Post-Conflict Heritage, Postcolonial Tourism

Culture, politics and development at Angkor

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To an enduring spirit, and the faith inherited…

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Abbreviations

ACO	Angkor Conservation Office
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
APSARA	Authority for the Protection and Safeguarding of the Angkor Region – (Autorité pour la sauvegarde et l'aménagement de la region d'Angkor)
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BEFEO	Bulletin d'Ecole Française d'Extrême Orient
CARERE	Cambodia Area Rehabilitation and Regeneration Project
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CGDK	Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea
CMAC	Cambodian Mine Action Center
CPK	Communist Party of Kampuchea
CPP	Cambodian Peoples' Party
CSA	Chinese Team for Safeguarding Angkor
EFEO	École française d'Extrême Orient
EMR	Extended Metropolitan Region
DK	Democratic Kampuchea
FUNCINPEC	Front Uni National pour un Cambodge Indépendant, Neutre, Pacifique, et Coopératif
GACP	German Apsara Conservation Project
ICC	International Coordinating Committee for the Safeguarding and Development of Angkor
ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
ICORC	International Committee on the Reconstruction of Cambodia
IGeS	Ingegneria Geotechnica e Strutturale
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JICA	Japanese International Co-operation Agency
JSA	Japanese Government Team for Safeguarding Angkor
MOD	Ministry of Development

MOT	Ministry of Tourism
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPRD	National Program to Rehabilitate and Develop Cambodia
PDK	Party of Democratic Kampuchea
PPA	Paris Peace Accords
PRK	People's Republic of Kampuchea
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
SCNC	Supreme Council on National Culture
SNC	Supreme National Council
SOC	State of Cambodia
UN	United Nations
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
WMF	World Monuments Fund
WTO	World Tourism Organization
ZEMP	Zoning and Environment Management Plan

Figure A Map of Cambodia. (Copyright Kathyrn Sund.)

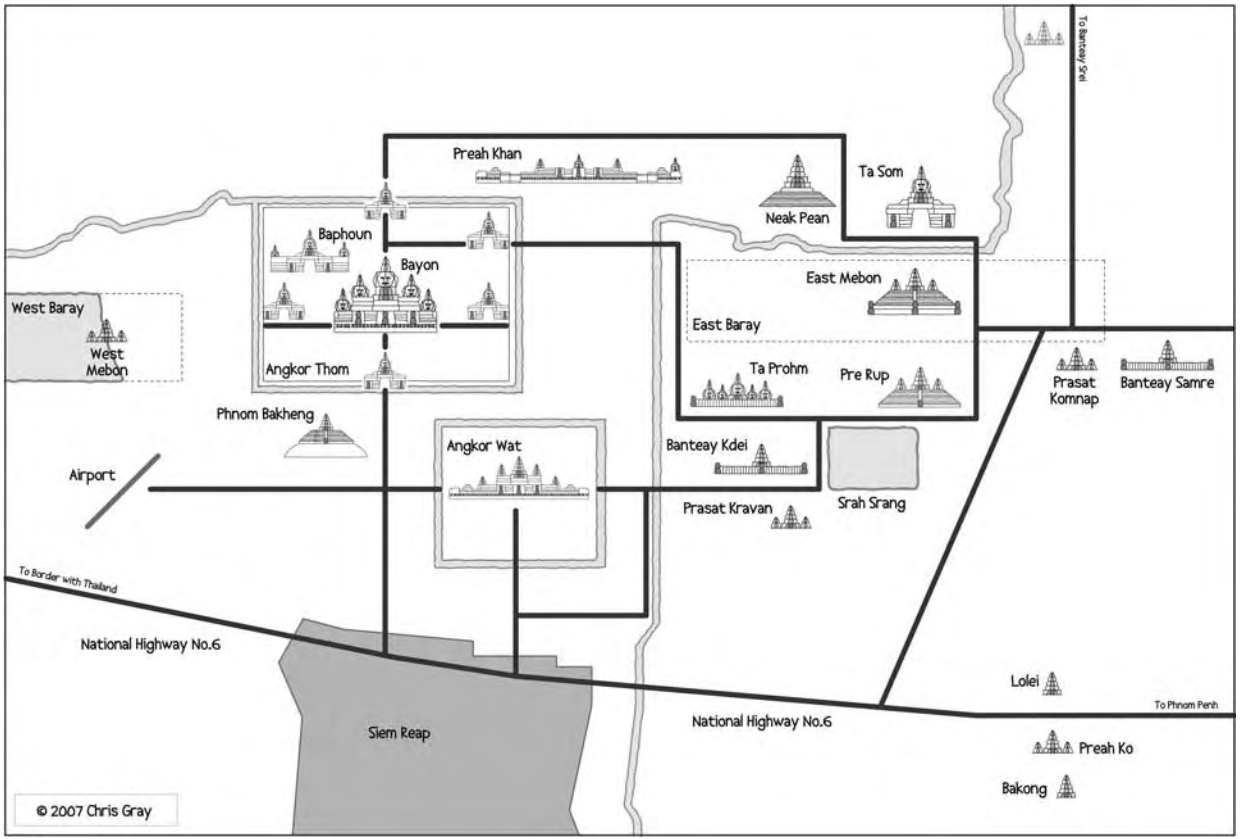

Figure B Map of Angkor.

All profound changes in consciousness, by their very nature, bring with them uncharacteristic amnesias. Out of such oblivions, in specific historical circumstances, spring narratives.

Benedict Anderson

From the moment it entered global consciousness Cambodia was spectacle.

Anthony Barnett

Landscape is a signifying system through which the social is reproduced and transformed, explored and structured.

Chris Tilley

In Angkor – a geographical region, an archaeological site and a cultural concept – lies much of Cambodia's future.

UNESCO

George (*75, American, trip to Thailand and Cambodia for 7 days*): Oh I came to see Angkor, it was nothing to do with Cambodia. It was like Machu Picchu or Timbuktu, it's one of those places everyone's heard about but never been, that's the attraction. To go to Thailand, yeah, but to Angkor Wat? That's the frosting on the cake, out of the jungle, ancient civilization, just how many of our friends have been here? Not many.

Michael (*40, British, traveling across Asia for six months*): We saw a program on Angkor just before we went away and the image was predominantly of you as the explorer, the archaeologist going through these completely unexplored temples, these magical mystical temples, of you exploring something that hasn't been discovered before … you have this idea that it was not 'touristy' at all. You arrive at this temple, you're Indiana Jones exploring this place.

Chum (*40s, Cambodian, Samroun district, day visitor*): I am very happy to see these temples restored. It keeps it for our next generation, it will help stop them being damaged by touching. People touching does not make me angry, but I know it is not good for the country, we may lose our heritage. I want to see these temples restored for my children to see.

Jennifer (*64, American, on 7 day tour of Thailand and Cambodia*): For me it is all ruins and the world's largest monastery, but I hope we can see them, are they not all covered up in vines? I hope you can see something and that it's not all covered in vines. I hope we can see the buildings.

Barry (*33, Australian, visiting Southeast Asia for 1 month*): We knew it was mystical, that it was hard to get to. I had the idea that all of Cambodia was dense jungle, and that would be from American war movies.

Tasos (*28, Greek, living in Singapore, in Cambodia for 3 days*): Angkor is a place that is a very, very vivid remnant of the past. It puts you in another place, another time.

Meng (*30s, Cambodian Resident of Siem Reap*): Angkor Wat is a symbol and creation of Khmer culture, a symbol of national culture. That is why it is important for me, and why it is important for me to come here.

Barton (*30s, Canadian, lives in Singapore, in Cambodia for 3 days*): Cambodia is all about landmines, Pol Pot and that America dropped millions of bombs on the country. Do I feel guilt as a North American, partly, but more like compassion really.

