 21).

With the lessons of the Wet Tropics and Komodo National Park ringing in our ears, where local people are either collapsed into nature or excluded from it, MacCormack’s cautionary comments lead us to ask the question: is there a way out of, or around, the nature-culture paradigm? Perhaps, the answer to this question can be found in statements made by Aboriginal people in North Queensland.

“NO DIFFERENCE, THEY BOTH TOGETHER, NATURE AND CULTURE”

If Hageners have no concept of nature and culture, then it appears that the Traditional Owners of the Wet Tropics make no distinction between nature and culture. A common observation made by Aboriginal people in this region is that there is “no difference, they both together, nature and culture”. Djabugay elder, Rhonda Brim, is referring here to the layer of symbolism and meaning absent from the current listing of the Wet Tropics for its natural values. In situations like the wet tropical rainforests of north-east Queensland, the cultural presence of hunter-gatherer people who “exploit the natural environment in a sustainable way”, have “minimal material culture” and largely “non-monumental lifestyles” (Fowler 2003: 56) is not always apparent to Western ways of looking and thinking about forest landscapes. Yet, as Fowler remarks, the statement that “‘there is nothing there’ is in effect an inconceivable conclusion to expect from a serious examination of any area of land” (loc. cit.). The history of protected area gazettal and management in Australia, whether national parks or World Heritage properties, certainly points to a perceptual (and obvious political) inability to see culture in nature (Smyth 2001), whether Indigenous or Anglo-Australian cultures. As Anna Tsing (2003) points out, the scientific construction of nature, authorised by claims to objectivity and neutrality, readily conceals the operation of Western cultural frameworks, as well as those of minority groups.

For Rainforest Aboriginal people, like the Anangu Traditional Owners of Uluru Kata Tjuta, the idea of ‘nature’ as an autonomous domain separated from culture is an anathema to their beliefs. As Rhonda Brim observes, “that’s whiteman identifying and dividing nature and culture. When we look at the World Heritage area we don’t just see trees, we see bush tucker, we don’t just see rainforest, we see our home, our traditional country.”

For Djabugay people, like other Rainforest Aboriginal people, their traditional responsibility to care for *bulmba* (‘country’) derives from the charter of *Bulurru* or the ‘Law’, established in the ‘Dreamtime’ and subsequently, transmitted from generation to generation of Djabugay people (Duffin and Brim n.d.). In the words of two Djabugay women:

All things come from Bulurru – the sun, the moon and stars, the food we eat, the creatures of the world, the plants and trees, the rain, the very land itself. We ourselves come from Bulurru. Bulurru is the good spirit that protects life and Law (Duffin and Brim n.d.: 5).

As these comments indicate, *Bulurru* is acknowledged as the source of all life forms, natural phenomena, social customs, subsistence practices, and cultural knowledge, which comprise and inform the world inhabited by Djabugay people. In this sense, *Bulurru* provides Djabugay people with their “plan of life”, as the anthropologist, W. E. H. Stanner, once described the role of the Dreaming in Aboriginal society (Stanner 1963: 10).

For the Traditional Owners of the Wet Tropics, country is regarded as a conscious entity that generates and responds to their actions. As a counterpoint to conservationist views of

wilderness as uninhabited spaces, Deborah Bird Rose speaks of country as “a living entity with a yesterday, today and tomorrow, with a consciousness and a will towards life” (1996: 7-8). This is a part of what Traditional Owners mean when they speak of a “living” cultural landscape.

Judging by the actions of the Australian Government and the World Heritage Committee, however, it seems that non-Aboriginal people interpret statements about ‘living landscapes’ and the togetherness of nature and culture to mean that Indigenous people are ‘one with nature’ in an evolutionary display of ecological relicts. This is certainly not the outcome intended by Traditional Owners in the lead up to the nomination of the wet tropical rainforests. While not entirely rejecting the proposition that Aboriginal people are ‘one with nature’, Traditional Owners are not, on the other hand, advocating for their inclusion within some supra-category of culture, although their push for the renomination of the Wet Tropics as a cultural landscape could easily be read in these terms. What is clear, however, is that the Indigenous idea of ‘no difference between nature and culture’ is often invoked by Aboriginal people to signal a history of cultural difference.

