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RELIGION AND IDENTITY IN INDIA'S HERITAGE TOURISM

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Abstract: The growing worth of heritage in the renegotiation and dissemination of identities has intensified conflicts over whose voice dominates heritage tourism representations. Therefore, this study compares the way India's heritage is represented by the Indian government, by the domestic tourism trade media and by the popular tourism media. The findings reveal that India is consistently represented as an ethnically diverse nation in which Hinduism preceded and prevailed over all other ethnicities/religions; a portrayal that consolidates the state's secular nationalist narrative. Furthermore, the trade and popular media emphasize nostalgic experiences of a sanitized colonial history while the government emphasizes accounts of resistance against colonial powers and of suffering due to Muslim atrocities. **Keywords:** heritage, religion, national identity, representations, politics. © 2008 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

INTRODUCTION

Religion makes itself appear as a habit of the heart, the hard core of a community's identity, as a thing that cannot change and is nonnegotiable… [and]… religious discourse tries to deny historical change and derives its power to an important degree from its success at doing so. Indeed, in that sense, religion is ideology, but it does not hide class dominance; it hides its own history, its own dependence on social movements, institutions, and political economy (van der Veer 1996:269).

All of us—as individuals, as nations, as ethnic and other entities— adapt the past to our presumed advantage. Such acts undeniably deform history for heritage aims; and heritage is further corrupted by being popularized, commoditized, and politicized (Lowenthal 2005:87).

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According to MacCannell (1992:1), ''Tourism is not just an aggregate of merely commercial activities; it is also an ideological framing of history, nature and tradition; a framing that has the power to reshape culture and nature to its own needs.'' The debate surrounding the role of tourism in the renegotiation and dissemination of history has gained much importance recently due to the increased realization that contested identities account for the world's most critical national and international conflicts. Although several scholars (Hewison 1987; Walsh 1990) have undermined the importance of heritage tourism and argued that heritage is a kind of bogus history; recently, others (Ashworth 1994; Johnson 1995; O'Connor 1993; Palmer 1999; Peleggi 1996; Pretes 2003) have argued that heritage tourism may be important in creating national identity. As ethnically diverse societies have the tendency for fragmentation, and as traditional tools of socio-political socialization (e.g., education, ethnic policy) have gradually lost effectiveness, heritage tourism has arguably emerged as a privileged tool for states to disseminate a shared cultural identity with their citizens (Graburn 1997). For example, Bossen (2000) reported that governments of newly independent nations like Singapore, and Malaysia have used touristic representations to foster nationalism. Several scholars (Johnson 1995; Light 2001; Palmer 1999; Pretes 2003) have mentioned that the promotion of heritage sites is important in the construction of national identity as the viewing of heritage sites by domestic tourists offer glances of a nation's past. While visiting these heritage sites, people of that nation understand ''who they are and where they have come from'' (Palmer 1999:315). Garcia Canclini (1995:108) suggested that heritage ''has to be preserved, not discussed or analyzed.'' But in the contemporary world, the growing worth of heritage intensifies conflicts over its representation. So, there are disputes over whose heritage should be preserved and made available for touristic consumption (Light 2001; Timothy and Boyd 2003). Some authors have even argued that ''conflict is endemic to heritage'' (Lowenthal 2005:234). Thus, heritage tourism is a dynamic and political practice in which dominant narratives of history, culture and identity are always disputed (Light 2001). Although recently some researchers have investigated the politics of heritage in tourism (Bruner 1996; Edensor 1998; Hall 1994, 1996, 1997; Johnson 1999; Peleggi 1996; Philip and Mercer 1999; Pretes 2003; Richter 1989, 1999; Timothy and Boyd 2003), the majority of tourism research has focused on ''non-critical, inventory, and physical conservation approaches to heritage'' (Pearson and Sullivan 1995 cited in Hall 1996:497).

Religion and National Identity

India is currently experiencing critical divisions in national identity and a major growth in domestic tourism. Since India achieved independence in 1947 from Britain, Governments have tried to build a sense of nation by uniting the diverse groups of the country. However, identity in India ''has centered around smaller groups based on religious, cultural and linguistic identity'' (Sabhlok 2002:25). Among these, religious

identity is the most prominent. India's civilization, which is believed to be over 5000 years old, has been enriched by consecutive migrations which were absorbed into the Indian way of life. As a result, the country's heritage is inextricably related to six major religious identities (i.e., Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Islam and Christianity). Out of these, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism were home grown, while Islam and Christianity were imported. The cultural past of these religious identities in India is reflected in their cultural heritage and architectural splendor. Moreover, religious heritage sites are the major tourist attractions that are intensely visited and incessantly promoted.