1 From a time of conflict to conflicting times

> Today, all around the country you see mass graves and ruined structures; the latter are the result not of neglect but of a conscious, coordinated campaign by the Khmer Rouge to smash the country's pre-revolutionary culture. And you see underpopulated towns and cities whose inhabitants are only slowly emerging from a nightmare that claimed the lives of their parents, spouses, siblings and children.[1]

Taken from the opening page of the Introduction to the 1992 *Cambodia Lonely Planet*, this excerpt provides some indication of what a visitor to Cambodia might find. These few lines also reveal why the publisher of what has become the bible of contemporary travel waited until then to publish a guide dedicated to the country. Indeed, in many respects, the publication of this first edition marked the beginning of Cambodia's return as a major destination of international tourism; a turbulent journey which would bring numerous contradictions, paradoxes and dilemmas. By the late 1960s Cambodia had become increasingly familiar with the challenges and opportunities presented by tourism. Two and a half decades of war and intense social turmoil virtually erased that familiarity. In the early 1990s the country would be starting again, and, as such, totally unprepared for the frenzy of international attention – and millions of visitors – which would arrive over the coming years.

Despite having so much of its physical infrastructure destroyed by decades of armed conflict, as well as its social institutions shattered by devastating periods of genocide and foreign occupation, Cambodia was about to witness an explosion in tourism unparalleled in any other country in recent times. Far from national in scope, this infant industry would focus overwhelmingly on the spectacular temple complex of Angkor. After decades of trauma, and with the country heavily dependent on international aid, reconciliation, cultural rejuvenation and economic rehabilitation were urgent and simultaneous demands. Located at the heart of this matrix, Angkor would witness an intense and fractious convergence between agendas of cultural preservation and socio-economic development. The situation was especially severe due to the country's need to restore a national identity severely damaged by prolonged conflict, the immense scale of the past to which that identity adheres and the dependence of the state on the revenue of tourism.

As a result, Angkor is enduring one of the most crucial, turbulent periods in its 1200-year history. Its immense historical importance, along with its global prestige, has led to an influx of international assistance, with more than twenty countries – including France, Japan, China, India, America, Germany, Italy, and Australia – donating millions of dollars to help restore and safeguard the temples. While such efforts have prioritized architectural restoration and archaeological research, the number of international tourists visiting the site has risen by a staggering 10,000 percent in just over a decade. Not surprisingly, the Royal Government has paid far greater attention to this growth in tourism, with Angkor now regarded as a 'cash cow' of much needed socio-economic development and wealth generation for a country plagued by shattered physical and social infrastructures. In such a context, culture, history, and local communities have become entwined in an elaborate set of political, economic, and social relations.

This book takes a critical look at this evolving situation. It explores conceptions of culture and development, the politics of space, and the relationship between consumption, memory and identity to illustrate the intense battleground which has formed around Angkor since it became a World Heritage Site in 1992. I locate heritage and tourism within their broader political and socio-economic contexts, both historical and contemporary, to reveal the aspirations and tensions, anxieties and paradoxical agendas, which have emerged due to the lure of the tourist dollar and the need to prevent the rampant destruction that the dollar and its bearers might bring. The situation in Cambodia today is a stark example of a phenomenon common to many countries attempting to recover after periods of conflict or political turmoil. Heritage and cultural tourism are widely regarded by host governments and international bodies like the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) or the World Tourism Organization (WTO) as effective tools for protecting past histories, whilst simultaneously providing the economic fuel for societal modernization (Meethan 2001). In essence, tourism looks in both directions: it restores and promotes the past while promising future prosperity.

By addressing such issues at Angkor the book sets out to place cultural heritage and tourism in the foreground of debates concerning post-conflict nation building, postcolonial cultural politics, and the socio-spatial changes brought about by contemporary globalization. The immense scale and complexity of the Angkor region also brings into sharp focus the challenges facing countless heritage landscapes around the world today as they attempt to marry a series of interconnected agendas: development with conservation; national sovereignty with global patrimony; modernization with tradition; responsible governance with democratic ownership; and cultural values with economic value. A recurrent theme of academic studies on tourism and heritage has been the analytically elusive relationship between the discursive nature of the tourism industry, the ways in which tourists actually encounter landscapes, and how such processes come to shape the development of destinations. Recent years have seen increasingly sophisticated accounts in this area, and by exploring consumption in terms of various symbolic economies and

the materialities of touristic performances, this book seeks to add clarity to these debates.

I argue that scholars of tourism and heritage need to pay greater attention to the cultural politics of development and postcolonial theory than they have done previously. An analysis of Cambodia, I believe, provides valuable insights for countries such as Iraq, Afghanistan or Rwanda which face similar challenges of marrying agendas of cultural restitution and modernization in their quest to recover from eras of war and social instability. Finally, this text joins the literature on contemporary Southeast Asia, a field which includes a limited number of works on Cambodia. Since the late 1970s two antithetical histories have received much attention: the ancient glories of Angkorean splendor and the horrors of the modern Khmer Rouge regime. By focusing on issues such as cultural politics and regional re-integration, it is hoped this book can offer a perspective that challenges some of the misconceptions, even clichés, about the country which continue to linger.

Years of turmoil

Situated at the heart of mainland Southeast Asia, Cambodia covers an area of just over 180,000 square kilometers. It is bordered by Thailand to the west and northwest, by Vietnam to the east and southeast, by Lao People's Democratic Republic to the north, and by the Gulf of Thailand to the south. Largely made up of plains, the country's topography also includes low mountain ranges in the southwest and north, and Southeast Asia's largest freshwater lake, the Tonle Sap. At the beginning of the 1990s Cambodia was a 'transitional society' in every sense, to use Curtis's terms (1998). The country would move 'from a centrally planned economic system to a market oriented one … from a war economy to a peace economy, and from a poor and underdeveloped economy to a more prosperous and developed one' (Tith 1998: 102).

Cambodia's turmoil began in the late 1960s through its involvement in the Vietnam–America war, in what Shawcross (1993) famously dubbed as the conflict's 'Sideshow'. As North Vietnamese communist forces moved southwest into Cambodia the US responded by launching a series of devastating bombing campaigns that penetrated further and further into the country. Frustrated by Norodom Sihanouk's alliances with Beijing and Moscow, Washington supported the overthrow of Cambodia's Prime Minister by military coup in 1970. As eastern provinces increasingly fell under communist control the country became further embroiled in the conflict (Kiernan 2004). The death toll grew to the hundreds of thousands, with a similar number of internally displaced refugees fleeing to escape the conflict. For those Cambodians with the political and/or financial means to leave, many sought refuge in France, and to a lesser extent the US. Global media coverage produced both expressions of sympathy for the Cambodian people, as well as visions of the country as the political 'other' of western democracy and capitalism – an image which would be subsequently reinforced by the isolationalist policies of the Khmer Rouge regime.

On 17 April 1975, paralyzed by years of US bombing and domestic turmoil, Cambodia experienced the start of one of the most radical and brutal social experiments ever inflicted upon a nation. Saloth Sar, latterly known as Pol Pot, promised to 'liberate' the country from the tyranny of both Vietnamese and American intervention. Through his revolutionist ideology Pol Pot would set about replacing previous post-independence modernization programs – seen as corrupt, elitist and urban-centric – with an agrarian-based economy. Within a matter of weeks all major cities and towns were evacuated, with their residents forced to become agricultural workers in the countryside. Although bearing a number of similarities with Maoist and Marxist-Leninist doctrines, Pol Pot's utopian vision recognized no precedents. As Chandler (1996a) asserts, it was revolutionary in every sense. According to Kiernan (1996) the issue of race would be central to the regime. In the quest for Khmer purity, the removal of 'those of foreign origin, education, or employment' resulted in the execution of tens of thousands of non-Khmers (ibid: 27).

Anonymous at first, it was not until September 1976 that the Communist Party of Kampuchea (CPK) declared themselves as leaders of a new Democratic Kampuchea (DK). By then however, a fresh constitution had already been promulgated abolishing all religious practices, private property and even the most basic human rights (Chandler 1996a). The imposed ideology of collectivist production and consumption rapidly began to unravel, and with failing harvests and increasing foreign hostilities came ever greater levels of brutality. By 1977 killings across the country were vast and largely indiscriminate. Fears of potential 'pollution' from contact with the neighboring Vietnamese meant the country's eastern provinces suffered the highest numbers of murders (Etchison 2005).[2] In Phnom Penh, an infamous facility with the code name S-21, now known as Tuol Sleng, incarcerated, tortured and sentenced to death over 14,000 victims accused of threatening the security of the party centre (Chandler 2000).

