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INDIGENOUS TOURISM IN VICTORIA: PRODUCTS, MARKETS, AND FUTURES

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to present a review of indigenous tourism in Victoria, in particular examining product, markets, and issues confronting indigenous tourism. A discussion of the key issues in the literature will ensue. The term 'indigenous tourism' will be defined, and a brief history of Aboriginal tourism in Victoria will be presented. The applicability of the Uluru model of hand over and lease back arrangements concerning National Parks and other publicly owned lands will also be considered.

DEFINITION OF INDIGENOUS TOURISM

When speaking of the Aboriginal people of Victoria it is possible to refer to them in many ways - by their language or tribal names (for example: Yorta Yorta, Wembawemba, Wergaia), or by the main language groupings (Kulin, Ganai, Mara), or by the label 'Koorie' that is now commonly accepted as a term for the Aboriginal peoples of southeast Australia. Rather than use any of these terms, the term 'indigenous' has been chosen as it is both inclusive of all the above distinctions as well as being descriptively neutral.

This report concerns the peoples who are indigenous to the lands we now know as Victoria, and includes indigenous peoples from other parts of Australia who now live in Victoria.

Indigenous tourism, as a field of study, is relatively new, and is considered to have begun with Valene Smith's (1977) anthropological study which was concerned with the impacts of tourism on indigenous peoples. The central issues raised in this seminal work were the potential for the marginalization of indigenous tourism entrepreneurs, concerns about authenticity, commoditization through the packaging and sale of culture, and acculturation as foreign tourists influence local culture.

Historically, one of the primary motivations in travel and tourism has been a desire to see and experience other cultures. Some have argued that the essence of tourism is a desire to visit the 'sacred sites' of other cultures, to experience their sacred places, and to learn from them in an effort to achieve greater self-understanding. Others suggest that we may find travelling instinctively pleasurable, given favourable conditions, because we have a common nomadic or semi-nomadic heritage (Leiper 1995). Travel was central to human existence, and rather than being exclusively focussed on meeting the needs for food and shelter, nomadic itineraries included time for cultural and recreational pursuits.

In Europe and the Middle East, the 11th to 15th centuries was an era of mass pilgrimage, and pilgrimage tourism established certain forms of tourist behaviour which remain concerns today. These include such things as interest in sites of religious significance and concern with discriminating between authentic and inauthentic relics - now expressed in relation to many kinds of cultural attractions.

Hinch and Butler (1996:9) have defined indigenous tourism as 'tourism activity in which indigenous people are directly involved either through control and/or by having their culture serve as the essence of the attraction'. This definition is certainly broader than that of Parker (1993:400) who considers indigenous tourism to be 'any tourism product or service owned or operated by Aboriginal people'.

In Hinch's and Butler's framework the degrees of indigenous control over tourist activities and the extent to which the tourist attraction is based upon an indigenous theme are indicators of indigenous tourism. Hinch and Butler have considered that indigenous control and indigenous themes are defining features of indigenous tourism. We would add a third feature, that of indigenous places, for whilst it is possible to consider indigenous tourism occurring at places that are not considered Aboriginal places (for example, an Aboriginal-owned and operated outlet in the United States retailing indigenous Australian art and craft), the inclusion of this spatial dimension ensures that the discussion is inclusive and comprehensive. Whilst all of

Victoria is, in one sense, an indigenous place, we use indigenous place in this strategy to refer to locations that have significant indigenous cultural heritage values.

From this typology it is possible to identify four categories of tourism activities:

1. Tourism activities controlled by indigenous interests which feature indigenous places and/or indigenous themes;
2. Tourism activities controlled by non-indigenous interests which feature indigenous themes and/or indigenous places (examples would be guided tours by tour companies to Aboriginal rock art sites, with the tours and interpretation conducted by non-Aboriginal guides; art galleries owned and operated by non-indigenous interests retailing Aboriginal art and artefacts; and restaurants appropriating indigenous cuisines);
3. Tourism activities controlled by indigenous interests which do not feature indigenous themes but which may occur at indigenous places (examples are native-owned casinos commonly found in the United States of America, this category will not be considered in this paper);
4. Tourism activities controlled by non-indigenous interests which feature neither indigenous themes or places within which Aboriginal people may or may not be employed. This category, in effect, is what we may call 'mainstream tourism', and its various sectors such as visitor services, hospitality, travel, and attractions. As such it may be characterized as non-indigenous tourism. Brokensha and Guldburg (1992) found that employment of Aborigines by the private sector in hotels, tourist operations, and tourist transport is negligible.