In India, religion is an integral part of the nation and religion pervades every aspect of life - from daily chores to education and politics. Religion also plays a vital role in the politics of India. For example, a political party's support in India to a great extent depends upon the religion the group recognizes (Chandra 2004). Various scholars (Brass 2003; Chandra 2004; Kothari 2002; Ludden 1996a,b) have argued that India's politicians increasingly exploit religious sentiments for short-term political gain, for example, to win elections, regardless of the longer-term social consequences to religious fundamentalism that their campaigns create. As many scholars (Brass 2003; Chandra 2004; Kothari 2002; Varshney 2001) have noted, the impact of this religious fundamentalism on public life in India has been one of the greatest challenges to Indian governments since independence. For example, in 1992, Hindu nationalists destroyed the disputed *Babri Masjid* mosque in Ayodhya in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Muslims believe that Babri Masjid was built in the 16th century by the first Mughal Emperor in India - *Babar*. However, according to the Hindus, Ayodhya is the birthplace of *Lord Ram*, and is thus a very holy pilgrimage destination for them. The demolition of the *Babri Masjid* in 1992 caused nationwide (also in Bangladesh and Pakistan) riots between Hindus and Muslims that killed more than 2,000 people and injured another several thousand. Religion is thus not only one of the most important facets of Indian history and contemporary life, but is also the major factor behind ethnic conflicts relating to national identity.

Politics of Representing the Past

Appadurai and Breckenridge (2001) argued that recently there has been a craze among anthropologists, folklorists, sociologists, historians and tourism researchers in writing about the politics of heritage. From the works of researchers emanating from various fields, it is apparent that heritage tourism is a dynamic and complex subject. In tourism research scholars are increasingly investigating the politics of heritage (Bruner 1996; Edensor 1998; Hall 1994, 1996, 1997; Johnson 1999; Peleggi 1996; Philip and Mercer 1999; Pretes 2003; Timothy and Boyd 2003). Although some scholars (Chronis 2005; Graham 1998; Lowenthal 2005) have claimed that the representation of heritage encompasses several agents who interact to co-construct a representation of the past, with a few valuable exceptions scholars have only considered

one voice in investigations of tourism representations (i.e., either the Government representation or some other agent's representation). Thus, previous research has overlooked important insights that might be gained from the comparison of representations of places by different agents (e.g., between governments and international representations [Bandyopadhyay and Morais 2005]). Accordingly, an examination of a government's heritage representation would not reveal whether the tourism industry embraces or resists that representation. Further, looking at tourism industry representations is also important because ''heritage fabricated by the media often seems more real because it is more familiar than the original'' (Lowenthal 2005:165). Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine what aspects of the heritages of six major religions in India are represented to domestic tourists by three different tourism representations in the country (Indian Government, Indian Trade and Indian Popular Media). In particular, the information from these sources was analyzed in terms of how tourism may be represented differently to the six major religions in India, as religion plays a vital role in politics and permeates all aspects of life in the country. According to Rana (2003 cited in Singh 2006:223), ''Of all domestic travel in India, over one-third is for the purpose of performing pilgrimage.'' Moreover, several Western and Hindu scholars, such as well-known American writers on Hindu-Muslim conflict in India (Brass 2003; Ludden 1996a, 1996b), India's Nobel Laureate in Economics Professor Amartya Sen (2005), and perhaps the most famous Indian historian Professor Romila Thapar (2004), have recently argued that in the contemporary politics of India the believers in the *Hindutva* movement are promoting a narrowly Hindu view of Indian history. As a result, according to Ludden (1996b:63), this promotion of a ''narrowly Hinduized view of Indian history fosters the congruence of a Hindu identity with a more general Indian identity.'' Similarly, Sen (2005:308) lamented,

> To see India just as a Hindu Country is a fairly bizarre idea in the face of that fact alone, not to mention the intermingling of Hindus and Muslims in the social and cultural life of India (in literature, music, painting, and so on). Also, Indian religious plurality extends far beyond the Hindu-Muslim division. There is a large and prominent Sikh population, and a substantial number of Christians, whose settlements go back at least to the fourth century CE... [and]... to this we have to add the millions of Jains, and practitioners of Buddhism, which had been for a long period the official religion of many of the Indian emperors (including the great Ashoka in the third century BCE, who had ruled over the largest empire in the history of the subcontinent).

Therefore, due to the above mentioned reasons, the authors chose to analyze available data in terms of how tourism may be represented differently to the six major religions in the country. Accordingly, two research questions guided the study: what heritage of six major religions in India is represented to domestic tourists by the three Indian tourism representations (i.e., Indian Government, Indian Trade, and Indian Popular Media)? and what are the differences in those representations, if there are any?

