

# Sustainability in the Management of World Cultural Heritage

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## 1. Introduction

In tourism, objects with cultural significance are usually among key tourism attractions, including the ones listed under the World Heritage List. Being designated as a World Heritage Site (WHS) for monuments, areas, or natural landscapes, is a privilege because the international visibility of the site as a tourism attraction will likely increase through the promotional and informational activities conducted by the government, tourism industry players and the World Heritage Committee (Drost 1996; Li, Wu and Cai 2008). Timothy and Nyaupane (2009) pointed out that visits to cultural and historical resources have become one of the largest and fastest growing sectors of the tourism industry.

Heritage means something of inheritance or something that has been passed down from previous generations. It can cover historic buildings or monuments as well as natural landscapes. It also covers traditions, knowledge and work of arts – known as intangible heritage. Heritage as defined by Throsby is the different forms of cultural capital<sup>1</sup>, which represents the community's value of its social, historical, or cultural dimension (Benhamou 2003).

UNESCO adopted the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage in 1972. The purpose of the Convention is to ensure the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value<sup>2</sup>. The Convention states that the World Heritage Committee (WHC) should coordinate the process of designating the sites through a system known as inscription, which includes an evaluation of the resources by experts against a set of known criteria. The aim of the inscription is to encourage conservation of the resources within designated sites and surrounding buffer zones on a local level and also to foster a sense of collective global responsibility via international cooperation, exchange and support (Leask 2006).

For the Convention to achieve its purpose of ensuring the identification protection, conservation, presentation and transmission of cultural and natural heritage to future

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<sup>1</sup> Cultural capital as cultural resources with inherent characteristics that usually inspire or give rise to the production of other cultural goods (Throsby 2003).

<sup>2</sup> The outstanding universal value is translated into ten criteria for evaluating sites nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List.

generations, the concept of sustainability needs to be applied in the management of the World Heritage Site. The concept of sustainability is based on the concept of sustainable development that was put forward in 1987 via the work of the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Commission's report *Our Common Future* introduced the idea of sustainability as a means of integrating economic and ecological concerns in long-term development strategies.

While the concept of sustainability that was first presented in the WCED's report emphasized ecological concerns, the idea of sustainability had been extended to the arena of cultural development through the report of the World Commission on Culture and Development (WCCD), *Our Creative Diversity*. The report promoted the long-term needs of future generations for access to cultural resources (Throsby 2003), hence the notion of cultural sustainability had emerged.

Throsby (2003) argued that although the Brundtland definition of sustainable development provides an encapsulation of the essential concept, it is incomplete as a basis for considering the relationship between sustainability and culture. He suggested six principles in which sustainable management of cultural resources might be assessed: (1) material and non-material well-being; (2) intergenerational equity; (3) intragenerational equity; (4) maintenance of diversity; (5) precautionary principle; and (6) maintenance of cultural systems and recognition of interdependence (Throsby 2003 : 184 - 186). The first five principles were derived from the concept of natural capital and the notion that natural resources should be managed in a way that provides for the needs of the present generation without compromising the capacity of future generations to meet their own needs, as in the Brundtland Report.

The principle of material and non-material well-being implies that the flow of cultural goods and services provides both material benefits in the form of direct utility and non-material benefits in the form of non-market cultural goods whose value can be estimated in economic and cultural terms. Intergenerational equity refers to fairness in the distribution of welfare, utility or resources between generations, which relates directly to preservation and wise utilization of the resources. On the other hand, intragenerational equity refers to fairness in access to cultural resources and to the benefit flowing from them, viewed across social classes and income groups. Maintenance of diversity means the diversity of ideas, beliefs, traditions and values that will lead to the creation of more varied cultural goods, such as artistic works. The principle of precautionary principle states that decisions that may lead to irreversible change should be approached with extreme caution.

