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CONTRASTING STRATEGIES
Tourism in Denmark and Singapore

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Abstract: This paper analyzes and compares the tourism strategies of Copenhagen and Singapore and examines how Wonderful Copenhagen and Singapore Tourism Board manage their tourism industries and balance the different interests of locals and tourists. It discusses their respective tourism strategies and how they are implemented in each country. The paper shows that these national bodies receive different degrees of societal and institutional support for their programs and concludes that the local political environment affects the destination's tourism promotion authorities in terms of strategies, manner of operation, and extent of influence exercised on the local culture-scape. **Keywords:** Copenhagen, dialogism, impact of tourism, politics, Singapore. © 2002 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

Résumé: Stratégies contrastées: le tourisme au Danemark et à Singapour. Cet article analyse les stratégies pour le tourisme à Copenhague et à Singapour en étudiant comment l'Office du Tourisme de Copenhague et le Conseil du Tourisme de Singapour gèrent l'industrie touristique et maintiennent l'équilibre entre les différents intérêts des habitants et des touristes. On discute des stratégies des deux conseils et de comment ces stratégies sont mises en œuvre dans les deux pays. L'article montre que ces deux conseils reçoivent des niveaux de soutien social et institutionnel différents et conclut que le milieu politique local a un effet sur l'administration de la promotion du tourisme d'une destination quant aux stratégies, aux opérations et à l'étendue d'influence sur la vie culturelle locale. **Mots-clés:** Copenhague, dialogue, impact du tourisme, politique, Singapour. © 2002 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

INTRODUCTION

In cultural tourism, local food, traditions, crafts, performances, and historical sights are packaged into products. However, some researchers are concerned that local cultures are being changed when transformed into tourist-friendly goods (Cohen 1988; Dann 1999; MacCannell 1976:91–107; Oakes 1993; Ooi 2001b:180–208; Picard 1995; Watson and Kopachevsky 1994). For instance, Boissevain's study of tourism in Malta shows that the colorful religious celebrations by Mal-

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tese villagers have been transformed in part because of their popularity with tourists. These events have now become less religious, less concerned with the transcendental, more economically driven, and more focused on pleasing spectators (Boissevain 1996:116).

Other studies have shown that over time, seemingly negative cultural effects of tourism can be neutralized by the host society (Boissevain 1996; Erb 2000; Martinez 1996; Picard 1995). Cohen observes that "it is possible for any new-fangled gimmick, which at one point appeared to be nothing but a staged 'tourist trap', to become over time, and under appropriate conditions, widely recognized as an 'authentic' manifestation of local culture" (1988:380). The case of Las Vegas turning into a popular gambling destination is an illustration; what is deemed negative at first may turn out otherwise in the long run (Gottdiener, Collins and Dickens 1999; Hannigan 1998).

This paper considers particular relationships between culture and tourism. While the industry impacts local society, its consequences can be managed and engineered by promotion authorities. The paper analyzes general strategies, especially how Wonderful Copenhagen (WoCo) and Singapore Tourism Board (STB)—the respective tourism authorities—strive to promote their destinations and manage the local cultural consequences. The paper asks two main questions: what WoCo and STB's tourism strategies are, and how they are implemented. More specific questions follow, such as how these two authorities define the balance between tourism and local societal interests; how they mediate between their tourism industries and local societies; and to what extent they commercialize and modify local cultures for tourism. The two management approaches clearly reflect the political practices and values embedded in their respective societies. Besides articulating their governmental views on engineering of local cultures, their contrasting strategies highlight the diverse institutional social engineering and public policy frameworks in these societies. Consequently, as the paper shows, local political contexts are important specifically at the governmental and institutional level.

TOURISM AND LOCAL CULTURES

There are many economic and societal benefits to be gained from tourism. For instance, it can rejuvenate a physical area, help improve a destination's infrastructure and environmental quality, and be a revenue generator and employment provider (Roche 1992). Without commercial tourism, historically significant but derelict buildings, existing but vanishing craft expertise, and increasingly esoteric traditional performances might disappear for lack of financial support. These cultural forms may die out completely, but tourism gives them reasons to remain relevant and vibrant. Nonetheless, many problems also arise from this expanding industry.