Study Methods

Individuals' images of destinations are constructed from the integration of multiple (and often conflicting) representations. This study examined and contrasted representations of India's heritage created by three actors: the Indian government, the Indian tourism trade media, and the Indian popular media. In order to find out how the Indian Government represented India's heritage; first, tourism articles related to the promotion of heritage tourism were collected from the Indian Tourism Ministry's *Newsletter* (available online since March 2002, one issue/per month) published between March 2002 to June 2005. The printed hard copy of the *Newsletter* was searched manually, one issue at a time. The *Newsletter* was selected for collecting the data as this is the main source of the tourism promotions by the government of India. In these *Newsletters,* all the latest developments in the Indian tourism industry are published. Second, contents relating to India's heritage were explored from the official tourism website of India: <www.tourismofindia.com> (now the website has been changed to <www.incredibleindia.org>). This is the Indian government's main tourism website which includes detailed information on various Indian destinations. Moreover, the website provides the historical background and updated information of the most popular heritage destinations.

To assess how the Indian Tourism Trade Media represented India's heritage, feature articles related to India's heritage were collected from India's premier tourism trade magazine: *Express Travel & Tourism* (available online since February 2001, one issue/per month) published between March 2002 and June 2005. The new name of *Express Travel & Tourism* magazine since December 2005 is *Express TravelWorld.* This magazine was selected because it is India's only national trade publication targeting travel and tourism professionals. This magazine often carries tourism news missing from other publications as it is developed to target the specific tourism industry professionals. Moreover, this magazine publishes statements and interviews of foremost tourism personalities, from both the private (e.g., Director of Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India) and the public (e.g., the Tourism Minister of India) sectors.

To examine how the Indian Popular Media represents India's heritage, relevant feature articles were collected from India's premier popular tourism magazine: *Outlook Traveller* (available online since June 2001, one issue/per month) published between March 2002 and June 2005. This magazine was selected as it is India's premier travel magazine representing the popular media. Travel writers from different religious backgrounds write about their travel experiences in different parts of India in each issue of this magazine. Sometimes, these travel writers travel to remote places of the country and describe the history of monuments unknown to the general public. These popular press publications and government documents are all written in English as this language is widely spoken in India, crossing ethnic and regional boundaries, and in India's strongest inbound markets (i.e., UK, USA, Canada and Australia). In India, 300 million people of its one billion

inhabitants are middle-class, and India's print media reaches over 220 million people (Dubner 2007). English is not only the international business language, but the language of aspiration for up-and-coming Indians.

A three year timeframe from March 2002 to June 2005 was selected for this study for several reasons. First, because the effects of India's economic liberalization in 1991 gradually trickled down to the tourism industry and it was during this period that the domestic and international tourism experienced unprecedented growth. Second, the Indian government's tourism *Newsletter*, and most of the tourism magazines in the Indian tourism industry including the *Express Travel & Tourism* and *Outlook Traveller*, were all lauched in 2001 and 2002. Third, in 2002, two major tourism promotional campaigns were implemented by the Indian government. One campaign focused on attracting Western tourists - *Incredible India*, and the other focused on both the Indian diaspora as well as the Indian domestic tourists - *Discover India, Discover Yourself.*

The research questions in this study were explored empirically through qualitative means. Namely, tourism representations of India's heritage published by the Indian Government, the Indian Tourism Trade Media, and the Indian Popular Media were content analysed. Content analysis was used as this technique ''attempts to apply a rigorous and structured analysis to what are difficult, contentious and usually subjective cultural objects'' (Pritchard and Morgan 2001:172) and because it can be used ''for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages'' (Holsti 1968:608). Several scholars in tourism research have used content analysis of texts and images (Buck 1977; Jenkins 2003; Thurot and Thurot 1983; Uzzell 1984). Pritchard and Morgan (2001) recommended that content analysis should involve more than one researcher coding data independently and then comparing classifications for assuring the verifiability and reliability of the findings. Accordingly, all three authors of this manuscript were closely involved in the data analysis. The authors have different nationalities (India, Portugal and USA) bringing cross-cultural perspectives to the analysis. The primary author (from India) took the lead role in the data analysis but the other authors were closely involved through a process of interactive consensus (i.e., compare and contrast themes until consensus is reached; Creswell 2003).