Lasting until early 1979, this horrific episode in Cambodia's history finally ended with the arrival of over 100,000 Vietnamese troops. On January 7, 1979 Phnom Penh was once again liberated as Pol Pot fled westwards by helicopter. While the Khmer Rouge regrouped as a jungle guerrilla army in Thailand, a new government formed in Phnom Penh calling itself the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK). This experiment lasting just under four years in which it is now estimated over one and a half million people died, or one in seven of the population, had finally come to an end.

In addition to new hope, 1980 brought an improved harvest and the reintroduction of money. In a complex political landscape however, various power struggles were being waged across the country, with Hanoi pulling the strings of the PRK government in Phnom Penh (Chandler 1996b). Factions fiercely dedicated to communist ideals were embattled with parties led by former Khmer Rouge defectors, as well as an anti-Vietnamese coalition which somewhat farcically realigned Sihanouk with an unrepentant Pol Pot.

As the 1980s progressed a political and military stalemate would set in with Hanoi and Moscow locked against the Chinese and Western supporters of the

Cambodian resistance (Gottesman 2003). With virtually no humanitarian aid reaching an impoverished population, Cambodia was essentially locked into a struggle which had 'become simultaneously a civil war, a regional war, and a great-power proxy war' (Brown and Timberman 1998: 16). In such circumstances, a gratitude for liberation initially held by many Cambodians was gradually replaced by a resentment towards the Vietnamese as an occupying power.

In 1989, starved of funds by the collapse of the Soviet Union, Vietnamese troops were forced to withdraw from the country. Despite the ongoing presence of numerous factions, the State of Cambodia (SOC) party administered about 90 percent of the territory, enabling it to restore Buddhism as the state religion, as well as introduce a new national anthem, flag, and constitution for the country. The ongoing re-population of Phnom Penh after the enforced evacuations of 1975 was largely driven by the desperate situation in the countryside, with physical and mental illnesses, black markets, smuggling and widespread poverty all remaining prevalent (Chandler 1996a). Headquartered along the Thai border in the mountainous southwest of the country, and funded by cross-border gem and timber trading, the Khmer Rouge – now known as the Party of Democratic Kampuchea (PDK) – continued to be the most powerful group fighting the SOC.[3]

Nonetheless, the end of the cold war provided the opportunity for unlocking Cambodia's political stalemate. In 1991, the Paris Peace Accords (PPA) attempted to broker a resolution to decades of civil conflict through the creation of a temporary coalition prior to forthcoming elections. To oversee this transition the United Nations implemented its largest and most expensive peacekeeping operation to date, involving around 40,000 personnel, at a cost of over $2 billion. The United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia, or UNTAC as it became known, was charged with the task of creating an environment of conciliation and compromise, essential for open and fair elections. UNTAC's meticulous planning ensured 95 percent of those deemed eligible to vote were registered for the 1993 elections (Brown and Timberman 1998: 19).

Although passing off peacefully, the election could only produce a compromise dual government, made up of the royalist *Front Uni National pour un Cambodge Indépendant, Neutre, Pacifique, et Coopératif* (FUNCINPEC) party, led by Norodom Ranariddh, and the Cambodian People's Party (CPP), led by the former Khmer Rouge defector Hun Sen. In the ensuing power struggle, FUNCINPEC had little control over the military forces, police or civil administration. Somewhat predictably, this fragile democracy would unravel some years later with the ousting of Ranariddh by a violent CPP coup in 1997.

Rebuilding Cambodia

Together with $880 million of aid pledged during the inaugural meeting of the International Committee on the Reconstruction of Cambodia (ICORC), the UNTAC-sponsored elections represented an attempt to kick-start major reforms and a process of transition. In 1993, with 85 percent of the population living in rural communities, agriculture accounted for more than 50 percent of the country's

gross domestic product (GDP) (Quintyn & Zamaróczy 1998). Export manufacturing industries were virtually nonexistent and the limited economic growth at that time was principally fuelled by UNTAC's effects on the service and construction industries, the vast majority of which centered on Phnom Penh (Shawcross 1994, Ledgerwood 1998). Nonetheless, the prospect of macro-economic stability – something Cambodia had been denied for over two and a half decades – provided the country with the opportunity to make far reaching, and desperately needed, reforms in 'the context of one of the lowest levels of per capita income in the world'. (Ministry of Planning 2003: 5).

Writing in 1994, Shawcross described Cambodia at that time as 'still a semi-feudal country, a place of bargaining, survival, and lawlessness … [with] … no independent legal system, no central authority, no tolerance, no concept of human rights or of loyal opposition' (1994: 2). He also argued that the military and a disproportionately high civil service, a legacy of the command economy established in the 1980s, required major reforms at every level. The Cambodian army, for example, bulged with 2000 generals and 10,000 colonels (Shawcross 1994: 90). The demobilization of these forces, whether they be real or corruption-driven fictitious creations, would be vital to the reconciliation process.

Throughout the 1980s the Soviet Union had funded much of the country's state expenditures. Major reform came in 1994 with the implementation of an International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank three-year structural adjustment program. Cambodia's re-emergence onto the international stage after nearly two decades of isolation would be driven by market liberalization and its geo-political realignment towards a western international donor audience (Hughes 2003). Indeed, the reconstruction of Cambodia's physical and social infrastructure was dependent upon a huge influx of foreign aid. In lieu of an effective state, a broader civil society was installed comprised of bi-lateral donors, multi-lateral banks, and numerous non-governmental organizations. In addition to the US$2.2 billion provided by the international community for the UNTAC operation, a further US$2.3 billion was pledged for the period of 1992–5 alone (with around 61 percent of that total, US$1.39 billion, actually being disbursed).[4]

Efforts to shift from a socialist-style authoritarianism to multi-party democracy in a few short years would, however, be greatly hindered by the absence of any recognizable legal infrastructure. In a country without lawyers or an independent judiciary abuses by the executive branch of government were widespread (Donovan 1993). Not surprisingly, systemic corruption spiraled with the swift transition to a dollar economy and the presence of a multi-billion dollar aid industry (Kamm 1998).

Private appropriation of public office had a major impact on efforts to rebuild Cambodia's shattered physical infrastructure. While the value of real estate in Phnom Penh rocketed, hospitals, universities, schools, airports, water and power supplies all desperately needed reconstructing, a task made considerably worse by the isolation of many provinces from Phnom Penh. Throughout the country hospitals were inundated with patients suffering from a multitude of physical and

psychological disorders including malaria, dengue fever or post-war trauma, but had no doctors to treat them; and schools located in communities where 50 percent of the population were under the age of 15 and essentially illiterate, were deprived of any teachers to educate. Migration, both in and out of the country, continued apace. While a number of those who had fled the country in the early 1970s returned to resurrect political or business interests, many skilled and wealthy individuals sought a better life elsewhere. One of the most pernicious legacies of the conflict was the silent threat posed by millions of landmines. In December 1993 only 19,000 of an estimated 10 million mines scattered across the countryside had been cleared (Shawcross 1994: 80). With around 300 Cambodians either killed or maimed each month during this period, their effect on agricultural production and rural communities was devastating (Chandler 1998).

In 1994 the first full-scale national development program was launched. The National Program to Rehabilitate and Develop Cambodia (NPRD) outlined six specific aims, which together encompassed the areas of law, education, healthcare, economic stability, rural development, and the sustainable use of natural resources. Given the immense political and socio-economic challenges facing the country, it was understandable that rehabilitation and development were defined in such physical and structural terms. Within this paradigm however, little attention was given to the more nebulous, and perhaps seemingly less urgent, need for the rehabilitation of the country's cultural and intellectual life.