Besides the noted transformation of cultures, locals and tourists may also disagree on how to interpret local cultures (Prentice 1993; Teo and Yeoh 1997). Tourists can belittle a cultural object that is locally significant and well-regarded. For example, Teo and Yeoh document

that locals and tourists differ in this symbolic interpretations of Haw Par Villa, a Chinese mythological theme park in Singapore (1997). Haw Par Villa was once a popular local haunt, but extensive conversion (from a garden of Chinese mythological statues into a theme park), destroyed the strong local affinity. By comparing local and tourist perceptions, Teo and Yeoh warn against "insensitive commodification" (1997:210).

Desiring both to benefit from tourism and to minimally disrupt and transform local cultures, many researchers recommend a balance between cultural preservation and commercial interests (Chang 1997a, 1997b; Garrod and Fyall 2000; Teo and Yeoh 1997; van der Borg, Costa and Gotti 1996). For example, Newby defines conceptual relationships between heritage and tourism (1994:208–215), as a continuum along three principal foci: coexistence, exploitation, and imaginative reconstruction. Tourism and heritage coexist when the former does not dominate the local economy. The relationship becomes exploitative when cultural heritage becomes the basis for generating a cash flow. Imaginative reconstruction allows preservation without being swallowed by commercialism. This balanced and desired strategy ensures that the heritage remains "alive", but the separation among coexistence, exploitation, and creative redevelopment is unclear and subject to disagreement. What are the specific criteria to be used to ascertain that a cultural product is imaginatively reconstructed and is not exploiting the local culture? Who should define these criteria? To what extent is commercialization and eventual modification of local cultures acceptable? Furthermore, Philo and Kearns observe that the promotion of a destination is also "a subtle form of socialization designed to convince local people, many of whom will be disadvantaged and potentially disaffected, that they are important cogs in a successful community and that all sorts of 'good things' are really being done on their behalf" (1993:3). So, to what extent should local society be convinced and changed so as to cater to tourism?

These questions are central in the role of official tourism authorities, who have to promote the industry to both tourists and locals, by attracting foreign exchange and convincing locals that hosting paying guests in their community is advantageous. In the cases of Copenhagen and Singapore, WoCo and STB use different strategies in mediating between the industry and local society. To answer why these authorities choose their selected strategies, this paper will show that their management styles reflect their views on business–culture relationships, and their strategic actions and practices are embedded in the social and political circumstances of their local societies.

Study Methods

Theoretically, a comparison of two viewpoints usually adopts a "control through common features" or "most similar systems" approach to minimize variables (Pearce 1993:22). By establishing the common bases, the development of theory is stimulated when differences are located, as empirical fields are specifically bounded by their own insti-

tutions, economic and social structure, and culture (Baszanger and Dodier 1997:16–18; Pearce 1993:22). The latter author points out that comparative research faces three general interrelated issues. First, a comparison is only sensible if it is based on clearly understood problems. Second, there must be conceptual equivalence. Third, the studies must pay attention to contextual factors. Pearce offers a framework to conceptually structure the comparative research, which this study uses as a guide.

In terms of the first criterion of a clearly defined problem, this paper focuses on the role of the national tourism promotion authorities of Copenhagen and Singapore, their strategies and how they are implemented. Such exploration provides the base issues to compare the two destinations and to define the scope of the investigation.

By utilizing conceptual equivalence, (the second condition in Pearce's comparative framework), the paper employs a dialogic perspective to draw out the bases' contextual factors. This treatment originates in the work of theorist Bakhtin (1981, 1984, 1986), whose works on literary texts have been appropriated into the social sciences (Bell and Gardiner 1998; Ooi 2001b; van Loon 1997). The dialogic perspective accentuates social multiplicity and dynamic processes. It offers a set of concepts and vocabulary to present social phenomena in a dynamic and yet systematic manner, with the emphasis on social multiplicity and interplay.

Specifically for this paper, to accentuate multiplicity, a number of dialogic concepts—namely, heteroglossia, polyphony and carnivalesque—are assumed. Heteroglossia (Bakhtin 1981:325–326; Holquist 1981:428; Vice 1997:18–44) points to the multiple contexts in understanding tourism and its impact on local cultures and highlights at least two different social frames. Tourism is primarily perceived as an economic leisure industry. Culture, on the other hand, is supposedly founded on the history and everyday life of local society. As a result, the manifestations of the two are conceived to have originated from different economic and social motivations. From a dialogic perspective, the touristification of cultures arises from the meetings of, and clashes between, the social contexts of tourism and host cultures. Both WoCo and STB are managing the interface of these different spheres of social activities.