The sixth principle, maintenance of cultural systems and recognition of interdependence implies that no part of any system exists independently of other parts. Throsby (2003) proposed that this final principle draws together the entire concept of cultural sustainability since failure in sustaining cultural values that provide people with a sense of identity will place cultural systems in danger.

## **2. The case of borobudur temple compounds world heritage site**

From this point on, this chapter discusses sustainable management of a World Cultural Heritage in the view of principles of cultural sustainability as identified by Throsby (2003). It

uses the case of Borobudur Temple Compounds World Heritage Site in Central Java, Indonesia, drawing from a research conducted on the heritage site and its vicinities. The research, focusing on the management and conservation of the World Cultural Heritage, and the interactions between the heritage site and the communities, was conducted during 2007 to 2009 with the following data collection methods: survey, focus group interviews, and interviews to representative of organizations that were involved in the management of the heritage site and surrounding areas.



(Courtesy of Borobudur Heritage Conservation Institute)

Fig. 1. Borobudur Temple (Candi Borobudur)

The temple compounds are one of the prime tourism attractions in Indonesia. It became a World Heritage Site in 1991, and includes multiple locations, i.e. Borobudur Temple (the main temple); Mendut Temple and Pawon Temple, which are smaller but similar in architecture. Built in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, these ancient and magnificent Buddhist temples are located in Magelang Regency, Central Java Province. Borobudur Temple has a shape of a stepped pyramid consisting of nine super-imposed terraces and crowned by a huge bell-shaped stupa. The lower structure consists of six square terraces. The temple's displays one of the largest ensembles of bas-reliefs describing the life of the Buddha and many other Buddhist stories. In October 2010, eruptions of Mount Merapi (one of the most active volcanoes on earth) caused five to six centimeters thick white ash covering the entrance, stupas and parts of the temple. Borobudur Temple was temporarily closed at the time because of the emergency situation and to allow ash-cleaning activity.

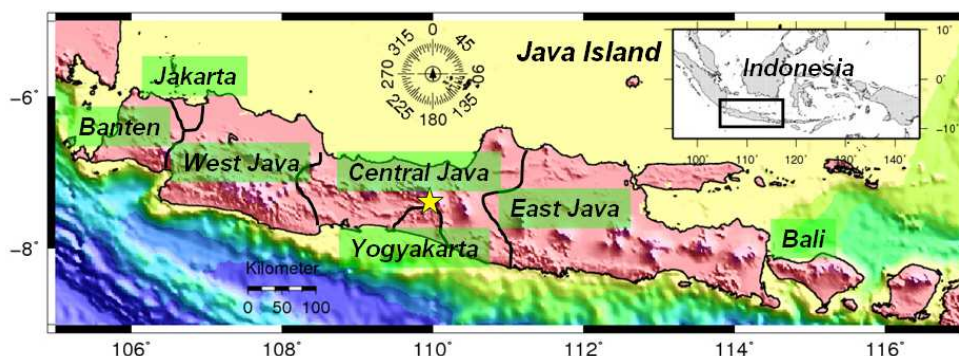
Indonesia, which signed the World Heritage Convention in 1989, currently has three cultural WHS and four natural WHS with Borobudur Temple being the most visited WHS in the country. Around 2 million visitors visit the temple every year with an approximately 80% of the visitors are Indonesian nationals. It was listed as World Heritage Site Number 592 in 1991 under the following criteria:

- Criteria 1: The site represents a unique artistic achievement, a masterpiece of the creative genius.
- Criteria 2: The site has exerted great influence, over a span of time, or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture, monumental arts or town-planning and landscaping.
- Criteria 6: The site has directly or tangibly associated with events or with ideas or beliefs of outstanding universal significance.

To accommodate visitors coming to the main temple, Borobudur Temple Recreation Park was built specifically in 1985. The development of the park has resulted in the displacement

of two villages, with some conflicts arising in the process. The recreation park also includes museums, an audiovisual theatre, kiosks and stalls, area for cultural performances, and car and coach parking.