Not least because of Pol Pot's brutal attempts to erase much of Cambodia's past, recent decades left a deep-seated anxiety over what actually constituted Cambodian, or Khmer, culture, identity and history. Long associations between ethnicity, conflict and aggressive nationalisms within the region also meant losing many of the socio-cultural markers defining 'Khmer' would be politically charged. Understood in its broadest sense, rehabilitation would therefore involve an intense desire to recover the past, and, unsurprisingly, reclaim former glories. In this respect Cambodia at that time can be characterized as an extreme example of the duality familiar to modernity, whereby the desire to embrace the future is accompanied by nostalgic gazes towards forgotten pasts. As we have already seen, in the early 1990s Cambodia was replacing an imposed socialist ideology with free market capitalism. The future was about regional re-integration and embracing the multitude of cultural and economic flows that process would bring. Contemporaneously however, there was an intense looking back beyond the turmoil of two decades; a gaze dominated by a desire to reclaim those elements of Khmer society and culture which had been lost, or were often perceived to be lost. Despite suffering vandalism, theft and a limited amount of structural damage, Angkor had come through relatively unscathed. It was widely accepted that the same could not be said for the other facets of Cambodia's cultural landscape, such as the performance or literary arts, which suffered profoundly. The restoration of ancient temples would thus be deeply imbued with a sense of reconnecting contemporary society with its ancient past, and as such, restoring national pride, strength and identity. Encapsulated within a discourse of genocidal 'erasure', the landscape of Cambodian culture was now seen by many as a *tabula rasa*, and

as such open to political manipulation. Crucially, and as this book will extensively illustrate, the political matrix of an internally embattled state buttressed by networks of international aid and trans-national capitalism would hold major implications for how the restoration of Cambodia's past would unfold over the coming years.

An additional factor shaping this milieu was the virtual absence of a Cambodian intellectual elite. Although a small number of academics and scholars returned to the country after the Paris Peace Accords, there was virtually no 'public sphere' for them to contribute to, or dialogue with. In his study of Cambodian Buddhism Harris illustrates how the religion came 'close to extinction' under the Pol Pot regime, with 'little more than a handful' of influential monks surviving the period (2005: 229). His account also reveals that, despite being reinstated as the state religion in the September 1993 constitution, Buddhist monks continued to suffer violence and political marginalization in their quest to restore their institutional structures.

After 23 years of civil war and decline, trust and confidence in the country's institutions had to be re-built. Politics had to be transformed from jungle conflict and guerrilla tactics into non-violent discussion. Abject poverty needed to be replaced with sustained and stable economic growth. And a sense of cultural and political sovereignty needed to be reclaimed – an immense challenge in itself given the lack of skilled human resources and influx of foreign aid and intervention at that time. Embarking upon such roads, early 1990s Cambodia was now a place of optimism, hope, and progress. One of the sites where these aspirations and various challenges converged most intensely was the templed landscape of Angkor.

In December 1992 Angkor was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In recognition of Cambodia's plight, the site was also added to the List of World Heritage in Danger. The recent past had left the country with a vacuum of expertise in monumental conservation, archaeology, and tourism development. In response to this situation, UNESCO assisted in the establishment of a cultural heritage management policy for the country. This resulted in the creation of the Supreme Council on National Culture (SCNC), and the complementary International Coordinating Committee for the Safeguarding and Development of Angkor (ICC).

The return of peace meant the site emerged as one of the most important assets for a government desperately needing to undertake a nationwide, sustained program of socio-economic development. Typically described as one of the 'cultural highlights' of Southeast Asia, the temples of Angkor were the principle, if not sole, attraction Cambodia could offer in a highly competitive regional tourism industry. In 1993 around 9000 international tourists visited the site. Just over a decade later this figure would rise to over 900,000, an increase of over 10,000 percent. Yet, in that same period, the tourist numbers visiting the northeast of the country rose only by a few thousand. Moreover, Khmer Rouge strongholds, together with widespread unexploded ordinance and shattered social and physical infrastructures would all ensure a number of provinces in the west and north remained inaccessible until the beginning of the twenty-first century.

'Call this a holiday?'; a rough guide to Angkor

Covering an area of just over 400 square kilometers in the northwest of the country, the World Heritage Site of Angkor is comprised of four main elements: tropical forest, areas of cultivated land, a number of rural communities, and some of the most spectacular architectural structures ever created. Dozens of elaborately carved temples are testimony to what was historically Southeast Asia's most powerful and expansive kingdom (see Figure B) – a territory which, at its height, stretched from central Laos in the north to central Thailand in the south, and from the Mekong delta in the west to the borders of Pagan in the east.

In Angkor Wat, the Angkorean period has also given us the largest religious building on the planet. Unlike the Egyptian pyramids, Khmer architecture combined immense scale with intricate ornamental detail. As a result, itineraries incorporating Angkor Wat and the site's other temple complexes of Ta Prohm, Preah Khan, Bayon, Banteay Kdei, Banteay Srei, Ta Keo, Ta Som, Neak Pean and the Roulos group to name a few, come with the risk of 'temple fatigue'. Eyes inevitably glaze over from the thousands upon thousands of intricately carved deities; ears eventually close to the seemingly endless tales of myths, legends and the unpronounceable names of rulers; and legs invariably give way from the struggle of dozens of incomprehensibly steep staircases baked by the tropical sun.

To give clients a respite from their bodily fatigue and the sensory overload of temple-filled itineraries, local tour guides often arrange for visits to some of the region's other major features, including the great lake Tonle Sap and nearby Kulen mountains: both of which are pivotal in the story of Angkor's history. With water came an abundant supply of fish and a vast flood plain for rice cultivation, whereas the nearby mountains to the north provided the stone required for construction. Nestled in between these two essential resources, Angkor stretched and shifted across the region's flat plains.

The immense amount of architecture available to scholars and researchers of the modern era has meant stone has been consistently regarded as the key for unlocking the secrets of Cambodia's past. Since the beginning of the twentieth century Cambodian historiography has been principally oriented around, and framed by, the temples of Angkor and beyond, and the stories of their creators. Piecing together such histories has made a vital contribution to our understanding of Southeast Asian history and provided a rich tapestry of knowledge concerning the Angkorean period and the centuries either side. Decades of laborious and rigorous scholarship in the fields of epigraphy, archaeology and architectural conservation have given us a detailed – yet still far from exhaustive – account of Angkor's rulers, their shifting religious affiliations, major battles and population changes. The account of the Chinese envoy Zhou Daguan, who visited Angkor in 1296, also depicted some of the details and richness of everyday life. Chapter 2 examines this historiography in greater detail, arguing that a dependence on stone has, however, also created major historical black holes, over-simplifications and various unresolved points of conjecture.

It is commonly accepted today that the Angkorean period lasted from 802 to 1431 CE. Prior to this period the region was made up of various, non-centralized chiefdoms. Battles and subjugation, alliances and break-aways, were the defining features of an era which also included extensive cultural and political influences from India. The ubiquitous imagery of Shiva, Vishnu and Buddha, along with the widespread use of Sanskrit, led early scholars to explain the origins of Angkor principally in terms of an earlier 'Indianisation process' (Vickery 1998). More recently, however, greater attention has been given to an emergent polity and the formation of a more unified 'state' under the rule of Jayavarman II, who, on his ascension to the throne proclaimed himself as the first 'universal monarch'. Jayavarman's consecration as the first 'king of kings in a highly charged ceremony' also involved the creation of a royal court symbolizing both the centre of a kingdom and an earthly representation of heaven (Higham 2001: 53). Although a number of Angkorean kings built little or nothing, this architectural statement would be reproduced over and over on an increasingly grandiose scale. With each new king the construction of temple complexes in honor of the ruling monarch became more ambitious, time consuming and dependent upon ever greater amounts of labor. It was an architectural program that would culminate in Jayavarman VII's highly extravagant thirteenth-century Angkor Thom city complex, the ruins of which dominate the landscape today. The demands of such an extensive construction schedule have been cited by a number of historians as a major contributory factor to Angkor's eventual 'decline' around the mid-fifteenth century (Jacques & Freeman 1997).