Polyphony (Bakhtin 1981:331–336; Bakhtin 1986:112–113; Vice 1997:112–148) highlights multiple voices but points to the ubiquitous and mediating mission of the tourism authorities. This paper locates their ubiquitous mediating action in their respective destinations. Operators, tourists, and local residents contribute to, and express themselves in, the profile of each destination, but the authorities offer the overall strategy to enhance broad marketability (Ooi 2001b:145–179). WoCo and STB also present ways of appreciating and understanding the destination for tourists, and ways for locals to behave and imagine themselves with regards to foreigners. Their mediating presence is centered on bringing the different interests of tourism and local society together.

The concept of the carnivalesque (Bakhtin 1984; Stallybrass and

White 1986) points to multiple cultures and spheres of activities that the authorities could not totally manage, suppress, or control. For instance, despite the glossy images they presented of staying in sanitized hotels and visiting properly constructed attractions, tourists can still gaze at and experience the seedier aspects of a destination. However, the manner in which selected attractions are accentuated (or suppressed) informs the choices authorities make in their strategies. Moreover, their methods of defining and acting on their options betray their views of how tourism and local society should relate to each other, and also imply the social and political conditions that these authorities are working within.

Together, heteroglossia points to the clash of commercial and cultural contexts in tourism; polyphony accentuates the ubiquitous and mediating voice of the authorities in managing the clashes of tourism and local cultural contexts; and the carnivalesque alludes to spheres of activities beyond the control of the authorities, although these activities and sights may be suppressed or ignored by them. Interrogating the coerciveness behind the mediating voice of authorities highlights their ideological views and the political contexts within which they function. Although this framework is tacit (and conspicuously silent), it offers the conceptual structure for analyzing the strategies of WoCo and STB, and forms a basis for their comparisons.

This study will emphasize the political contextual factors in order to highlight the contrasts between tourism strategies in the two destinations. The common starting points for comparing Copenhagen and Singapore are their tourism industries, the cities being destinations, and the focus on the agencies. WoCo and STB have to deal with similar issues of how local cultures should cater to the needs and desires of tourists and to what extent should a society be touristified. However, because these destinations have quite different political environments, the authorities employ different strategies. Their management style also reveals their views on the business–culture relationship.

Clearly defined problems, conceptual equivalence, and drawing out contextual factors are the three elements which form this paper's comparative framework. To apply the latter, data were collected in both destinations in similar manners. The researcher has immersed himself into the empirical fields since 1996 and his understanding is developed and grounded on his data, experiences, and analyses (Ooi 2001b:64–87). A number of interviews were conducted with representatives in the respective official tourism promotion agencies (WoCo, STB, Danish Tourism Board, and the Danish Ministry of Industry and Business) and with tour operators, tourist guide publishers, and attraction managers. The quotations in this paper come from personally conducted in-depth face-to-face responses. In addition, other data included those from participant observervation (the researcher functioning as a tourist to witness happenings at the destinations). Besides official documents, promotion and marketing materials for tourists were also collected.

Copenhagen and the Danish Tourism Authorities

The Danish Tourist Board (DTB) is the national tourism authority in Denmark. WoCo, the official congress and tourist organization for the Greater Copenhagen Area, believes that "by promoting Greater Copenhagen as a major city destination, attractive and competitive for both holiday and business tourism, the organization is instrumental in generating revenue and employment in the region" (W.C. 1999:2).

WoCo and the DTB do not license any tourism businesses, but the latter controls the information centers throughout Denmark and promotes the country as a destination around the world. WoCo concentrates on the development and the optimization of tourism products, marketing, and services in the capital city (Lousdal and Sihm 1997:62–68). As part of providing the infrastructure in Copenhagen it is the coordinator of five networks or platforms for industry players to meet and collaborate. In one network, "Meetingplace Wonderful Copenhagen", the members are providers of conference and meeting services in the city. The aim is to maintain and improve the quality and development of meeting, incentive, congress and exhibition products. "Copenhagen Card" is another network built around a tourism product. With this card, tourists have free or discounted access to a number of sights, and cardholders can ride free on local buses and trains. Expectedly, the "Copenhagen Card" network consists of museums, attractions, public transport authorities, and shops.

