

Balinese Postmodernity: Culture, Conflict, and Space in a Tourist Paradise

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ABSTRACT

Two apparently unrelated events have had enormous significance for Bali. First, at the request of the Indonesian government, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) funded the preparation of a master plan for tourism on the island in 1971. Second, the historian Charles Jencks denoted 1973 as the inception of Post-Modernity. So tourism in Bali is fundamentally a postmodern phenomenon. This fact has great significance in how we analyse tourist development on the island, since postmodernity, the rise of globalisation, mass tourism, electronic communication, and the culture industry are synonymous events. Given Bali's status as a cultural centre of national and global impact, the latter dimension is extremely significant. So the focus of this paper is to analyse the complex relationship between tourism and culture. Central to this analysis are three factors. First, a brief account of the nature of global tourism to extract principles that have value in the Balinese context. Second, an examination of the dominant economic relationship between tourism and cultural practices. Third, a determination of the structural issues in spatial production and potential solutions to these problems. To conclude, the ensuing conflicts that surface are discussed, along with certain potential remedies for this overall problematic.

Keywords: *postmodernity, space-creation, tourism industry, territoriality, culture, conflict*