After the sacking of the capital by the Siamese c1431, and with regional power shifting towards Siam, Angkor's much reduced population distilled into a collection of rural villages focused around Theravada Buddhist monastic communities. No longer the seat of Southeast Asia's greatest military power, Angkor's architectural landscape steadily succumbed to the tropical climate and surrounding forest. The cumulative effect of intense heat, rain and pernicious vegetation over a number of centuries not only savagely attacked Angkor's stone temples but also destroyed any wooden structures not maintained by the few villages living nearby.

The degree to which Angkor was 'abandoned' in the mid-fifteenth century, as is commonly asserted, remains an area of intense scholarly debate. Over recent decades a number of researchers have focused on religious shifts or the production of rice and associated issue of irrigation to help explain why the population migrated south in a more piecemeal manner. However, as Higham (2001: 160) neatly summarizes, scholarship on Angkor's irrigation network falls into two distinct camps. Eminent researchers like Bernard-Philippe Groslier and Jacques Dumarçay argued that the city's success as a hydraulic society stemmed from its elaborate water infrastructure of rivers, canals and two vast reservoirs, or *barays*. This approach provided the foundations for a more recent study conducted by the University of Sydney, which examines whether the decision to abandon the region was based upon the catastrophic failure of the canal and reservoir system.[5] The other camp, to which it appears Higham subscribes, argues that despite containing

millions of cubic meters of water, the *barays* were totally inadequate for extensive rice cultivation. Instead, it is suggested an explanation for these expanses of water lies in their symbolic value as earthly representations of the oceans surrounding Mount Meru.

One additional insight which has emerged from research into this question is the extent to which Angkor extended as a low-density, residential landscape. Through the use of NASA satellite imagery it is now understood that the greater Angkor region potentially stretched over an area as large as 1000 square kilometers, rather than the 400 enlisted as a World Heritage Site (Pottier 1999). A greater understanding of the scale of the settlement might also help fill the fundamental knowledge gaps which still remain concerning Angkor's economy, social structures, and vernacular history (Acker 1998). Similarly, little is known about the territorial extent of the Angkorean kingdom. Inscriptions from temples located in modern-day Laos and Thailand have provided a rudimentary understanding of the reach of Khmer influence at different times, but years of further research at numerous other temple sites across the region are still required in order to flesh out the details of this basic picture.

Contested spaces: the politics of heritage

For those tourists visiting Angkor in the mid-1990s the short journey from Siem Reap was punctuated by a brief stop at a small road-side hut to purchase an entrance ticket. Constructed from concrete and iron bars, and barely big enough to seat its two occupants, the hut marked the boundary of the park. A small, round concrete 'Welcome to Angkor' sign 50 meters further down the road modestly confirmed to the visitor – who perhaps traveled several thousand miles and waited many years for this moment – that he or she had finally arrived at Southeast Asia's largest and most elaborate cultural heritage site.

A decade later this same boundary would be marked by a multi-laned, drive-in ticket booth and a line of road-side signage advertising evening performances, souvenir shops, and one-hour photographic processing. The more observant visitor might also notice two large signs designed for a Cambodian audience. One, entirely made up of text, warns those living inside the Angkor park about the strict regulations on the construction of residential houses, restaurants and other buildings (Figure 1.1). If planning permission has not been obtained from the local Authority for the Protection and Safeguarding of the Angkor Region (APSARA) any modern buildings will be demolished. The sign informs residents that they must uphold the 'traditional' feel of the park. A few hundred meters away, the artwork of another roadside sign persuades residents of the bonds between peace, reconciliation, and modernization (Figure 1.2). The message of interconnected transitions is clear: replace guns with communal harmony, rural poverty with (sub)urban prosperity, and misery with happiness.

In their conflicting messages these two signs vividly capture the divergent, and often contradictory, discourses the park's residents have had to negotiate in that intervening decade. In a post-conflict era a stable growth in trade and commerce

Figure 1.1 APSARA sign warning residents of illegal construction. (Photo by Tim Winter.)

Figure 1.2 Sign – We No Longer Need Weapons. (Photo by Tim Winter.)

has created new forms of wealth and disposable income. Not surprisingly, the aspirations of rural communities have shifted towards pathways of modernization and the signifiers of material development. And yet, in the first sign these values and goals are seemingly refuted, even denied, by a world heritage legislation that prioritizes the 'traditional', and a landscape aesthetic which carefully monitors and defines the validity of any 'modern' intrusions. Seen together, these two signs, by virtue of their co-existence, point towards contestation, intersecting ideologies, and a politics of space and culture. This book sets out to read these signs in such terms and explore the myriad issues, processes and forces they simultaneously reveal and hide. It is also an approach that brings Angkor into the fold of a literature that examines the political and inherently contested nature of heritage tourism landscapes.

As Macdonald points out, recent studies of heritage landscapes – and the heritage industry in general – have now brought 'questions of the implications of materiality, and of the mutual enmeshing of the material and social to the fore' (2006: 11). By implication, greater attention has been given to forms of contestation between groups seeking differing claims of identity from the past. While organizations like UNESCO have attempted to advance a language of cultural difference within a shared inheritance of globally 'unique' sites, a framework of 'world heritage' has invariably led to a battleground between nationalistic agendas and the sub-national interests of minority groups. Observers of this ever-expanding industry have therefore questioned the feasibility of bridging these gaps and using heritage as a way of promoting ideas of a global citizenship or cosmopolitanism (Turtinen 2000, Meethan 2001).

In reflecting upon the concept of world heritage further, authors such as Smith (2004) and Shepherd (2006) have examined landmark international agreements such as the 1964 Venice Charter and 1972 World Heritage Charter as instruments of objectivity, rigor, and depoliticized governance. As Smith suggests, within such frameworks material objects are entrusted to a small number of 'intellectuals associated with their collection, curation and interpretation' (2004: 86). Paralleling such observations, Turtinen also summarizes World Heritage as 'an institutional system of formalised routines, beliefs and practices, in a centre/periphery relationship … created through highly standardised, transnational processes and procedures based on expertise' (2000: 3).

By examining Stonehenge through a similar analytical lens, Bender (1999) constructs a 'multi-vocal' text to draw our attention to the value systems marginalized by certain institutionalized knowledges, such as those presented by English Heritage, which attempt to narrate a 'standard' account of history, and thus, by implication, secure ownership over the land. She states:

> More often than not, 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 … freezing time allows the landscape

> or monuments in it to be packaged, presented and turned into museum exhibits.
>
> (Bender 1999: 26)

Implicit here is a concern for a particular value system that promotes a series of naturalized world views cultivated by experts. From the late 1980s onwards parallel observations were made by Shanks and Tilley (1987), Thomas (1996) and Leone et al. (1987), who, in harmony, argued that the task of reading landscapes as socio-political constructions needed to begin with a process of self-reflexive, critical analysis, whereby the field of archaeology itself is treated as an authoritative form of knowledge production. To understand the power/knowledge relationships inherent to the field it is necessary to examine the institutional contexts from which interpretations and pronouncements are made. In considering the particularities of Asia, authors like Taylor (2004), Chen (1998), and Logan (2001) have reflected upon the degree to which fields like archaeology and conservation remain imperialist technologies within Eurocentric world heritage paradigms. To support such arguments Logan also considers how bodies like UNESCO, International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), or the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) impose certain 'best practices' and 'good behaviours' on their member states. The recently developed China Principles and Hoi An Protocols for Best Conservation Practice in Asia are two attempts to move away from the 1964 Venice Charter and deliver heritage policies more sympathetic to the cultural and historical contexts of Asia. As we shall see however, such initiatives have yet to gain any traction in countries like Cambodia, where a language of heritage continues to reflect and reinforce Eurocentric understandings of culture and landscape.

For Smith (2004) these issues are best addressed at the conceptual level. Building on the earlier arguments of Hodder (1992), Kohl and Fawcett (1995), and Tilley (1999), she discusses the now familiar distinction between processual and post-processual forms of archaeology to argue that despite the latter's concern for discourse and ideology, multi-vocality and self-reflexivity, scientifically-driven, positivist approaches remain popular both within the field and its associated discipline of Cultural Resource Management (CRM). Smith extensively illustrates how these fields continue to seek a meta-professional authority through a 'logical positivism [that] stresses objectivity and ensures technical rigor' (2004: 20). CRM – the arena in which archaeology and its theory are practiced beyond their academic contexts – further de-politicizes discussions by focusing attention on two key areas. First, debates over 'ownership' of heritage sites and their objects primarily address questions of access and possession. From this, a secondary level of discussion arises concentrating on the logistics of site management. In essence then culture and cultural heritage are enveloped within science-based and managerial paradigms.