WoCo and DTB do not offer direct support to private tourism companies through promotional materials or product development. The authorities attempt to maintain a clear demarcation between private businesses and public interests. They also perceive cultural and economic spheres of activities as separate but try to bring them together. With reference to the arts and culture, the country generally holds the view that any form of cultural expression needs public support (Koefoed 1995:133–140). In this, the government bears the financial responsibility, while the contents of the cultural activities rest with the artists and the professionals (Koefoed 1995:136). Similarly in tourism, the public–private and culture–business divides are maintained by these authorities in Copenhagen, although tourism and local interests do meet and clash. Consequently, WoCo and the DTB attempt to interest tourists in what locals decide and want themselves, a style of mediation illustrated by how the capital city is packaged as "Wonderful Copenhagen".

"Wonderful Copenhagen" has been in use since the 50s. W.C. sees a close natural relationship between the destination brand—"Wonderful Copenhagen"—and its product. The popular brand-images are of classical and historical Copenhagen, including the old city center, the Little Mermaid, Amalienborg (the Queen's residence), writer Hans Christian Andersen, and the Tivoli Gardens. There are concerns among various private tourism agencies in Copenhagen about the officially promoted identity. The editor of Copenhagen Expozed (an Internet information guide) lamented that

> ["Wonderful Copenhagen"] is very, very old fashioned. This is giving the wrong impression of Copenhagen. It's not like that anymore …. They have to show that Copenhagen is a lively city, one that is young at heart and experimental. Copenhagen and the Danish people experiment with music and art, and all the cultural, creative things. And the officials are hiding that away, and pretending that it's wonderful Copenhagen (interview in 1988).

Besides being perceived as "old fashioned", "Wonderful Copenhagen" does not reflect the full carnivalesque character of the city. Copenhagen This Week, the only free monthly tourist guide booklet, has an "After Dark" section at the back. This advertising section features escort services, sex shops, and striptease clubs. Some tourists and locals are offended by this section. Its publisher explained why the section is still kept:

> We have one complaint [of *Copenhagen This Week*], which is about the ["After Dark"] back pages. … But everyone knows that [the sex business] is here, and it is part of Copenhagen. And it's not illegal. It is legal business. So, that's why we print this (interview in 1998).

Sexually titillating postcards and sex shops are readily found around Copenhagen. The Economist (1998) mentioned that the city is one of the biggest centers for pornography production in Europe. Nevertheless, sex is not an image normally associated with the official identity "Wonderful Copenhagen". By quietly ignoring the seedier aspects of the city, WoCo attempts to present the destination by selectively narrating and directing attention towards certain sights. On the other hand, WoCo has not insisted that Copenhagen This Week removes its "After Dark" section despite the booklet's being promoted as the official information guide. Although officially sanctioned, the booklet is independently run.

While WoCo generally lets private businesses decide on their own products, it also acknowledges that "Wonderful Copenhagen" is perceived as "old fashioned". WoCo's Director of Development explained how his organization intends to change that perception:

> We have a strong image on the Little Mermaid, Tivoli and Hans Christian Andersen, things like that. And it is fine, it is a positive image but also, it is old fashioned. We would like to reposition ourselves with new elements, not to throw away the Little Mermaid, not at all. We could put new elements into our image. … We have very good museums of modern art, for instance (interview in 1999).

This approach is also reflected in another project, which involves WoCo. Greater Copenhagen and Scania, the southern-most county of Sweden, are cooperating to form the Øresund Region. A bridge and a tunnel opened in July 2000, to join these two areas across the Øresund Sound, with "The Human Capital" as the identity branding for this region. The approach to developing this brand is similar to that of developing "Wonderful Copenhagen", that is, associate appealing products and images over time into it.