Aboriginal cultural self-representations both challenge and embrace the commonly held view of culture as fixed, uniform and unchanging. As Cowan and her colleagues point out, Indigenous people’s appropriation of essentialist views of culture often joins together “an interest in cultural renaissance with the political constraints of a society willing to recognize claims on the basis of cultural authenticity and tradition” (2001: 42). While presenting culture in these terms may be politically effective in certain contexts, in other situations it may deny the interactive and inventive nature of Aboriginal social constructs and actions. As Lisa Meekison points out, the ‘boomerang-throwing’ image of Aboriginal culture “tends to reinforce what non-Indigenous people think about Indigenous people rather than what the latter think about themselves” (2000: 11). While there is no denying the fact that Aboriginal cultural identities are often turned into marketable commodities for tourist consumption or reduced to stereotypical images in the media, contemporary Indigenous representations and forms of communication point to more dynamic and innovative processes at work. Appropriating new technologies and drawing upon the inter-connectedness offered by an increasingly globalised world, these new cultural forms are often used to revivify “local languages, traditions and histories, and [articulate] community identity and concerns” (Ginsburg 2000: 30). In this sense we see how Aboriginal traditions can serve as both “a means and measure of innovation” (Sahlins 2000: 512).

In light of these comments, we can conclude, along with Arjun Appadurai (1996: 12-13), that it is perhaps more useful to think of culture as a “heuristic device” to talk about difference, than to focus upon the noun form of culture, so often regarded as an object, thing or substance. Rather than trying to define what culture or nature is or is not, a more interesting exercise involves looking at the “relationship between the word and the world” (Appadurai 1996: 51). Put another way, the invocation of culture and nature is a far more interesting area of investigation than its definition.

In the post-listing period, it is clear that nature and culture constitute the small-arms fire in the struggle by Traditional Owners to renominate the World Heritage Area as a “living [Indigenous] cultural landscape” (WTMA 2005: 1). As evident in the opening sections of this report, this is also a struggle about the “appropriation of symbols, a struggle over how the past and present shall be understood and labelled, a struggle to identify causes and assess blame, a contentious effort to give partisan meaning to local history” (Scott 1985: xvii). In the often lively exchanges which characterise this struggle, it is apparent that nature and culture are also key terms in the discourse and practices associated with the day-to-day management of the two World Heritage areas in North Queensland, namely, the Wet Tropics and the Great Barrier Reef. For example, nature and culture form influential terms of reference among the internationally recognised members of the science community, who

provide research and advice to the government agencies and statutory bodies responsible for 'managing' the two World Heritage areas. In the world of 'research providers' and 'end users', nature is variously depicted as a 'public environmental asset', defined as 'ecosystem goods and services', or spoken about in terms of 'biodiversity'. Using the current hybrid lexicon resulting from the marriage of economic rationalism and industry-responsive science, scientists speak of this nature as devoid of humans and clearly separated from culture (see Dwyer 1996). Nature and culture also constitute the key conceptual components in the multi-million dollar regional tourism economy, where industry activities in the two world heritage areas are depicted as 'nature-based tourism' by the peak bodies, the Alliance for Sustainable Tourism and the Queensland Tourism Industry Corporation. Contrary to Dwyer's observation that "Westerners know it [nature] is an invention, an artefact" (1996: 157), in North Queensland nature is regarded as having a rock-solid reality.

Given the pervasiveness of the nature-culture discourse, and its varied use by both Aboriginal and Anglo-Australians as a lingua franca in regional discussions and debates, it is difficult to see a way out of, or around, the paradigm, at least in Australia that is. Indeed, if the efforts of the Traditional Owners of the Wet Tropics in lobbying the Government of Australia to proceed with the renomination of the World Heritage area are anything to go by, it would appear that some sectors of the regional community don't see the nature-culture idea as such an obstacle to their aspirations. In the final section of this report, I briefly explore what it might mean to be defined as part of a 'cultural landscape' under the auspices of the World Heritage Convention.

CAUGHT IN CULTURE: MORE LESSONS FROM THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST

In Australia, Uluru Kata Tjuṯa National Park, listed as an 'associative cultural landscape', is often cited as an exemplary model of the possibilities and practicalities of managing a 'living cultural landscape'. As Lennon points out, however, "[W]orld Heritage associative cultural landscapes have special needs for strategies and actions to maintain the traditional associations which give the place its outstanding universal values" (2003: 123). Maintaining these associative values thus entails maintaining the cultural associations and cultural well-being of the group(s) whose values have been inscribed on the World Heritage List. Failure to recognise the very different management requirements of associative cultural landscapes may result in the placement of the landscape on the World Heritage in Danger List, or the reclassification of the property as a relict landscape (*loc. cit.*). Perhaps, more disturbing than these scenarios of heritage demotion is the fate of those groups or people who, by association, are similarly classified as 'relict' or 'in danger'.