As we shall see in the coming chapters in the context of CRM heritage becomes a 'resource' requiring protection, cataloguing and objective interpretation. More specifically, CRM 'provides the institutions, policies and legislative frameworks

that effectively mobilize archaeology as a technology of government' (ibid: 11). Invariably, and with Angkor being no exception, maps have become powerful tools for justifying management rights and even claims of ownership. Inherently spatial, CRM, archaeology and cultural heritage consistently deploy cartography not only to 'codify, to legitimate and to promote [their] world views', but also, and as Harley reminds us, to produce silences and absences (1988: 429). Accordingly, the review of UNESCO's zoning scheme presented in Chapter 3 illustrates how a desire to formalize and define resists pluralism and thus, by implication, excludes those views and parties that fall outside the dominant paradigm.

Studies by Ashworth (1994), Macnaghten and Urry (1998), Bender (1999) and Waterton (2005) have also demonstrated how scientifically oriented frameworks of cultural heritage and CRM tend to inadequately address questions of social justice and indigenous values. A number of authors, including Smith (2004), have therefore argued that CRM needs to move beyond the polarized and oppositional stances of its processual and post-processual traditions and develop more humanist, democratic, and inclusive approaches. However, while these authors commonly draw upon examples from Europe, North America or Australia to support their arguments, we will see over the coming chapters that the challenges they pose take on an altogether different face in countries torn apart by war and violent internal conflict, like Cambodia.

The critiques offered by the above authors remind us of the importance of understanding the interaction between heritage landscapes and their residential communities. In the case of Angkor, a growth in tourism has generated a sharp growth in the number of people living within the park's perimeters. According to World Bank estimates, this population exceeded 150,000 in 2003, up from 50,000 a decade earlier.[6] Detailed anthropological accounts of the values these residents ascribe to Angkor as a lived space, a place of oral traditions and evolving religious practices has been offered by Miura (2004) and Luco (2006). To complement the insights these recent studies offer, the discussion of Angkor as a form of 'living heritage' presented here steers in a somewhat different direction, focusing specifically on tourism and on those who visit the site as tourists.

Cultural economies of tourism

As we saw from the opening words of this Introduction, the first *Lonely Planet* on Cambodia was published in 1992. More than merely 'bibles' for independent travelers, *Lonely Planet* guides, with their recommendations and 'not to miss highlights', invariably make a significant impact on the physical development of emerging tourist destinations like Angkor, Siem Reap. To this end, I have argued elsewhere that descriptions of landmines, jungle hidden ruins and dangerous war-torn cities presented in guidebooks and other media have played a pivotal role in defining the geographical and cultural boundaries of Cambodia's post-conflict tourism industry (Winter 2006). This book builds on these themes and expands their analytical frame to look at Angkor as an emergent tourist space. The following chapters situate media representations alongside discussions

of infrastructure resources, airline routes, the logistics of tour itineraries and the consumption practices of both domestic and international tourists. In other words, the development of Angkor's tourism industry is approached as a series of cultural economies, each of which is constituted through an interweaving of the symbolic with the real, the discursive with the non-discursive, and the local with the transnational.

Within the literature on tourism of late there has been a growing unease that the conceptual categories of the 'tourist' and 'place' have created intellectual straightjackets for the field (Coleman and Crang 2002, Terkenli 2002, Roy 2004). Countless studies dedicated to understanding the motivations and desires of tourists have been paralleled by, and yet often separated from, other accounts of how tourism commodifies and transforms 'host' people, places and cultures. In an attempt to overcome this analytical separation a number of authors have turned to a language of performance (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998, Coleman & Crang 2002, Lasansky & McLaren 2004). A shift towards understanding tourism in terms of performativity views the production and consumption of tourist spaces as contingent and mutually constitutive processes. Places are no longer regarded as the static recipients of 'guests' that come and go. Instead there is an awareness of how people and places are concurrently mobilized through the economies and cultures of tourism.

It has long been acknowledged that international tourism provides an effective medium for performing a national 'brand' on the international stage. Richter (1993), Peleggi (1996), and Picard and Wood (1997) have all demonstrated how coherent, state-endorsed images of the nation projected externally also become important mechanisms for nation building or the ethnic profiling of a population. Perhaps the most detailed study in this field has been Dahles' account of cultural tourism in Indonesia; a language seized upon by the New Order government to enhance its political legitimacy and boost economic growth. Dahles concludes that a seemingly innocuous policy of promoting a tapestry of ethnic diversity for an international tourist audience provides a mask for the state's broader ideological interests. Summarizing this argument she states:

> In Indonesia culture and art have become an arena in which seemingly 'unpolitical' visions of national identity are stated. Applying a strategy of 'culturalization' of identity, the government is not only accommodating differences but actually producing them … the concept of culture has gone through a process of aestheticization, stylization, relativization, and standardization. This is not a harmless exercise in semantic associations but a strategy of domination.
>
> (2001: 16)

Clearly for Dahles the transformation of a localized Javanese culture is primarily driven by state policies. Although recognizing that this cultural, political twinning gains momentum through the prospect of financial gain her account speaks less about the power of capital in transforming those places designated for tourism.

To address such questions, authors like Harrison (1992), Wood (1993), and Jackson (2004) have all insightfully demonstrated how developing country government programs to promote places of tourism invariably lead to tensions between the state and localized communities, as disproportionate levels of wealth are accrued by a small elite within a situation of imbalanced modernization. The analysis presented in the following chapters draws these various political and economic threads together.

In a departure from state-centered approaches to unequal patterns of development authors like Sassen (2002), Urry (2000), Appadurai (1990), and Castells (1996, 2000) have foregrounded the idea of regional and global networks. Together they argue that as we embark upon the twenty-first century, processes of socio-spatial change are defined by the flows of people, capital, information and objects within a new social morphology of networks. As Castells states there is a 'performance of activities throughout the social structure. This material basis, built in networks, earmarks dominant social processes, thus shaping the social structure itself' (1996: 471). Evans and Spaul adopt this mode of analysis to interpret the socio-cultural impact of tourism. However, rather than using the familiar examples of 'global cities' like New York, Tokyo or London, they demonstrate how quiet, unpopulated forests in England are encoded with new meanings as they are absorbed into an arena of tourism and leisure. The introduction of stylized signposts, boundary fences and architecturally sympathetic visitor centers tangibly signify the presence of new managerial practices and networks of governance oriented towards consumption. In offering a theoretical interlude to their account the authors declare that:

> Heritage and tourism landscape are no longer in 'place' in the sense that they once were – living embodiments of rooted communities – but have drifted into the 'space' of tourist attractions: alienable parcels of countryside integrated into a social network, created by mobile populations in search of leisure activity.
>
> (2004: 213)

The empirical example given by Evans and Spaul indicates how the metaphor of the network points towards infinite possibilities for systemic interconnectivity. Nomadic capitalism, after all, is said to recognize no boundaries and connects the world through a seemingly endless infrastructure of nodes and scapes. To better understand the broad dynamics by which tourism expands its frontiers and conquers new territories Urry's distinction between scapes and flows is instructive here. Adopting the conceptual language of Arjun Appadurai, Urry suggests scapes are 'the networks of machines, technologies, organizations, texts and actors that constitute various interconnected nodes' (2000: 35). By contrast, flows consist of 'peoples, images, information, money and waste, that move within and especially across national borders' (2000: 36). At the core of his distinction is the greater degree of structure associated with scapes. In developing this idea further in his book *Global Complexity*, Urry argues flows – this time discussed as

'global fluids' – 'result from people acting upon the basis of local information but where these local actions are, through countless iteration, captured, moved, represented, marketed and generalized within multiple global waves' (2003: 60).