In sum, the Danish tourism authorities consider the elements currently constituting "Wonderful Copenhagen" and the "Human Capital"

to be evolving with new elements emerging. The authorities do not forcefully impose or narrate how these identities should be constructed. As a result, WoCo <http://www.woco.dk> offers a collage of traditional and modern images of Copenhagen, while still profiling the destination as "Wonderful Copenhagen". WoCo and other Danish promotion authorities respect the differences in interests among tourism, local cultural institutions, and local society. Although the private business sector has voiced its dissatisfaction with the romantic "Wonderful Copenhagen" message, in keeping with the democratic ideal of Denmark, the agency lets the image evolve. In this non-forceful and almost unobtrusive manner, WoCo attempts to balance the different interests of commercial tourism and local society; it looks out for suitable sights and activities that have evolved and emerged in the society, and includes them as elements of "Wonderful Copenhagen". The agency mediates in the industry by encouraging tourism businesses to offer better products, while building an infrastructure conducive for development of the industry.

Singapore and its Tourism Board

Singapore Tourism Board is the official agency in the city-state. The original Singapore Tourist Promotion Board (STPB) was renamed in December 1997. Both names are used in this paper to reflect the temporal contexts. STB works closely with other state agencies, such as the National Heritage Board, Urban Redevelopment Authority, and the National Art Council to make Singapore a more interesting place. It also licenses tour guides and travel agencies (STB 1998b). It subsidizes the printing of promotional materials by travel agents, who in turn support the marketing and product policies of the agency. It also actively helps to develop tourism products for inbound travel agents.

While the Danish authorities take the role of facilitator among industry players, STB moves further and takes initiatives. It is involved in organizing activities, such as the annual Singapore River Buskers Festival, Great Singapore Sale, Singapore Food Festival, and festival street light-ups. It has also recommended and initiated the conservation of Chinatown, Little India, and other heritage places (Chang 1997b; Leong 1997). It has also produced the master plan for three new national museums: the Singapore Art Museum, the Asian Civilizations Museum, and the Singapore History Museum (STPB and the Ministry of Information and the Arts 1995; Ooi 2001a). In other words, STB both offers the infrastructure to develop Singapore into a tourism city, and is involved in shaping the culture-scape in the destination. It attempts to balance different interests of commercial tourism and local society by merging their economic and cultural contexts; tourism and local cultural life are shown to share complementary interests and motivations. This strategy is seen in the promotion of the destination branding.

A new destination identity, "New Asia—Singapore", was launched in January 1996 by the STPB. In its press release, it proclaimed that the positioning "better captures the essence of today's Singapore". The

previous 11-year-old "Surprising Singapore" position is considered no longer adequate to communicate "the breadth of the mature Singapore tourism product, or the vision of Singapore tourism" (STPB 1996:1). The agency's Director of Destination Marketing Division explained:

> We needed to find a branding that better reflects the new Singapore. We also need the new branding to reflect the new role of the Singapore Tourist Promotion Board, and the fact that we are now not just a destination but we are also a jumping off point to a culturally very exciting, very rich area of the world, plus an important tourism business hub. We also wanted something that would reflect that Asia is coming of age, we are listening to people talking about the [21st] century being that of the Asia Pacific. So, we wanted to include elements of these sentiments in the market place, into our branding. And it also gives us an opportunity to refresh the way we present ourselves in our brochures, posters and other collateral. As a result of these, we said we need a new branding (interview in 1998).

The new positioning re-packages and re-invents Singapore as a destination, with new interests, new products, and new tourism possibilities. A Destination Marketing Division brief expresses the new destination identity as follows:

> "New Asia—Singapore" expresses the essence of today's Singapore: a vibrant, multicultural, sophisticated city-state where tradition and modernity, East and West meet in harmony; a place where one can see and feel the energy that makes New Asia—Singapore the exemplar of the dynamism of the South-East Asia region (STPB 1997:1).

Since 1964, according to Chang (1997a), Singapore's positioning as a destination changed three times. In the 60s and 70s, it was promoted as "Instant Asia", where one could find an array of Asian cultures, peoples, festivals, and cuisine conveniently concentrated in a single destination. In the 80s, "Surprising Singapore" placed contrasting images of modernity and Asian exoticism together (Chang 1997a:548–555; Leong 1997). In the latest destination identity, the focus subtly shifts from promised pockets of mutually exclusive, diverse, and distinct ethnic cultures in modern Singapore, to the fusion of ethnic cultures and modern development. Metaphorically, while "Surprising Singapore" described a "salad mix" of various ethnic cultures in a modern environment, "New Asia—Singapore" paints the country as a "melting pot" of Eastern and Western cultures. This also presents Singapore as having a unique, constantly evolving culture, in contrast to the supposedly more exotic and pristine destinations of Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, and others in the Southeast Asian region.