While this reference to the bureaucratic reshuffling of World Heritage properties and categories appears innocent enough, reclassification opens up new spaces for the old practices of social engineering. For example, concern about the incidence of petrol sniffing among young Aboriginal people, and the possible negative impact of this activity on the viability of the World Heritage-listed values of Uluru Kata Tjuṯa National Park derived from Anangu 'oral history' and 'traditional knowledge', has led to the development of a number of targeted youth education programs to address this 'problem'. In keeping the associative and continuing values of this World Heritage property "strong", Anangu are "assisted" by Parks Australia, the Australian Government's federal environmental agency (Calma and Liddle 2003). Given its history of European colonisation, government control, and the 1985 lease-back arrangement to the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service, in Uluru Kata Tjuṯa National Park, like so many other World Heritage properties, it is clear that the local community does not set its own agenda. This point was recently brought home to the Aboriginal Traditional Owners and residents of the Park. As reported in the national media, the closure of the Park in May 2001 for 'sorry business' (i.e. the death of an Aboriginal elder)

'ignited a row' that involved national politicians, the Northern Territory Government, local and international tourism operators, and regional Aboriginal organisations. The 2001 closure highlighted the conflict that exists between satisfying the demands of a multi-million dollar tourism industry and maintaining the listed Indigenous cultural values of the National Park. The 2001 closure of the Park, together with previous closures for ceremonial 'business', alerts us to the fact that some cultural values and activities are often seen as unacceptable or unintelligible to a wider audience⁶⁸. It is also apparent here that not all forms of culture are compatible with the World Heritage ideal and management of culture, in the same way that some forms of nature don't easily fit within the definition of outstanding natural properties under the Convention. In Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park, for the 200,000 visitors each year, cultural heritage is a performance consumed by way of 'guided bush tucker tours', 'sacred site walks' or multi-media presentations at the Park's 'cultural centre'. For Anangu living in the community of Mutijulu, located within the National Park but off-limits to Park visitors, these highly orchestrated and public forms of heritage performance are not a part of what passes as culture for them on a day-to-day basis (pers. com. Daniel Vachon).

For Indigenous people and minority groups, World Heritage listing of their traditional estates as a cultural landscape raises serious issues about the relationship between local autonomy and global intervention. As the example of Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park illustrates, for some groups and peoples maintaining World Heritage-listed landscape values may involve creating new opportunities for the transmission of traditional skills and knowledge or revitalising customary cultural activities. In either situation, effective management of an associative cultural landscape will need to address those social problems and economic pressures, which impact upon the cultural viability of the group. This issue of cultural viability, accentuated by the growing realisation that the way of life of many Indigenous people is "now under severe threat", begs the question as to whether "preserving" small, essentially non-Westernised Indigenous populations in their 'natural' habitats is the proper business of those implementing the World Heritage Convention" (Fowler 2003: 56). This is a pertinent question, particularly given the historical fact that many of the state parties to the Convention have woefully neglected their fiduciary duty to their Indigenous citizens. This question also highlights the fact that ultimately the protection of cultural landscapes, heritage and values pivots upon the sustainable involvement of, and support for, those groups and communities who are the traditional custodians of the cultural values expressed in the landscape. With this acknowledgment comes the realisation that the production and protection of heritage, whether natural or cultural, is a highly politicised process that often has very stultifying effects.

All too often under the auspices of the World Heritage Convention, cultural landscapes and natural properties are depicted as living ethnographic displays or zoological exhibits, disturbingly reminiscent of nineteenth-century museological traditions. The many cultural