This paper will primarily focus on categories one and two, which revolve around tourism focussed on indigenous cultural themes and indigenous places, differing in the degrees to which indigenous communities have political control of these activities.

On the basis of control, tourism activities may range from those over which the indigenous communities have no control whatsoever, to those where they have total control, including ownership and management interests. In between these extremes it is possible to identify a number of gradations including the influence of indigenous peoples in performing a number of roles such as employees, advisory board members, and formal partners in development. Examples here include the Brambuk Living Cultural Centre in Halls Gap which is managed and operated by indigenous communities which do not have freehold title to the site and have entered into a management agreement with the relevant land managing authority. Rock art tourism in the Gariwerd/Grampians National Park is an example of an activity over which the indigenous community has minimal control, with representation on management advisory boards and other committees.

The degree to which tourism attractions are based on indigenous themes range from that of complete focus on indigenous culture to a total absence of indigenous themes. In discussing this category it is important to recognise those tourist destinations where indigenous tourism may not currently exist, or may be nascent (beginning to exist), but which are known to possess significant indigenous heritage values on the basis of archaeological sites and/or historic and present associations. An example is Lal Lal Falls, south of Ballarat, which is a primary attraction because of its natural values, yet it also has considerable indigenous values in that it is known to be one of the living sites of Bunjil, the creator spirit. Mt Arapiles, is primarily world-renowned for abseiling, yet has significant indigenous values. The indigenous values of both places are relatively neglected despite the fact that they are the focus of tourism brochures produced by local Aboriginal communities.

Indigenous tourism, by definition, also includes the tourism behaviour of indigenous peoples, that is the consumption of tourism products by indigenous peoples, in the sense of the demand-side of the demand/supply equation. However, the study of the tourism consumption of Victorian indigenous peoples in and away from Victoria, and of non-Victorian indigenous peoples in Victoria, is outside the focus of this paper.

The literature on indigenous tourism in Australia has generally been confined to tourism in remote communities, particularly in Western Australia and the Northern Territory. This research has focussed on the impacts of tourism on remote communities and addressed such issues as joint land management arrangements in Aboriginal-owned National Parks, self-determination and control, and authenticity and sustainability. For example, studies of impacts in northern Australia include Palmer (1985); Dillon (1987); Altman (1987a,b; 1992); the Central Land Council et al (1991); and Reynolds (1992). Studies of National Park tourism and related management issues include Kesteven (1987); Altman and Allen (1991); Davis (1992); Birckhead, De Lacy and Smith (1993); and Hill and Press (1993). General studies on remote tourism include Altman (1988; 1989; 1995); Ross (1991); and Mercer (1995).

Finlayson's (1991) study of tourism in rural and urban eastern Australia is one of the first to study indigenous tourism in this setting. Altman and Finlayson (1992) discussed Aboriginal tourism and sustainability in both remote and rural and urban southeast Australia; Gostin (1995) reviewed tourism at Mungo National Park; and Padasian (1996) explored cultural sustainability at the Brambuk Living Cultural Centre in Victoria.

Other studies that are relevant include those that are concerned with aspects of the tourism industry that relate to indigenous peoples. Examples include Cohen's (1992) study of tourist arts; Cohen's (1993) study of touristic images of native peoples; Blundell's (1994) paper on representations of indigenous peoples as tourist souvenirs; Hollinshead's (1996) study of the promotion and projection of Aboriginal Australia; and Sofield's and Birtles's (1996) model of cultural opportunities for indigenous peoples.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF INDIGENOUS TOURISM IN VICTORIA

Despite the views of some commentators, such as Reynolds (1992:114), who argues that 'traditional Aboriginal society does not have any equivalent to tourism', a strong case can be made that indigenous involvement in tourism in Victoria, has a long and rich heritage. The following nineteenth century activities are presented as precursors of contemporary forms of tourism. They are forms of behaviour, many of which remain prominent characteristics of tourism today:

- tour guiding, in the sense that indigenous people actively guided European explorers, sojourners, and travellers through their countries providing them with interpretation and commentary (George Robinson during his many journeys through Aboriginal lands in the 1840s was often accompanied by local people who guided him through their countries and who took great pride in telling him the names of features of the land and other information);
- involvement in hospitality by staging diplomacy festivals such as 'Tanderrum' in which strangers were given 'freedom of the bush'. When Robinson travelled through western Victoria in the early 1840s many first meetings with Aboriginal clans saw tanderrum festivals staged (Clark 1990). A tanderrum was staged by the western Victorian Aboriginal communities at the opening of the Brambuk Living Cultural Centre in December 1990, and is believed to have been the first performance of this festival for over a hundred years. The Tandurrum Aboriginal Cultural Ceremony has now become one of the major cultural events in Victoria;
- participation in event-tourism, staging what might be called annual harvest festivals in which non-local people were invited to participate and celebrate (examples include eeling at Lake Bolac; emu hunting at Mirraewuae swamp near Caramut; large annual gatherings at Lake Buloke, Lake Terang, and at Wirrengrin Plain; and annual gatherings during the whaling season at Tarerer, a swamp between Tower Hill and the Merri River (see Clark 1990);
- involvement in the handicraft industry: whether voluntarily or involuntarily, Aboriginal material culture was appropriated by collectors in the nineteenth century (JH Wedge, La Trobe, and Robinson were avid collectors in the 1840s (see Sculthorpe 1990, and for discussion of later collectors see Griffiths 1996). Nineteenth century Victorian artists include Barak, Tommy McRae, Johnny Dawson, Billibellary, and Woorook-koonong (see Sayers 1996). Indigenous Victorians were increasingly

photographed in the nineteenth century and became the subject of tourist paraphernalia (postcards and such) (Dann 1996). An example is Wilmot from the Warrnambool district (see Critchett 1980);

- participation in sports-tourism through such things as Aboriginal people showcasing their skills such as boomerang throwing, wrestling, and other talents at events and festivals (Clark 1990), and later playing cricket, within Victoria and in England (Mulvaney 1967). Aboriginal men like Jacky Wallace, who spent much of his life in the Dergholm area, was a noted rough rider and steeplechase rider, who spent some time travelling with a show as a steeplechase rider (Clark 1990, see also St Leon 1993);
- Aboriginal places became the basis for recreational visits and tourism, such as visits to Aboriginal stations such as Coranderrk, Ebenezer, Lake Condah, Framlingham, and Lake Tyers from the 1870s (see Attwood 1989; Jackomos & Fowell 1991); and picnics and visits to the Billimina (Glenisla) Aboriginal art site in the Gariwerd mountains from the 1870s by local station workers and later by the local community at that and other art sites (Clark 1991).

ROCK ART TOURISM IN VICTORIA

Victorian Aboriginal rock art has been the object of tourism and recreational visits since the 1870s (Clark 1991). In 1929 members of the ethnological section of the Field Naturalists Club of Victoria and the Anthropological Society of Victoria visited the Billimina site to obtain tracings for a model of that shelter that was to be shown at an 'Exhibition of Aboriginal Art' staged in July by the National Museum of Victoria. The Field Naturalists Club were initially responsible for publicising the location of art sites, for conferring site names, and for encouraging the Forests Commission of Victoria in constructing the first protective grilles at art sites in 1937.

In the 1950s the main players in the management and protection of rock art in the Gariwerd-Grampian mountains were the Forests Commission, the National Museum of Victoria, the National Trust, local Field Naturalists clubs, local government, the National Parks Association, and the Grampians and District Tourist Association.

In the late 1960s the Victorian government took action to preserve Aboriginal relics and sites in Victoria. The Museum of Victoria prepared a Draft Bill to make provision for the Conservation of Archaeological Sites and Aboriginal Relics. The Victorian Aboriginal community was not consulted in the drafting process, and the legislation was passed on the mistaken assumption that Victoria's Aboriginal population had been dispossessed of their cultural heritage and no longer maintained links with traditional tribal areas.

In June 1972 the Victorian parliament passed the Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act. In February 1973 the Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Office was established, and administratively attached to the Museum of Victoria. The Relics Office was restructured in 1975 and became part of the Ministry for Conservation and became known as 'Victoria Archaeological Survey'. The Relics Office had seven priorities: data collection by implementing a site register system; determining significance of archaeological sites; surveys of areas considered likely to be affected by future developments; salvage work and environmental assessments; surveillance and protection of archaeological sites; an educational programme; and Aboriginal involvement.