The data encompassed every monthly issue of *Newsletter*, *Express Travel & Tourism*, and *Outlook Traveller* from March 2002 to June 2005. Feature articles containing the keywords, 'heritage', 'architecture', 'temple', 'fort', 'palace', 'Church', 'festivals', 'pilgrimage', 'Hindu', 'Muslim', 'Christian', 'Buddhist', 'Jain', 'Sikh' and 'Colonial' were identified and printed for subsequent analysis. The Indian Government's tourism website (www.tourismofindia.com) was also a source of primary data. This site was not organized into articles; therefore, the method used for identifying relevant content was adapted to the multilayered format of such a web site. In this approach the aforementioned keywords were used to identify relevant pages, links, downloadable documents or sections. As in the case of the periodic publications, all relevant data were printed for subsequent analysis.

REPRESENTATIVE DISSONANCE IN THREE INDIAN TOURISM REPRESENTATIONS

A systematic evaluation of the data revealed that India's heritage was constructed through six themes: 1) India's glorious past and its current modernity, 2) India's blend of religions and cultures, 3) atrocities of Muslim emperors, 4) atrocities of colonial rulers, 5) resistance against oppression, and 6) India's colonial heritage. A subsequent comparison between the three agents of tourism representation (the Indian Government, the Trade Media, and the Popular Media) revealed the representations were similar in regards to the first four themes, but that they differed regarding the two latter themes.

Similarities in Three Indian Tourism Representations

Glorious Past and Modernity. The most prominent similarity among all three representations of India's heritage consisted of descriptions of the country's glorious past alongside with comments about its modern present. The slice of India's history selected as its anchor to emphasize the 'Golden Age of Ancient India' was the period between the 3rd millennium BCE and before the Muslim conquest of India in the beginning of the 2nd millennium CE. Interestingly, descriptions of India's history were systematically accompanied with descriptions of India's prosperous modernity, with particular focus on lodging and shopping facilities and services. This amalgamation of the past and present was strongly emphasized in the data:

> Delhi blends an historic past and a vibrant present. Delhi has some of the finest museums in the country. Legend has it that the Pandavas, the August heroes of the epic Mahabharata, originally founded Delhi, then called Indraprastha, around 1200 B.C. Present day Delhi is built around the ruins of seven ancient cities. Delhi - a canvas that reflects the complexities, contradictions, beauty and dynamism of a city where the past co-exist with the present (Indian Tourism Ministry website 2005).

> One of the country's most industrialised and progressive states, Gujarat showcases a perfect blend of the modern milieu and age old traditions (Dhruva 2002—*Express Travel* & *Tourism* magazine).

> A booming urban culture amid and reminders of a grand past... [and] ... home of the capital of India, Delhi is the fusion of eight former capitals under different rulers of India. The centre of Indian politics and now a throbbing metropolis, Delhi has all you're looking for—flamboyant restaurants and nightclubs, haute couture boulevards, up market shopping malls, polo grounds, imperial gardens and much, much more (Wadhwa 2003—*Outlook Traveller* magazine).

According to Bhabha (1994) and Smith (1997), even when nations are modern, they make claims of antiquity. According to several eminent Indian scholars (Chandra 1993; Sen 2005; Thapar 2004), the

emphasis on India's glorious past is evidence of resistance to extant hegemonic representations of India as backward, stagnant, mysterious, chaotic, and poverty-stricken. As Ludden (1996b:9) opined:

> Such habits of phrasing are not ephemeral or unique to the US Press. They represent cultural patterns that are deeply ingrained. Western accounts of India have long stressed the exotic features that make India foreign to modern, Western, readers: mysticism, yoga, ritual, caste, untouchability, cremated widows (sati), female seclusion (*purdah*), 'holy war' (*jihad*), and for that matter, communalism. The cultural connotations of these patterns of usage indicate the ideological legacy of orientalism, which created the religious stereotypes of Muslims, Hindus, and others that even today rationalize Western power in the world.

Therefore, as argued by the Indian scholars mentioned above (Chandra 1993; Sen 2005; Thapar 2004), post-colonial nationalist historians criticized the negative colonial theories but they did not replace these with alternate theories to explain the past, however, it is the Hindu nationalists (believers in the *Hindutva* movement), who have generalized India's entire past into a single frame 'glorious' to emphasize that there was once a time in Indian history when everything was great. This glorification of the *Hindu Golden Age* is ''in some ways an attempt to assuage the hurt of having been reduced to being a colony'' (Thapar 2003:8). In the second case, the likening of India's grand past with the modern present by all the representations was to stimulate the sense of connection between the two periods. Smith (1997:50) argued that ''the return to a golden age suggests that, despite the ravages of time and the vicissitudes of social change, we are descendants of the heroes and sages of that great age.''