Many of both the international and domestic tourists use Yogyakarta (43 kilometres from the compounds and the second most important tourism destination in Indonesia) as a base for their visit to the region.<sup>3</sup> The length of stay for the majority of visitors is rather short (3 - 4 hours) although there are also visitors (international and domestic) who spend a few days in various accommodations available in the Borobudur vicinity.<sup>4</sup> The Local Government of Magelang wants visitors to stay longer and spend more of their travelling expenditure in Borobudur. However, the majority of visitors still generally perceive Borobudur Temple as the only attraction in the area despite efforts from some community members to develop other potential attractions in the rural setting.



Note: This map was created using GMT Software (Wessel and Smith 1991)

Fig. 2. Location of Borobudur Temple Compounds World Heritage Site in Central Java Province; Borobudur Position Relative to the Neighbouring Yogyakarta Province

### 3. Viewing the principles of cultural sustainability in the management of Borobudur World Heritage

The first principle as defined by Throsby (2003) is the principle of material and non-material well-being. Material well-being implies the production of material benefits in the form of direct utility to consumers, deriving from economic and cultural value sources (ibid). In the case of Borobudur Temple, the material benefits relate closely with tourism that generates income for communities living in the locality and for the government. Tourism in Borobudur had contributed quite significantly to local government's tax revenue and to the growth of value added from services and tourism related sectors' (such as trade, hotel, and restaurant sector, and transportation and communication sector) shares into Gross Regional

<sup>3</sup> Yogyakarta is renowned for cultural tourism evolving around the Sultanate's palace and remnants of the colonial era in its historic buildings. The city also has other attractions such as beaches in the southern part of the city (and the island of Java) and Merapi highlands in by the infamous Merapi Volcano in the north.

<sup>4</sup> Accommodations in the Borobudur vicinity range from a luxurious international chain resort, hotels, guesthouses, and homestays.

Domestic Products (GRDP) within the Borobudur District (Kausar 2010). It has stimulated the development of infrastructure in the area and business opportunities over the years, which is indicated from the growing number of shops, restaurants and galleries (ibid). Tourism has contributed also to employment, although the employment is mostly in the informal sector characterized with low and unstable income. Another form of material well-being is how the presence of Borobudur Temple has inspired people to make art works, which relate to the temple.

However, there are still many remaining issues with regards to the economic impacts of tourism in Borobudur. For instance, tourism has not encouraged the growth in the agriculture sector - a sector in which more than 40% of the workforces are involved (Kausar 2010). Growth in the service sector, which has been induced by tourism, is not accompanied by a growth in agriculture sector. The decline in the agriculture sector is evident from the decreasing share of value added from this sector to the district's GRDP in the recent years. This indicates that the growth in the service sector, which has been induced by tourism, is not accompanied by growth in the agriculture sector.