In December 1974, Dr Michel Lorblanchet, a visiting rock art specialist from France, employed by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies as a research consultant, was employed to undertake a comprehensive documentation of 20 art sites in the Grampians. Reporting in February 1975 Lorblanchet recommended a reorganization of rock art tourism. This could be achieved by suspending unplanned tourism access to five shelters where he recommended the removal of all locational signage. He considered that art site tourism should be concentrated on three shelters - sites now known as Billimina, Ngamadjidj, and Bunjils. He recommended that tourism be allowed to occur at other public sites but only in the company of guides. With regard to interpretation, Lorblanchet suggested these three sites would be best

served by information centres on Aboriginal rock art. In time this recommendation for three centres was collapsed into one centre, which eventually became the Brambuk Living Cultural Centre (see below).

Lorblanchet noted that some of the farms adjacent to art sites in the Grampians National Park benefited from rock art tourism. One small farm sold drinks to tourists who visited the Ngamadjidj site. The owner of a host farm at Glenisla station had published a brochure to attract tourism. The brochure included a photograph of one art site and marketed the fact that art site tours were available to guests who stayed at his homestead. Lorblanchet believed guided tours of this nature were an ideal form of tourism activity because it guaranteed protection of the sites and enabled tourists to receive information and interpretation. He considered this the best type of tourism to remote sites in the National Park. Tour guides could maintain sites from an archaeological point of view, as well as instruct and lead groups of tourists. He believed tour guiding should become a full time occupation and that at least one Aboriginal person could be so employed in the Grampians.

LAKE CONDAH TOURIST DEVELOPMENT

The Lake Condah Mission was established in 1867 by the Church of England. Although officially closed in 1919, some families continued to live at the mission until the 1950s. The Victoria Archaeological Survey undertook archaeological surveys in the Lake Condah region in 1975, 1977, and 1980-81 and documented significant archaeological heritage including complexes of fish trap systems and stone house sites.

In October 1981 the Director of the Ministry of Conservation wrote to the Chairperson of Victoria's 150th Anniversary celebrations regarding the possibility of funding a project focusing on the Aboriginal cultural heritage of the Lake Condah Mission and its environs. In 1983 the Gundidjmara community formed an Elders Committee comprising 27 Elders from the region to represent the 3,000 community members in providing input in to the Lake Condah Project. This group became known as the Kerup-jmara Aboriginal Elders Co-operative. In 1983 planning commenced for a project to purchase portions of the former Reserve for the development of a tourist project to be managed by the community in conjunction with the National Parks Service. The Lake Condah Management and Planning Committee (LCMPC) was formed to prepare 'an action plan for the establishment of an area of cultural and natural significance in the Mt Eccles/Lake Condah district'. As part of this action plan the 'Lake Condah Project' was developed in association with the Victorian 150th Committee. Funds totalling $750,000 were set aside for the restoration of the Lake Condah Mission.

In 1984 the LCMPC decided to reconstruct the dormitory and two or three timber buildings at the mission site. The reconstructed dormitory was intended to be used as a museum. Throughout 1984 and 1985 VAS undertook further surveys of the region.

In 1985 the State Government granted inalienable freehold title over the land formerly occupied by the Church of England Mission at Lake Condah to the Kerrup-Jmara Elders Corporation. Title over the land was given as part of a compensatory agreement between the Corporation and Alcoa that proposed to establish a smelter at Portland which involved destroying important cultural sites. As part of the compensation package Alcoa agreed to contribute $50,000 annually to the Corporation for the upkeep and maintenance of the Condah mission.

The Lake Condah Mission tourism development was officially opened in September 1985. Units were built near the former mission site, capable of accommodating 70 people.

In 1989 White (1990) noted that the Diamantina Touring Company, and the Victorian Tourism Commission and the Kerrup Jmara Elders Corporation were operating Aboriginal study tours from the Mission complex, and to sites at Allambie and Lake Condah and the stony rises. Eight study tours were organized for 1989. In 1989 the enterprise floundered. Finlayson (1991) suggests reasons for the demise included factionalism, mismanagement and embezzlement.

In February 1990, the Victorian Tourism Commission, after negotiation with the Kerrupjmara Elders Corporation, entered into a two year lease of the Lake Condah tourist project. At the conclusion of the lease their intention was to return the management of the complex to the Kerrup Jmara Corporation. A strategy plan was developed that included reflooding Lake Condah so that people could see some of the systems of fish traps in operation; a range of tour packages were produced; a native plant walk was developed around the complex; product information was developed, and the accommodation units were refurbished.