Blend of Religions & Cultures. All three representations repeatedly celebrated the country's blend of religions and cultures. Comments highlighted how people from different religions enjoy the festivals together, which is well demonstrated in the data:

> Let's take our incredible heritage of festivals. Every change of season is marked by a festival. Every community has its own calendar of festivals [making for] at least 9,270 festivals being celebrated every year. But that is only part of it. Every temple, mosque, dargah, church and gurdwara has a festival in addition to the general festivals of its community. Christians, for instance, celebrate Christmas and Easter. Many individual groups of Christians also celebrate the special festivals associated with their church like the famed Bandra fair. Similarly, Sikhs celebrate Guru Nanak's birthday, but the beautiful gurdwara in Dehra Dun attracts thousands of devotees of all faiths when it celebrates its colourful Jhanda Mela (Gantzer and Gantzer 2001 – *Express Travel & Tourism* magazine).

Edensor (1998) argued that there are two main historical reasons behind the Indian Government's secular national narratives. First, before the Colonial period, the national narratives celebrated the *Hindu Golden Age* to confront the Muslims. And, in those narratives, the emulation of

non-Muslim heroes like *Shivaji, Maharana Pratap, Guru Gobind Singh* and *Maharani Laxmibai* who had fought against the Mogul rule was encouraged. Second, during the Colonial period, to mitigate the eroding effect of Colonial rule on India's nationalism the government sought to engender a national identity that was acceptable to all. To achieve that, a national historical narrative that underplayed religious conflict and highlighted religious acceptance had to be constructed. The present study found that these representations have continued to be important, all media surveyed portraying the Mughal period lavishly, for example, emphasizing on how the Mughals gifted India with some of the finest structures in the world. There are however many descriptions in all three representations, where a site was portrayed as an Indian creation - not solely by Muslim or Hindu. This harmony between the Hindus and the Muslims is reiterated in the descriptions of *Qutb Minar* Monument in Delhi:

> The surrounding archaeological area contains funerary buildings, notably the magnificent Alai-Darwaza Gate, the masterpiece of Indo-Muslim art (built in 1311), and two mosques, including the Quwwatu'l-Islam, the oldest in northern India, built of materials reused from some 20 Brahman temples (*Express Travel & Tourism* magazine 2002).

This message of harmony in India was also emphasized in the description of the *Golden Temple* of the Sikhs:

> Its architecture represents a unique harmony between the Muslims and the Hindus way of construction work and this is considered the best architectural specimens of the world. It is often quoted that this architecture has created an independent Sikh school of architecture in the history of art in India (Indian Tourism Ministry website 2005).

Also, the Indian Government's representation of Christian festivals in India emphasizes their secular appeal. It is mentioned that Christian festivals are celebrated by all religions in India, for example, the description of the church festival in Pondicherry below ends with an assurance that devotees of all faiths attend that festival:

> The Eglise de Notre Dame des Anges on Rue Dumas was built in 1865. The church has an oil painting of Our Lady of Assumption that was donated by Napoleon III. The Eglise de Notre Dame de Lourdes situated in Villiyanur on the outskirts of Pondicherry is built on the same pattern as the Basilica at Lourdes in France. The church festival conducted in June every year draws devotees of all faiths (Indian Tourism Ministry website 2005).

Thus, in the contemporary Indian scenario, the message of 'unity in diversity' of all religions is reiterated in all three representations.

Atrocities of the Muslim Emperors. Another significant similarity in all three tourism representations of India's heritage is an emphasis on the nation's suffering from Muslim destruction and tyranny. The Indian Government's representation places more emphasis on this theme than the tourism trade media or the popular travel media; however, all three representations have abundant references to how the

Muslim Emperors destroyed numerous Hindu, Buddhist and Jain monuments. This theme is well illustrated in the following quotes:

> A Shiva Temple has stood here for 1500 years but the present temple is not an old one because over the centuries it has been destroyed many times by Muslim invaders. The Mughal Emperor Akbar sponsored the rebuilding of a great temple to Shiva but his great grandson Aurangzeb destroyed it again and built a mosque at the site, which now stands beside it. But the traditions of this city go too deep to be uprooted, it has always possessed the will to endure and the temple rose once again (Indian Tourism Ministry website 2005).

> Tourist brochures will tell you that there were once 7,000 temples here but then, inevitably, the Muslims came, and now there are fewer than 500 (Patel 2001—*Express Travel* & *Tourism* magazine).