In clarifying the new official concept, a brief states that "New Asia" can be found in Singaporean lifestyle, food, music and various attractions (STPB 1997). This again points out that Singaporeans life include both a modern environment and some old traditions. Practices such as hanging clothes to dry on bamboo poles in high-rise buildings and places like Suntec City, with its modern buildings organized according to the ancient Chinese belief of geomancy, are "New Asia" examples.

STB has also developed a number of "New Asia—Singapore" tour products since 1996 and launched the Tourism Development Assistance Scheme in 1998. The government, through STB, has allocated $50 million [S$80 million] to be used over ten years for this scheme. More money will be offered if necessary (*The Straits Times* 1998c). Among other things, products consistent with the new theme would be developed.

With the resources available, STB's presence is felt not just in the tourism industry but also in the wider local society. For instance, STB, with the cooperation of other state-related agencies and the mass media, has made "New Asia—Singapore" a cultural category and reality in Singapore. *The Straits Times* (1997a), Singapore's only national English broadsheet daily belonging to Singapore's only press holding company, compared "New Asia cuisine" to fusion cuisine invented in California in the mid-80s. This includes dishes influenced by kitchens of different cultures. In another issue, *The Straits Times* searched for "Singapore's original 'food people', who may have been the first to invent fusion fare" (1998b). Thus, the brand becomes a cultural category, identifies numerous local practices as "New Asia", a cultural category (*The Straits Times* admitted) "coined here about 18 months ago" (1997a). Therefore, the brand has apparently led to the rediscovery of culture or "invention of tradition" (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983).

The apparent acceptance of STB's strategy is also reflected in the responses from the interviews collected for this study. Except for one, private tourism operators interviewed would not voice any criticisms against STB or its strategies. This situation suggests their apparent whole-hearted support for the board, or their unwillingness to make known their disagreements during the interviews. It was reported in *The Straits Times* that the STPB is "pushing agents to update the stories they tell visitors and pack in more information on new developments" (1997b). In the same report, Vice-President (inbound) of the Singapore National Association of Travel Agents commended STB's move as "bold, daring, and good". She added that "[s]omething needs to be done to jolt the tour operators for everybody's good".

Private tourism operators in Singapore have come to receive and rely on financial support and good promotional advice from STB. Institutionally, besides licensing tourism activities in Singapore, it has made itself central in the industry by taking initiatives and mobilizing tourism places, so that private businesses have become relatively dependent on it. For instance, it has plans to make the Singapore River into a more significant attraction (*The Straits Times* 2001b). It called for new transport services along the river to encourage tourists and locals to use it for daily travel. The Chairman of the Singapore River Business Association, when asked what could be done to breathe life into the river, said:

> The Singapore Tourism Board is looking at introducing more varieties of river transport, such as motorboats, by the end of the year. If the plan is agreed, we should be able to change the way people use the river (*The Straits Times* 2001a).

The private sector's dependency on STB reflects the government's control over commercial activities in the city-state. Tourism businesses must cooperate with and depend on the board's support of their activities, to have access to the previously mentioned resources.

Like "Wonderful Copenhagen", "New Asia—Singapore" does not reflect the full carnivalesque character of the destination. For Singapore, too, has an unofficial destination identity, "Fine City—Singapore". The pun describes a fine (pleasant) city, and is also a cheeky reference to the fines (penalties) meted out on people caught for "uncivil" behavior, ranging from jaywalking to not flushing public toilets after use. This slogan pokes fun at the many regulations in the nation-state. "Fine City—Singapore" souvenir T-shirts and refrigerator magnets are commonly found. Although it deviates from "New Asia—Singapore", the authorities ignore it.