⁶⁸ In an interesting twist to the issue of intelligibility, the Federal Court of Australia found in March 2006 that a group of Aboriginal Native Title Applicants, many of whom were identified in the 1979 *Uluru (Ayers Rock) National Park and Lake Amadeus / Luritja Land Claim* under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976* and in the 1985 'handback' of Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park as 'traditional Aboriginal owners', did not acknowledge and observe the laws and customs of Western Desert Aboriginal people at sovereignty (FCA 2006: 2). In other words, many of the Indigenous cultural values inscribed on the World Heritage List with the renomination of Uluru Kata Tjuta in 1994, are not, according to Sackville J, the 'traditional' laws and customs of the Western Desert bloc. While the Australian Government's renomination document describes the establishment of "contemporary Anangu culture" some 5,000 years ago (1994: 15) and states that the landscape of Uluru Kata Tjuta is the "outcome of millennia of management using traditional Anangu methods governed by the *Tjukurpa* (the Law) (ibid: 21), Sackville J concludes that the contemporary Anangu laws and customs of the Native Title Applicants are not related to those observed at sovereignty in the early 1820s (FCA 2006: 30). One wonders what will be the response of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee in light of the 'Jango' Native Title determination.

and visitor information centres, which form the locus for tourist visitations to World Heritage properties, unwittingly reproduce elements of these by-gone practices. For example, at the Kīlauea Visitor Centre and Jaggar Museum within the World Heritage listed Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, native Hawaiian people and their beliefs are presented in a timeless mythological space, while their material culture, confined to stone-axe quarries and petroglyphs, is located in a distant neolithic past. As depicted in the official Park brochure, 'Visiting Hawai'i Volcanoes', native Hawaiian history (and by inference, native Hawaiians themselves) "fade[s] away" with the arrival of Europeans in 1778. The use of native Hawaiian terms to describe some of the geological products of volcanism exemplifies the reification and temporal distancing of culture in this World Heritage property.

As this example indicates, in attempting to present people and their values as 'living' exemplars, readily intelligible to the viewing public, cultural heritage is often displayed as a staged performance or as an inanimate ethnographic spectacle. Yet, as Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett observes, "[w]hile it looks old, heritage is actually something new" (1998: 7). Despite the language of the World Heritage Convention, and its discursive focus upon protection, preservation, restoration, and regeneration, heritage is a "new mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past" *ibid*: 149). In this sense, World Heritage listing "gives buildings, precincts, and ways of life that are no longer viable for one reason or another a second life as exhibits of themselves" (*ibid*: 150). Stamped with the imprimatur of World Heritage, listed monuments, historic centres, so-called 'natural' spaces, and 'cultural landscapes' become museums of themselves within a heritage tourism economy.

... AND THE FINAL LESSON FROM THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST

As these comments suggest, the creation of new spaces is inimical to the production of World Heritage. These 'glocal' spaces both enshrine and enact the conjuncture of the global and the local. More than this, however, World Heritage branding invariably establishes the local as a destination product consumed by a primed global tourist market. In the context of the multi-billion dollar business of World Heritage tourism, the production of 'glocality' is also about the production of difference, and it is here that the Convention's cornerstone-concepts of nature and culture are given localised form and meaning. In the dialectics of the global and the local, it could be argued that listing signifies the end point of the process in which local history is gradually beaten into something called 'World Heritage' within the nature-culture crucible offered by the Convention.

In creating World Heritage, the Convention also creates, in many ways, a world without borders. As a highly organised global response to the myriad of local challenges facing the world's heritage, the Convention forms part of the new architecture of global governance. Through international treaties and policies of conservation and protection, such as the World Heritage Convention, "whole territories are now outside state authority" (Mbembe 2001: 50), as the political, economic and cultural sovereignty of nation-states is eroded in the post-Cold War 'new world order'. In this sense, UNESCO and its World Heritage 'mission' represents one of the many strategies, agencies and powerful interests that fall under the rubric of globalisation. While there is much talk about the impacts and anxieties created by the juggernaut of globalisation (see Appadurai 2001), perhaps the final lesson to be learnt from the World Heritage List is about the fragility and inconclusiveness of such world-making projects. As the case studies illustrate, World Heritage – as both a global concept and, for some, an imposed process – is subject to negotiation, opposition and a range of accommodations at the local level. In North Queensland, Aboriginal groups resist the imposition of 'universal' natural values, while in Komodo National Park, a soon-to-be-established Community Consultative Council will provide local people with a government-endorsed say in the new management and eco-tourism arrangements for the Park. In Macau and Helsinki, historic centres and monuments resonate with the cultural specificities

of the local community, while in Val d'Orcia World Heritage status takes a back seat to the local experience of place as being at home-in-the-world. These and many other World Heritage properties represent "new sources of hope" (Tsing 2001: 188) and ongoing challenges to the manufacture of history and heritage on a global scale.

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