> Reputed to be the most lavish temple in India, stories of its wealth, glory and fame reach legendary proportions. Revenue collected from ten thousand villages was spent on the maintenance of the temple. Two thousand priests attended to the daily rituals of the temple deity and a huge bell with a thick gold chain was used to announce the commencement of the prayers. The arched dome, intricately carved doorways and the graceful figurines of the goddesses all enhance the exquisite experience of Somnath. The first blow to Somnath in 1025 AD, was delivered by Mahmud of Ghazni. Romila Thapar, famed Indian historian commented that, these effects were to remain for centuries in the Hindu mind and to colour its assessment of the character of Mahmud, on occasion, of Muslim rulers in general (Wadhwa 2003—*Outlook Traveller* magazine).

By describing the destruction and tyranny of the Muslim rulers, all three representation sources imply that the Muslims are alien to India and wanted to establish their presence in the country by destroying the already existing Hindu culture (Edensor 1998). Eminent Hindu historian Partha Chatterjee (1993:102) commented that the image of Muslims in India is typically characterized as ''endowed with a national character: fanatical, bigoted, warlike, dissolute, and cruel.'' Thus, these narratives resemble earlier Western imperialist writings as they engender support for the politics of hate against Muslims.

Suffering under Colonial Rule. The Indian government, trade media and popular media representations of India's heritage were also similar in their description of colonial atrocities; albeit, once again, the Indian government's representation placed more emphasis in this theme than the others. Namely, there were frequent descriptions of how colonial rulers killed hundreds of innocent Indian people in shooting sprees and how they incarcerated and tortured freedom fighters. Below is a quote from the Indian government representation describing the atrocities carried out by Colonial rulers.

> To the left of Chandni Chowk; there was once a gate across the road that was called *Khuni Darwaza* or the Bloody Gate. The British reoccupied Delhi on 20 September 1857, after fierce resistance by rebels. On 21 September 1857 Bahadur Shah surrendered to Hudson at Humayun's tomb. On 22 September three Mughal princes, Mirza Moghul, Mirza Khizr Sultan and Mirza Abu Bakr were brought by Captain Hudson in a bullock-cart and shot dead at *Khuni Darwaza* near Delhi Gate. He ordered the princes to take off their upper garments and killed them one by one. The three bodies were carried to the Kotwali and stripped off all the clothes except a rag around their loins, and laid on stone slabs outside the building before they were buried. The reoccupation of Delhi was followed by massacre and plunder and it was even suggested that whole city be razed to the ground. Mirza Ghalib, the great Urdu Poet, who was a witness to the killings and plunders, wrote in his Dastambu: 'God alone knows the number of persons who were hanged. The victorious army entered the city along the main road. Whomsoever they met on the way was killed.' The *Khuni Darwaza* still stands in its solitary grandeur (Indian Tourism Ministry website 2005).

The following quotes refer to a prison built in the Andaman and Nicobar islands of India for patriots who raised their voice against the British Raj:

> Cellular Jail stood mute witness to the tortures meted out to the freedom fighters, who were incarcerated in this Jail... [and] ... this colossal edifice has mutely witnessed the most treacherous of inhumane atrocities borne by the convicts, who were mostly freedom fighters (Indian Tourism Ministry website 2005).

> They built a horrendous monument of human torture known as Cellular Jail in 1906 to crush the bodies and the spirit of the freedom fighters (Podder 2003—*Outlook Traveller* magazine).

Reflecting on the process of national identity building in young nations, Smith (1991) commented that colonial periods are often seen as periods when national pride was eroded and that as a result colonial influence is typically rooted out later to allow nations to find their uncontaminated selves. Accordingly, seeing India's colonial period vilified in tourism representations provides additional evidence that heritage tourism is intimately related to the process of identity building in India. Furthermore, Schopflin (1997:29) explains that ''myths of redemption and suffering'' and ''myths of unjust treatment'' are often created to reinforce the value of nationalism and self-determination.

Differences in Three Indian Tourism Representations

Resistance. The Indian Government's representation differed from the other two representations on the aspect of resistance to colonial influence. The Indian Government representation elaborately emphasized that although the colonial rulers gave English names to several ancient heritage architectures/destinations, their proper names have

been reinstated according to their original heritage. However, this perspective is completely missing from the other two tourism representations. For example, the Indian Government representation mentioned that the Colonial rulers gave English names to places which originally had Hindu names:

> the Elephanta Island, originally known as Gharapuri (fortress city) has 7th century rock cut Hindu caves situated atop a hill. This cave temple complex is dedicated to Lord Shiva (Indian Tourism Ministry website 2005).