However, STB may push for locally unpopular tourism cultural products. For example, in September 1998, the board initiated the $60 million plan to revitalize Chinatown over three to five years (STB 1998a; *The Straits Times* 1999). The Urban Redevelopment Authority and the board wanted to ensure that a "'fine balance' is maintained between preserving the old and keeping up with the demands of the present" (*The Straits Times* 1998a). The revitalization project intends to bring back the old spirit of Chinatown, which, after years of modern development, has been sanitized. The plans outline "details to carve Chinatown into three sectors, create theme gardens and streets, and mimic a street bazaar, among other things" (*The Straits Times* 1999). STB's plans sparked heated debates between Singaporeans and the authorities, with the-then Minister for Information and the Arts acknowledging the disagreements between the board and the public (*The Straits Times* 1999). After some consultation with interested parties, the main plans remain and will be implemented.

On the other hand, Singaporeans welcome some of STB's projects. For example, every year since the early 80s, the tourism authorities organize street light-ups and activities in Chinatown during Chinese New Year, in Little India during *Deepavali* (the Hindu festival of lights), along Orchard Road during Christmas and in Geylang Serai during *Hari Raya Puasa* and *Hari Raya Haji* (Muslim festivals). These light-ups generate atmospheres of excitement, and at the same time, celebrate ethnic pride according to the official Singaporean Chinese, Malay, Indian, and Others ethnic mix model (Benjamin 1976; Chang 1997b; Leong 1997; Siddique 1990). These lively and colorful activities make Singapore an "eventful" city, and they are aggressively promoted to tourists. Although these events are state-organized and staged through STB, they have become popular with locals.

Unlike WoCo and DTB, tourism and local cultures are not clearly separated by STB. Arguing that tourism improves the quality of life of Singaporeans (National Tourism Plan Committees 1996), it implements plans like other top-down social engineering programs in the country, an approach that the Danish authorities shy away from. STB attempts to advance tourism and local cultural interests towards

harmony and balance by promoting existing aspects of local society to tourists, and also by engineering local society.

Local Politics and Tourism Strategies

WoCo and STB see the relationship between culture and tourism differently. This finding is reflected in how they package and maintain their destination identities. Table 1 summarizes the comparisons between the tourism authorities in Copenhagen and Singapore. WoCo, together with the DTB and Ministry of Business and Industry, use an infrastructure-provider approach in managing their industry. Although WoCo separates the spheres of activities in tourism and local cultures, it lets businesses package their own products, and at the same time encourages cultural institutions to welcome tourists. In comparing the Danish and Singaporean approaches and the contrasting political environments embedded in their tourism strategies, the Singaporean political environment will be used against the less intrusive approach of the Danes.

First, STB attempts to ignore the contextual boundaries of tourism

Table 1. Different Approaches of the Danish and Singaporean Tourism Authorities

	Copenhagen: WoCo and DTB	Singapore: STB
Cooperation with Industry	Build cooperation with other business agencies;	Cooperates with other state agencies in their social engineering programs;
	WoCo coordinates five tourism-related business networks;	Cooperates with and offers policy support and financial resources to tourism businesses, such as retailers, attraction operators, and travel agencies;
	DTB licenses tourist information centers around Denmark;	License attraction operators, travel agencies, and guides in Singapore;
Role of Tourism Authorities	Provide infrastructure for tourism businesses;	Provides infrastructure for tourism businesses;
		Initiates, manages, and provides financial and institutional support for tourism activities;
		Engages in state social engineering programs;
Public–Private Separation	Maintain separation between public and private sectors;	Merges private sector interests with public social interests;
Business and Culture Relations	Advocates that business influences on culture should be balanced by letting these two spheres of activities decide for themselves.	Advocates that business and culture complement each other.

and local cultural activities. By doing so, it is suggesting that tourists and locals can speak the same language and share common interests. The economic context can contribute to the making of local cultural life. Apparently, STB gives primacy to economic interests over cultural interests, as in other spheres of social life in Singapore (Clammer 1985; Haley and Low 1998; Kwok 1999; Leong 1997).