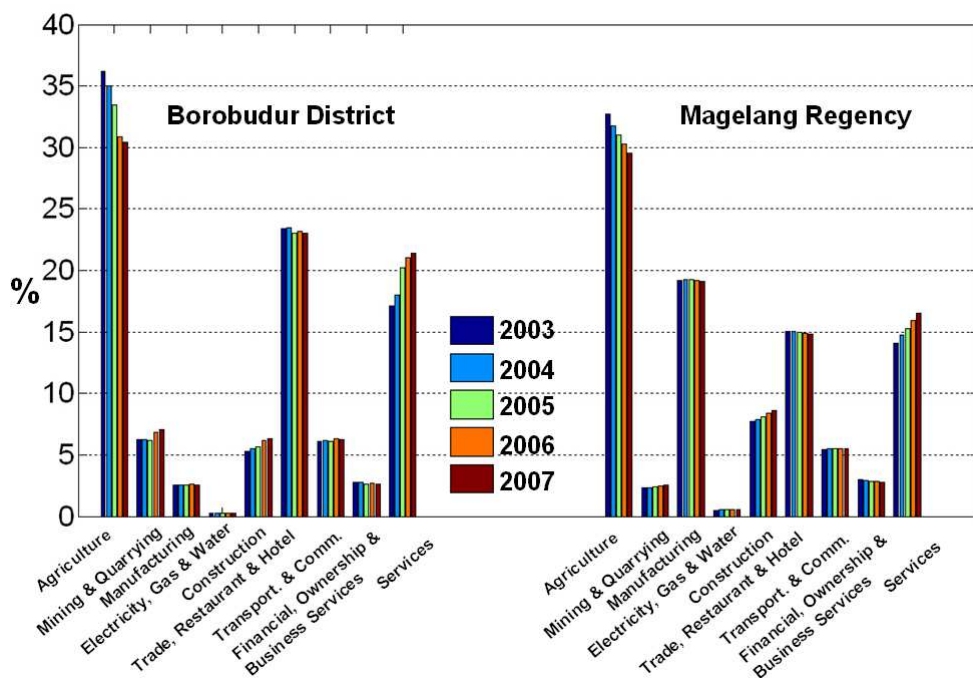


Fig. 3. Trend of Sectors' Share to GRDP in Borobudur District and Magelang Regency (2003 - 2007)

Figure 3 shows the comparison sector's shares to GRDP in Borobudur District and Magelang Regency between 2003 - 2007. It is revealed from this figure that decline of agriculture share to GRDP is faster in the Borobudur District than in the Magelang Regency as a whole.

Non-material well-being relates to the temple's function as a place to worship for Buddhists, a source of pride for the communities, and perhaps a sense of identity – although this last one needs further investigation.

The second principle of intergenerational equity relates directly to preservation and wise utilization of the resources. The restoration of Borobudur Temple began in 1973 and was completed in 1983, under the coordination of UNESCO and involving a national executive agency and an international supervisory committee. A zoning system was then developed, allocating the monument and its surrounding areas into a core conservation zone, a park – designated to accommodate visitors, and surrounding areas in which some regulations are applied. The preservation of the temple is the responsibility of a government agency called Borobudur Heritage Conservation Institute (BHCI), which reports directly to the Central Government. Local government is responsible for managing areas surrounding the park where residents live, whereas a state-owned company manages tourism and recreation inside the recreation park.

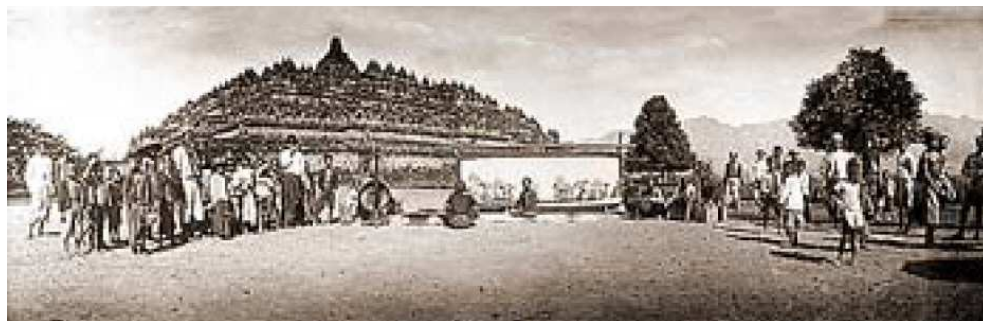
With regards to preservation, there are still some problems concerning visitor management. For instance, visitors sometime behave in ways that jeopardize the conservation state that BHCI is trying to maintain. Garbage problem, overcrowding, visitors trying to climb the stupas are some of the daily problems that must be addressed through a better coordination between BHCI and the state-owned company, PT Taman Wisata<sup>5</sup>.