Similarly, in Bangalore, the State High court, which is a magnificent building constructed in 1867 in the Gothic Style of architecture was renamed *Attara Kacheri* (local *Kannadiga* language). The same process is mentioned in respect of the Victoria Gardens in Mumbai, which has been renamed as *Veermata Jijabai Bhonsle Udyan* (in the name of a local famous Marathi woman—*Jijabai Bhonsle*). Also, the main train terminus in India's financial capital Mumbai was named Victoria Terminus by the British. It has been renamed *Chhatrapati Shivaji* terminus. This supports the name change of the old cities of Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta, which have been renamed Mumbai, Chennai, and Kolkata respectively to rid them of colonial associations. The Indian Government's efforts in this portrayal of the Hindu heritage is nowhere more prominent than the mention of the Gateway of India architecture in Mumbai:

> This 25-meter high stone archway is the landmark of Mumbai. It was designed by George Wittet in the 16th century Gujarat style and was built to commemorate the visit in 1911 of King George V and Queen Mary to India. The Gateway was formally opened by the then Viceroy, the Earl of Reading, on December 4, 1924... [and]... near the Gateway stands a statue of the renowned Hindu philosopher, Swami Vivekananda and facing the Gateway is an equestrian statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji installed in a garden (Indian Tourism Ministry website 2005).

Thus, it was stressed that though the British rulers designed the Gateway, it was according to the Gujarat (one of the Indian states) style. Also, although the Gateway is associated with colonial heritage, which the Indian government also embraces, it wants to make a point that the Hindus were not short of renowned leaders/personalities (here in the case of two statues, *Swami Vivekananda* who is arguably India's greatest spiritual celebrity, and *Chhatrapati Shivaji* who was arguably one of the country's most respected Hindu rulers). This resistance, it can be argued, is targeted in opposition to the Western colonial influence which, according to Greenfield (1992:222 cited in Hosking and Schopflin 1997:198) is ''a psychological state resulting from suppressed feelings of envy and hatred.'' Also, it is emphasized by the different representations how bravely the freedom fighters fought against the Colonial rulers, and some authors described how the people of India honor them by erecting their statues. For example, the Indian Government in its representations celebrated the Martyrs Memorial in the state of Bihar in the memory of freedom fighters who fought against Colonial atrocities:

> Life-size statues in front of the old secretariat compound have been put up in memory of seven brave young men who faced bullets for the freedom of the country and sacrificed their lives in August 1942 in the historic struggle for India's independence during quit India movement (Indian Tourism Ministry website 2005).

The Indian Government's resistance to Colonial influence by narrating the bravery of the freedom fighters, erection of their statues and war heritage supports several scholars (Ashworth 1990; Edensor 1998; Raivo 2000) arguments that these resistances glorify national character and culture, and arouse powerful nationalist feelings. This way of attributing histories and myths about national heroes re-enforces India's post-colonial nationalism.

Colonial Heritage. Although there is a similarity in the representation of Colonial heritage, the styles of portrayal of different representations is different. For example, there are differences in the way Colonial heritage is celebrated in the Indian Government representation and the Indian tourism industry representation. The Indian Government's representation focuses on the magnificence of colonial architecture in India, and occurrences of famous incidents, which is apparent in the description of Fort St. George in the south Indian city of Chennai, and Victoria Memorial and St. Paul's Cathedral in Kolkata:

> Fort St. George - The British East India Company built it in 1640 AD. The fort houses St. Mary's Church and fort museum. St. Mary's Church the oldest Anglican Church in India built in 1680. This ancient prayer house solemnized the marriages of Robert Clive and Governor Elinu-Yale, who later founded the Yale University in the States (Indian Tourism Ministry website 2005).

> This is one of India's most beautiful monuments built between 1906 and 1921 on the lines of white marble. It took 20 years to build at a cost of 10 million rupees. The Prince of Wales formally inaugurated it in 1921. Set in beautiful garden grounds, the Victoria Memorial houses a large bronze statue of the Queen Empress Topped with a moving angel. The statues of Motherhood, Prudence, Learning, Art, Justice, Architecture and Charity are brought from Italy. It also has a 5 meter tall bronze winged figure of Victory, weighing 3 tons. It houses paintings, manuscripts, and other objects of historic value in its Museum and Art Gallery (Indian Tourism Ministry website 2005).

> St. Paul's Cathedral measures 71m in length 24m in width the spire rising 60m high. The interior has exquisite scriptural scenes. Above these are the two Florentine frescos. In the centre of the eastern sector is the magnificent alter piece. The massive gold-gilt plate presented by Queen Victoria to Bishop Wilson, and the western windows are of special interest (Indian Tourism Ministry website 2005).