Second, economic and institutional resources are mobilized to achieve and maintain the goals and visions of STB. Generally, the government sets up policies, institutions, and mechanisms that encourage private businesses, unions, and other relevant partners to follow or obey official orders, visions, and strategies (Chan 1975; Deyo 1981; Haley and Low 1998; Heyzer 1983). In the case of tourism, private businesses are encouraged to produce "New Asia" products through incentive schemes. These operators would find it beneficial, or even necessary, to tap into the resources made available to them by the government (such as Tourism Development Assistance Scheme). As alluded to earlier, this governmental approach has partly resulted in private businesses becoming dependent on the leadership and support from the authorities. In contrast, the Danish tourism authorities do not have the resources or the forceful institutional mechanisms to ensure that private tourism businesses follow their leadership. They, in effect, keep the private and public sector interests separate.

Third, although STB does not have an explicit social engineering agenda, it works closely with other state institutions (such as the local mass media, Urban Redevelopment Authority, the National Heritage Board, the National Art Council and the police) to allow or promote certain tourism activities. The state agencies are difficult to separate (Leong 1997; Schein 1996). STB's strategies are achieved when different state agencies and departments coordinate their activities and help realize their agreed-to visions. In contrast, for instance, the Danish Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Industry and Business have different agendas and goals, and they do not have a comprehensive joint platform for the industry.

Fourth, Singapore is governed by a soft authoritarian regime (Chua 1995; Ooi 1998), having evolved into a one-dominant-party political system. The ruling People's Action Party has been in power since 1959. State policies and social engineering programs, popular or unpopular, can be implemented quickly because of the overwhelming majority of the ruling party in Parliament (Ooi 1998). Over the years, among many other things, the labor unions were brought under control by the government (Heyzer 1983), Singaporeans are encouraged to have more children if they are better educated (Quah 1990), and religious tolerance and mutual respect are sanctioned by law (Tong 1992). As discussed earlier, with the help of the mass media, "New Asia—Singapore" has become a subtle form of engineering an image of the country for the citizens themselves.

Finally, closely related to earlier points, under the strong and forceful leadership of the ruling party, Singapore has evolved into a pragmatic society (Chua 1995:68–70). People have come to accept a strong state role in promoting profit-driven culture, art, environmentalism,

and public programs (Chua 1995). The compartmentalization of economics from other aspects of social and cultural life is blurred. This intermingling is supposedly part of the "New Asia" approach. Singapore embraces foreign influences, adopts new technologies, seizes international business opportunities, and appropriates foreign cultures. While the state attempts to control "undesirable" foreign influences, this city-state constantly embraces the world economically. Its open trade policies often entail accepting many influences from the world. As a result the touristification of society is not necessarily an issue for many. For STB has the largely uncontested hegemony to redefine and blend tourism and local societal interests.

These points contrast with Danish society. For the last many parliamentary sessions, its government has had a narrow or no majority in the House. Proposals for almost any new policy and legislation face public criticisms from opposition and different interest groups. Dissenting views are freely expressed in the mass media. Since the state maintains a clear separation between private and public sectors, the government would offer only the infrastructure necessary to cultivate business. While WoCo attempts to stimulate the industry, it does not have the institutional muscles to dictate to the various private tourism businesses, nor does it have the financial resources to encourage these operations to adopt their comprehensive plans, even if they had them.

CONCLUSION

As a starting point, this paper posed two questions: What WoCo and STB's strategies are and how they implement them. The dialogic perspective is used as the conceptual framework in this paper. With this framework, whose presence is dominant but unspoken, the discussions have highlighted the meetings and clashes of tourism and local cultural contexts. These contexts entail different agendas and interests, which the tourism promotion authorities of Copenhagen and Singapore try to manage and balance. The voice of the promotion authorities is relatively loud in Singapore; STB's plans are supported by forceful policies and valuable resources. That is not the case in Copenhagen. This contrast reveals the diverse political circumstances within which the tourism promotion authorities are functioning. Their strengths, as industry leaders, are at least partly situated in the differing power they have and institutional support they can garner.

Therefore, the balancing of tourism and local cultural interests by promotion authorities has a political dimension, through which strategies are made and locally implemented. Thus, the extent to which tourism-driven cultural changes can be brought about by these authorities depends partly on the political ideology and institutional machinery in each destination. The examples of Copenhagen and Singapore illustrate the different extents and ways authorities can "touristify" their own local societies. As shown in Singapore, in the appropriate political environment, commercial interests can be forcefully and deliberately integrated into local cultures by the authorities.

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