The third principle, intragenerational equity or fairness in access to cultural resources and to the benefit flowing from them, implies the continuation of multiple uses of cultural resources. This means that heritage sites should not be utilized solely for tourism. However, Millar (2006) argued that universal ownership of WHS by the peoples of the world often results in stressing more on the global interest such as mass tourism at the expense of local people's interest. In the case of Borobudur, the development of Borobudur Recreation Park as an access to the heritage site and as a place to facilitate visitors' needs seems to fulfill global and national interests for conservation, access to the site, and for tourism as an income generator for the country. Survey and interviews that had been done as part of author's study in the area revealed decreasing sense of ownership or feeling of attachment to the site, which may indicate that the exclusive utilization of Borobudur for tourism or tourists is at the expense of other social groups. Indeed the temple does not have much relevance as a place to perform religious rituals for the majority of people living around it who are Muslims. However, old pictures, which are documented by BHCI and stories that are passed down from older generations suggest that a long time ago, Borobudur has been the setting of communities' activities and events. Figure 4 shows puppet (wayang) performed in the field with Borobudur Temple as the background. Nowadays, with fences separating the Borobudur Recreation Park from the communities, Borobudur Temple and its immediate area rarely becomes a place for communities' cultural activities.

Another issue related to the principle of intragenerational equity is the limited impact of tourism that is felt by the communities. This issue has been raised since 2003 when Borobudur was celebrating twentieth anniversary of its restoration (Adishakti 2006). On this occasion, some local community members made a declaration that questioned the role of

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<sup>5</sup> The full name of the state-owned company is PT Taman Wisata Candi Borobudur, Prambanan dan Ratu Boko.



Courtesy of Borobudur Heritage Conservation Institute

Fig. 4. Communities' puppet show at Borobudur

management bodies, especially that of the state-owned company, mandated to manage the recreation park in managing the site and in ensuring tourism benefits for local communities. In 2005, some villages' administrators in Borobudur District also voiced their concerns that the state-owned company had been concentrating tourism within the park without trying to disperse visitors to the nearby villages. Both events indicate that there are some concerns from both the communities and their leaders about the state-owned company's rights to manage tourism in the heritage site. A monitoring mission was carried out by UNESCO's World Heritage Committee and suggested the need to bring more benefits from the heritage site to the wider rural development context (Boccardi et al. 2006). In the last two years (2010 - 2011), however, there are more efforts to improve the livelihoods of rural community in Borobudur, such as through training on the production of snacks and handicrafts. Key organizations in the area with the supports of UNESCO organize these activities. Another recent development is handicraft demo organized by the state-owned company, PT Taman Wisata where handicraft makers participated. Visitors and tourists could even try to create their own handicrafts during this event.

The fourth principle of sustainable management of cultural resources is the maintenance of diversity. Throsby (2003) stated that diversity of ideas, beliefs, traditions and values would lead to the creation of a more varied culturally valuable artistic works in the future. Artistic works in the form of handicrafts have been flourishing in several villages across Borobudur area with each village having its specialty products. The handicraft industry has been one of the industries that is benefited by tourism in the area and by the flow of information from the outside world that inspires the creation and regeneration of art products while still maintaining their traditional characteristics. Many people working as handicraft makers, however, still expect supports from the organizations involved in the management of the heritage site and its surrounding areas in the forms of training and access to credits.

The precautionary principle, as the fifth principle, relates closely to the second principle, intergenerational equity. This principle implies that any decision concerning the cultural resources that may lead to irreversible change should be approached with extreme caution. In the case of Borobudur, it is not sufficient to discuss this matter in light of the conservation efforts that are undertaken in the heritage site. Carrying capacity of the temple should always be taken into consideration in managing heritage tourism. In addition, organizations involved in managing the temple and its surrounding must be



cautious in determining number of visitors to be targeted. While potential income from tourism is always tempting, the number of visitors that exceeds the carrying capacity will jeopardize the temple's state of conservation. One of the challenges in making decision that adopts the precautionary principle is the fact that each organization involved in the management of the heritage site has differing interests. PT Taman Wisata is more business orientated, while the local government's main interest is contribution of tourism to regional original income, hence it is understandable that two organizations may want more visitors to come in order to raise revenue, profit, and to contribute to local economy. On the other hand, BHCI's as a conservation agency is more concerned about the adverse impact that the visitors may caused to the temple. Having different organizational purposes is a situation that cannot be avoided in a domain where several stakeholders are involved. Therefore improved coordination and collaboration in setting mutual goals while recognizing existing problems is very important (Selin and Beason 1991; Jamal and Getz 1995; Wilson and Boyle 2006).