There are several reasons why all the three representations celebrate India's colonial heritage. As colonial monuments churches and museums are big tourist attractions in India, so most of them are kept intact and celebrated. For example, there are some unique architectural styles like the Victorian Bungalows that the British designed for India, which they later made also in England (Alsayyad 2000). This celebration of the colonial heritage in India also implies that its dissonance is not perceived strongly enough to risk foreign aid donors and tourists (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996), supporting Bandyopadhyay and Morais's (2005) assertion that in the case of India, the building of national identity is inextricably bound up with imperialism, colonial history, and now the hegemony of world capitalism. Interestingly, the Indian tourism industry representation also emphasizes tourism experiences related to the Colonial heritage; for example, to be an Englishman for a day in an erstwhile English-style cottage in a hill. One article in the Indian tourism representations pointed out that the British influence is quiet visible in Ooty:

> In the hand rolled cigars, chocolate and cheese one enjoys here. You also have the popular derby, and hunt held annually (Wadhwa 2003—*Outlook Traveller* magazine).

Also, one author mentioned how the older population in Goa misses the relaxed and calm life during the Portuguese rule:

> Dr Ribeiro still remembers Portuguese rule and a time when life was more relaxed and calm, 'susegada' as they say in Portuguese. But even in these fast-changing times, history has been preserved with delicate care over the years. Antique chinaware, mainly brought from Macau, laden with exquisite motifs, is displayed right next to ancient mirrors in rosewood frames hanging from the wall. As I cross the main courtyard of the house I feel like I have entered a place caught in a time warp (Sarkar 2004—*Outlook Traveller* magazine).

Thus, for the Indian people who have experienced the lifestyle during colonial India, nostalgia is one of the major reasons to visit a place, and the tourist industry promotes that. As Lowenthal (2005:4) mentioned, ''If the past is a foreign country, nostalgia has made it the foreign country with the healthiest tourist trade of all.''

CONCLUSIONS

This study has generated several insights into how tourism is interconneted with the socio-political dynamics governing India's contemporary state and society. The study showed that in India the ways in which the various religions are represented reflect important socio-political ideologies. As heritage is culturally related and comparative, it can be represented in various ways by different agents of tourism promotion. Some authors (Ashworth and Tunbridge 1990; Henderson 2002; Light and Prentice 1994; Shackley 2001; Timothy and Boyd 2003) have mentioned that the concept of market planning for heritage tourism is usually made within the public sector or in a

partnership between both public and private sectors. A systematic comparison of the Indian Government and Indian Tourism Industry's representations of the country's heritage of its six major religious groups revealed that there is some consistency in the representations. The findings suggest that the Indian government creates dominant national narratives which are accepted by the industry and integrated in its narratives in trade and popular media.

There is however a few significant differences between the Government and the tourism industry in the way India's heritage are portrayed. For example, the Indian government emphasizes atrocities and heroic resistance in it's representation of colonial heritage, while the tourism trade and popular media circumscribe their portrayals of colonial heritage to the physical attributes of era architecture and to de-contextualized hedonic pleasures of the colonizing powers. This contrast suggest that the Indian government may be using heritage tourism to instill feelings that India endured and overcame much suffering while under foreign control and in this way may be engendering support for its nationalist ideologies. The Indian trade and popular medias' ability to de-contextualize and/or sanitize colonial heritage for popular consumption, unearths a few questions worthy of additional inquiry. Has the Indian public overcome its resentment towards its past as a colony to the point that individuals are interested in experiencing the lifestyles of its former oppressors? Does the Indian public consume heritage as post-tourists who see tourism experiences as inauthentic performances fulfilling their hedonistic needs?

It is apparent from this study that the Indian Government's efforts to build Indian national identity are inextricably linked to a Hindu-centric national identity. Although India has the second largest Muslim population in the world, a Muslim President, a Sikh Prime Minister, a Christian leader of the Congress Party and more Christians than all the Scandinavian countries put together, the discourse of heritage and national identity of India discussed in this study is the notion of relatively affluent upper caste Hindus. As Partha Chatterjee (2005:279) opined ''official nationalism has a performative as well as a pedagogical function, in which the performative mode displays the unity and singularity of the nation, whereas the pedagogical mode reckons with the fact that all citizens cannot be treated equally because all are not 'proper' citizens.'' This study suggests that, although the Indian Government attempts to promote ethnic pluralism, the tourism representations examined in this study actually promote the idea of a Hindu centric national identity and vilify other religions. Thus, it can be argued, even after 60 years of India's independence, the idea of secularism is superseded by conflicts among various religions in the country. Amartya Sen (2005:316) appropriately suggested:

> …[A] serious problem with the narrow reading of Indian culture as Hindu culture is the entailed neglect of many major achievements of Indian civilization that have nothing much to do with religious thinking at all… [and]… the winter of our discontent might not

be giving way at present to a 'glorious summer', but the political aban-
donment of secularism would make India far more wintry than it cur-
rently is. ◼

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