In offering such an account, Urry recognizes that, far from being mutually exclusive, scapes and flows continually intersect, with the former providing a partial structure – a global order – within which fluidity can emerge and thrive. Indeed, to mobilize the flow of 'people, capital, images and culture', which Meethan (2001: 4) argues defines today's global tourism industry, an international network of corporations, legislation and trustworthy brands that 'roam[s] … across the surface of the earth' (Urry 2003: 57) delivering predictability and reliability is required.

But equally, unpredictability and an instability of knowledge are crucial factors in the territorial expansion of tourism. Given that crossing frontiers, and entering unknown lands provide much of the impetus to travel, Singh reminds us 'tourism has to search for new horizons of experiences that are bizarre and pregnant with curiosity' (2004: 2). For both the industry and tourists alike, there is a shared desire to move beyond existing frontiers, explore un-chartered territories, to break out of existing circuits. And yet, as we shall see in Chapter 4, a lack of regional airports, hotels and other facilities has both hindered and fostered particular tourist flows within and across Cambodia. In the case of the cruise ship market, the lack of a deep water port in the south has stifled growth in this luxury sector. Whereas for the independent traveler and backpacker markets, the under-developed and unfamiliar nature of Cambodia's tourism scapes represents an opportunity to explore and get off 'the well trodden path' of tourism (Winter 2006). The case of post-conflict Cambodia illustrates how the networks of tourism fray and fragment at the edges, and have their fluidity ruptured by obstacles and an absence of nodes.

For countries engaged in the early stages of tourism, development scapes and flows typically emerge in dialogue, and as one creates the other the voids in the network are filled and its frontiers expanded. But to suggest that development follows a linear, upward path would ignore the economic and political forces within the network that work to retain particular clusters of power and a rigidity of structure. Angkor's rise as a key heritage destination of Southeast Asia has brought it into a new arena of socio-political relations. Rather than viewing the site as the central hub of a wheel, the metaphor of the network enables us to understand Angkor as a single node within a de-centered web of connections. Tourism places come into being through the socio-political and economic developments taking place elsewhere in the system. In other words, Angkor's development has been shaped by power imbalances between nodes and the core, periphery dynamics they help create. As we shall learn, with Cambodia's airports unable to accept long haul aircraft, the expansion of the country's tourism industry has, in part, been determined by decisions made in the regional hubs of Bangkok, Singapore or Hong Kong. Moreover, for tour operators looking to integrate Angkor within their existing regional networks of hospitality, promoting Cambodia beyond temples remains a risky and unprofitable exercise.

A crucial component in the mobilization of places as new tourist destinations is the circulation of images and knowledges. Chapter 5 explores this theme in detail, demonstrating that international tourism in Southeast Asia involves 'the partial erosion of spatially bounded social worlds and the growing role of the imagination of place from a distance' (Gupta and Ferguson 1997: 39). For Cartier such cultural processes represent a symbolic order of seduction. Through an approach that emphasizes 'geographical imaginaries, how people think about destinations' she argues we, as tourists, are drawn to edges: to the beach, the cliff top, or the side of the pool (2005: 2). Moreover, she suggests: 'Secret and enigmatic places are seductive too: archaeological landscapes from the edges of history, the Egyptian pyramids, Mayan capitals, the mounds of imperial graves that mark China's millennial history, still unopened, too many to excavate' (ibid: 7).

Cartier's insightful account acknowledges both discursive and non-discursive practices. Indeed, in stressing that seduction works at both the symbolic level and through the realization of 'emplaced possibilities' her account forms part of a recent turn towards understanding touristic consumption as a process Crouch (2005) has termed 'embodied semiotics'. The late twentieth-century shift towards the subjective nature of place, as noted earlier, has informed more detailed accounts of touristic consumption as a multi-sensory, embodied process. Urry, for example, departed from his ocular-centric 'Tourist Gaze' (1990) to consider why the heritage and tourism industries deploy sounds, smells and textures to signify particular places or memories (1995, 1997). In his detailed account of the Taj Mahal, Edensor (1998, 2001) revisits Goffman's theatrical metaphor to interpret consumption as a series of spatially scripted performances. According to Edensor, the Taj serves as a highly symbolic stage enabling tourists to act out a variety of identity constructions. Similarly, Yalouri (2001) draws upon Bourdieu's notion of habitus to interpret visits to the Acropolis as spatialized cultural productions, known and enacted through the body.

Yalouri's analysis also illustrates a move towards understanding the relationship between identity, place, and history in terms of memory. Rather than viewing history as held within the landscape or building itself, the idea of memory switches attention to the ways places and histories are actively created and recreated in multiple ways on an ongoing basis (Connerton 1995, McCrone 1998). Once framed in such terms landscapes emerge as *lieux de mémoire* (Nora 1998) – spaces through which multiple pasts are simultaneously remembered and forgotten in subjective ways. As Yalouri points out however, given the multiple audiences drawn to the Acropolis, memory and its narration inevitably remains contested and unstable. Recognizing that consumption acts as a "'vehicle of agency" which informs the way Greeks understand their national identity' (2001: 17), she also demonstrates how the site is infused with localized sacred values which resist other more secular ideas of modernity and globalization.[7] In this respect, together with Edensor's (1998) account of the Taj Mahal, Yalouri reveals the complex political web arising from a framework of heritage attempting to encapsulate intersecting local, national, and global memories of place. Along with the contributions of Bender (1999) and Tilley (1999) noted earlier, Yalouri and Edensor have also contributed

to our understanding of consumption as a process of appropriation and created meanings.

Pursuing such themes further, this study contrasts the representations offered by an international heritage community and Angkor's local authorities with the practices and narratives of both domestic and international visitors. Touristic consumption is seen as an ensemble of spatial enunciations, to use De Certeau's terms, where place becomes meaningful through its 'kinaesthetic appropriation' (1984: 98). Rejecting the idea that landscapes are consumed through pre-figured or pre-scripted performances, this approach follow's Crouch's assertion that tourists 'figure and refigure knowledge of material and metaphorical spaces … .[by] … trying out, coping, negotiating, and contesting' (1999: 3). Crucially however, and as Crouch points out, such processes involve an interweaving of spaces that 'maybe material, concrete and surround our own bodies … [but] … may also be metaphorical and even imaginative' (ibid: 2).

Accounting for these metaphorical and imaginary spatial flows requires an understanding of their mediation by guidebooks, documentary channels like *National Geographic* and *Discovery*, films and other media. Frustrated by the lack of studies revealing how sensory, embodied practices are informed by processes of signification, Franklin and Crang (2001) and Meethan (2001) both argue that more rigorous understandings are still required concerning the subject/discourse or symbolic/material relations which constitute tourism consumption. In response, the following chapters explore such relationships by attending to 'embodied experiences as part of the semiotic relations within tourism' (Abram et al. 1997: 7). In Chapters 5 and 6 a diverse range of representations and framings – including hotel interiors, Hollywood films or decades of television news coverage – are set against the various ways in which tourists talk and walk about the site. In other words, the book explores the interconnections between the symbolic economies of Angkorean tourism and the material practices involved in actually doing tourism in Cambodia.

Restoration culture

The re-emergence of Angkor as a destination of international and domestic tourism coincided with a process of societal recovery. As we saw earlier, the temples would at once become an intense focal point for both the restoration of a glorious cultural past and the aspirations of an economically vibrant future. In a few short years, heritage and tourism thus emerged as arenas through which various geo-political, nationalist, developmental, and revivalist agendas were simultaneously channeled. This final section sets out a framework for interpreting such processes, and in so doing further situates the themes raised so far within the socio-political context of post-conflict, postcolonial Cambodia.