Courtesy of Candirejo Tourism Village, Borobudur

Fig. 5. Tourism and Cultural Activities in Candirejo Village, Borobudur District

The last principle, maintenance of cultural systems and recognition of interdependence amongst elements of the system, draws together the entire concept of cultural sustainability. Soeroso (2007) and Kausar (2010) suggested that conservation in Borobudur should not focus



only on the conservation of physical aspects of the heritage but to other intangible heritage. Conservation related to the physical aspects of the heritage is inherent in the principles of intergenerational equity and precautionary principle. On the other hand the conservation of intangible heritage relates more closely to the intragenerational equity, which allows the continuation of multiple use of the heritage and maintenance of diversity in ideas, beliefs, tradition and values. Communities' access to their heritage, the heritage site's function as a venue for communities' cultural activities will maintain their sense of attachment to the site and will allow the heritage to always function as inspiration of artistic works. The continuous creation and revitalization of artistic works are some of the ways to achieve material well-being since the artistic works can be used for tourists or visitors consumption.



Courtesy of Borobudur Heritage Conservation Institute

Fig. 6. Two Reliefs Found in the Walls of Borobudur Temple, One Illustrating Rice Paddy and the Other Illustrating a Farmer with His Cattles. This indicates that agriculture has been an important sector in the area since many centuries ago.

In maintaining cultural systems and recognizing the interdependence amongst elements of the system, it is also paramount to take into account the basic characteristics of local people. The communities in rural Borobudur are basically an agriculture-based society. However, research revealed that tourism has not encouraged the growth in the agriculture sector (Kausar 2001). Agriculture, though still the primary sector in the local economy is growing less than the service sector. Both harvested area and rice production has been decreasing in the Borobudur District. Analysis land use change over the years even pointed out that the conversion of land from rice fields to other purposes accelerated from the mid 1990s, after Borobudur was inscribed in the World Heritage List (Winarni 2006). Leaving out agriculture in a development that is more pursued toward growth in service sector induced by tourism, may threaten the viability of the local cultural system.

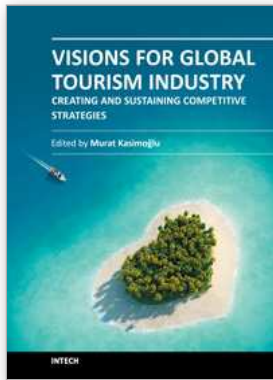
#### 4. Conclusion

It can be concluded from this chapter that the six principles of cultural sustainability is interdependence. The example of Borobudur Temple Compounds World Heritage that is

presented in this chapter suggested that to achieve sustainability, management of a cultural heritage should consider all of the aspects of cultural sustainability. Communities are the actual guardian of the heritage site, thus maintaining communities' sense of ownership and attachment through to the site is crucial for heritage conservation in the long run.

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We have been witnessing huge competition among the organisations in the business world. Companies, NGO's and governments are looking for innovative ways to compete in the global tourism market. In the classical literature of business the main purpose is to make a profit. However, if purpose only focus on the profit it will not to be easy for them to achieve. Nowadays, it is more important for organisations to discover how to create a strong strategy in order to be more competitive in the marketplace. Increasingly, organisations have been using innovative approaches to strengthen their position. Innovative working enables organisations to make their position much more competitive and being much more value-orientated in the global tourism industry. In this book, we are pleased to present many papers from all over the world that discuss the impact of tourism business strategies from innovative perspectives. This book also will help practitioners and academicians to extend their vision in the light of scientific approaches.

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