The arguments presented over the coming chapters join a growing literature which examines the impact of social turmoil and violent conflict on cultural landscapes as sites of collective patrimony. As way of a contribution to this field, the book departs from a number of themes which have already garnered considerable

attention. With wars and periods of social unrest almost inevitably resulting in the destruction of material culture – whether it be artwork, sacred texts, buildings or monuments – expressions of lament have become commonplace, with the most critical commentaries typically coming from writers external to, and thus politically disengaged from, the issues being disputed. Not surprisingly, the rise of a world heritage discourse has underpinned a body of writing that has sought to protect 'our' cultural property from being burned, stolen, demolished or bombed (Gamboni 1997, Golden 2004). In March 2001 the Taliban's iconoclasm of the Buddhas at Bamyan generated unanimous condemnation across the world (Ashworth and Van Der Aa 2002). Recently however, more ambivalent voices have also reflected upon the ways in which cultural heritage can perpetuate conflicts, and in so doing sustain anger, hostility, and enmity. Bevan (2006) and Layton and Thomas (2001) point out that decisions to destroy or preserve heritage may reflect a variety of discordant agendas. Citing examples from Bosnia, Kosovo, India, and Israel among others, they demonstrate that, if managed by local groups sensitively, heritage sites can advance reconciliation and reunification. Equally though, the past can be misused in the present to deny previous atrocities or inflame inter-communal tensions.

Within this literature a number of studies have addressed what happens to heritage sites and material culture *after* times of conflict. The principle point of focus here has been the issue of memorialization; a language that reads buildings, statues, and landscapes as 'memorials' embattled with the impossibility of retaining an adequate and respectful memory (Young 1994, Forty and Küchler 2001, Guha-Thakurta 2003, Macdonald 2006). Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996), for example, reflect upon the production of memorials marking the atrocities of World War II, expressing concern that various groups and voices have been written out, and thereby disinherited, from the story of the holocaust.[8]

Understandably, studies examining societies working towards peace and reconciliation have tended to look at those cultural sites either damaged and destroyed by the conflict, or whose symbolic value has been, or continues to be, actively contributing to the contours of the dispute (Brown 1998, Hodder 1998). The case of pre-modern architecture in Cambodia is somewhat different however. As the following chapter notes, the temples were revered across the political landscape throughout the civil war. Grenades, bullets and the looting of prized carvings undoubtedly took their toll, but the temples succeeded in avoiding any programs of systematic destruction.[9] Consequently, their structural forms have not, as such, emerged as memorials to this devastating period in the country's history. In fact, in the decades since the Khmer Rouge ceded power, efforts to commemorate have gravitated towards more vernacular structures and landscapes. The infamous school, turned torture centre, Tuol Sleng, in Phnom Penh, the nearby mass graves of Cheung Ek, and Pol Pot's final place of residence in Anlong Veng, being the most high-profile examples among many (Chandler 2000, Wood 2006).

The situation Angkor finds itself in today thus demands an analysis that explores, but moves beyond, ideas of contested memory and site representation, to include

the multitude of issues arising from a rampant growth in tourism. To date the convergence of these two industries in post-conflict situations has been approached via the theoretical vantage points of commodification (Lennon & Foley 2000, Baram & Rowan 2004), semiology (Adams 2003, Bishop & Clancy 2003) or the more technical language of Cultural Resource Management (McManamon & Hatton 2000). The aim here is to pursue similar lines of enquiry, but stretch their intellectual terrain by reading the broader social, economic and political contexts in a way that reveals the tensions and contradictions arising from a violent collision between a desire to embrace rapid modernization and the need to restore and protect an illustrious, but fragile, ancient culture. In other words, by understanding tourism heritage in terms of spatial contestation, performance and networked mobilities, issues of site management and the politics of narration are explored in order to ask larger questions about postcolonial relations, post-conflict nation building, geographies of development, and cultural economies of place.

The pursuit of these various goals brings in to view the ways in which heritage and tourism have triggered Angkor's appropriation by a range of players for particular ends. To help interpret this picture the book draws inspiration from the field of Latin American Cultural Studies, which, through the work of Alvarez, Canclini, Escobar, and Yúdice, amongst others, has sought to understand how and why a multitude of social actors adopt culture as a resource to serve certain purposes or goals within a context of development. Together these authors have brought notions of citizenship, civil society, development, the state and globalization into the fold of cultural studies perspectives on developing countries, and perhaps more importantly, fore-grounded culture within debates over such issues. In justifying this approach, Yúdice argues that the embedding of culture within the economic and socio-political spheres of growth and development has set in motion a 'particular performative force', whereby the cultural has a 'social imperative to perform' (2003: 12). Returning to the theme of performance reminds us what is 'being accomplished socially, politically and discursively' through culture (Domínguez 1992: 21).

Angkor's ability to endure, both physically and symbolically, ensured the restoration and exposition of stone – or to be more specific, ancient stone – would serve as a metaphor for a society undergoing post-war reconstruction and rehabilitation. UNESCO's valuable support for the use of classical antiquities as a cornerstone for a grossly weakened state nationalism has also greatly helped the Royal Government parade the temples on the international stage. However, given recent political events in the country and the concern expressed by Meethan (2001) that such assistance programs often legitimize reductive, state-nationalized understandings of culture, this situation warrants closer attention, as we shall see.

The scale of assistance offered for Angkor in recent years demands that we interrogate national heritage practices in relation to the wider transnational networks and institutional structures within which they operate. Governments, foundations and universities based in various countries around the world have all gained considerable prestige from 'adopting' some of Asia's largest and most elaborate temples for restoration or research. The introduction of such assistance programs

in post-conflict situations raises difficult questions and dilemmas regarding sovereignty and neo-colonialism. An analysis of Angkor enables us to fruitfully pursue such issues; and, thus, move beyond accounting for reconstruction and development merely as national or local projects, and instead read heritage as an arena of geo-politics, bi-lateral relations and competing ideologies. Accordingly, the following chapter provides the historical context for such an analysis through a story of monumental conservation, modernity, tourism, and political appropriation that begins in the mid-nineteenth century. Before moving on to such arguments, the final part of this introduction summarizes each of the coming chapters.

Chapter 2 traces Angkor's 'modern' history. An examination of how the site has been appropriated, conceived, and framed within a variety of contexts over the last 150 years – social, political, economic, cultural – provides the foundation for understanding processes of heritage and tourism today. In essence, the chapter not only offers a modern 'social life' of Angkor, but also provides the vital historical contexts for understanding the issues discussed in subsequent chapters.

Moving on to the early 1990s, Chapter 3 examines Angkor's establishment as a World Heritage Site. Tourism and conservation are intensely converging agendas, and within a turbulent, corruption-ridden economic/political environment, the site is legally and geographically isolated. International assistance focuses on the conservation of an 'ancient' temple culture – a situation which re-imposes a former French colonial construction of Cambodian culture, where Angkor is seen as static, dead and frozen in a moment of past glory. The chapter also addresses the expert, student discourse of foreign assistance in terms of power and notions of authority.

Chapter 4 introduces the notion of *touristscape(s)* in order to examine a level of tourism growth perhaps unparalleled anywhere in the world. It is argued that within a World Heritage framework, tourism is conceived in static and geographically bounded terms, where the protective isolation of a monumental landscape, as an emergent *touristscape*, remains precedent. In contrast, an alternative analysis of *touristscapes* focuses on the socio-economic networks and flows which are now intersecting at Angkor. The implications arising from this situation are presented.

Chapter 5 turns to examine the prevailing constructions of Angkor within a socio-cultural landscape of airline adverts, guide books, souvenirs and themed hotels, and how these connect with the ways tourists talk and walk about Angkor. The chapter highlights how distinct, and politically charged, formations of an Angkorean culture, landscape, and history circulate within the contexts of both domestic and international tourism.

Many of the arguments offered in preceding chapters are brought together in Chapter 6 through a detailed analysis of two temple sites: Ta Prohm and Preah Khan. It is argued that the processes discussed earlier converge on these 'partial ruins' in fractious and contradictory ways. It will be seen that a politically imbalanced web of international assistance utilizes the imagery of tourism to re-impose a colonial vision of Angkor as 'ruin', silencing those voices wanting to see the two sites restored as architectural and active religious landscapes.

Finally the Conclusion consolidates the key themes of the book and re-connects the study to other tourism heritage sites around the world. It reflects upon the importance of examining intersecting nationalisms, cultural economies and the various postcolonial, transnational relations which arise through converging agendas of development and cultural rehabilitation in a country like Cambodia.