With the restructure of the Victorian Tourism Commission in 1991, the terms of the lease were transferred to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. When the lease ended control of the mission complex reverted to the Kerrup Jmara Corporation. Tourism at the site has again floundered, attributed to a lack of community consensus over the objectives of conducting tourism in the area (Larrieu 1996). Community members opposed to tourism have periodically expressed their rejection of tourism by 'squatting' in the tourist cabins, effectively closing the complex to tourists.

BRAMBUK LIVING CULTURAL CENTRE

The Relics Office fully supported Lorblanchet's 1975 recommendation for an interpretive centre near Billimina - one of the major art sites in the Grampians National Park. In July an application for a National Estate grant was submitted in an attempt to introduce 'planned tourism' into the Grampians, revitalising the art for general public education and to provide more protection to the art as well. The nub of the scheme was to construct four full-scale facsimiles of four shelters representing four different regions of the Grampians. The application was rejected owing to lack of funds and the project lapsed.

When the Relics Office was transferred to the Ministry for Conservation the project was reactivated in June 1976 only to lapse again through shortage of available funds.

In September 1981 the Public Works Department and the Ministry for Conservation produced a feasibility report and design proposal for an Aboriginal art museum at Halls Gap. It was proposed to house six full-scale reproductions of select rock shelters in the museum along with dioramas and an exhibition space for audio-visual displays.

The project was reactivated in 1982 when the Tourist Development Committee of the Ministry for Conservation expressed an interest in the project. In August 1983 VAS suggested the 'Grampians Interpretive Centre' be incorporated into Victoria's sesqui-centenary year. In May 1984 the Ministry for Tourism proposed establishing an Aboriginal Art Museum in the Grampians as part of the Victorian Tourism Strategy Plan.

In October 1984 a meeting was held in Halls Gap to enable Aboriginal input and involvement into planning of tourism and other developments specific to Aboriginal interests in the Grampians National Park. Members of the Goolum Goolum Cooperative, Kerrup-jmara Elders Council, Lake Condah Aboriginal Cooperative, National Parks Service, Victorian Tourism Commission, and the Department of Premier and Cabinet were invited to attend. The outcome was an interim committee comprised of 11 members: six Mara and Goolum Goolum representatives and five from the National Parks, Premier and Cabinet, Victorian Tourism Commission, Museum of Victoria, and RG Gunn, a rock art consultant who had conducted extensive surveys in the National Park. The terms of reference of the interim committee included decisions relating to the siting of the Aboriginal centre and its relationship to the National Park Visitors Centre; further investigation of art sites and their interpretation; and the design and content of the Aboriginal centre. The committee became known as the 'Grampians Aboriginal Interpretive and Cultural Centre Committee'.

In 1985 the Labor government agreed to provide one million dollars to build the interpretive centre in the Grampians National Park.

In May 1986 the centre committee resolved that Aboriginal membership of the committee should be on the basis of ties and associations with the Grampians area. In October 1986 the name 'Brambuk' was adopted

in deference to the ancestral heroes the Bram brothers who had created much of the surrounding landscape and named its features. The Brambuk committee was comprised of representatives from the Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Cooperative, Gundidjmara Aboriginal Cooperative, Framlingham Aboriginal Trust, Kerrupjmara Aboriginal Elders Corporation, and the Portland-Heywood Aboriginal community. In 1987 Brambuk became an incorporated body.

The Brambuk Living Cultural Centre was formally opened in December 1990, but did not become fully operational until September 1991. In many respects the Brambuk centre is the fulfilment of Lorblanchet's 1975 recommendation.

KOORI TOURISM UNIT, VICTORIAN TOURISM COMMISSION (1989-1991)

As part of the then Cain Labor government's Social Justice Strategy, the Victorian Tourism Commission sought to establish an Aboriginal Tourism Unit to facilitate the development of tourism enterprises which would create employment for Aborigines in Victoria and bring forth pride in Aboriginal cultural heritage.

1988 AGB: McNair Aboriginal Tourism Survey

In 1988 the Victorian Tourism Commission commissioned AGB: McNair to undertake market research and assess the public's interest in the development of Aboriginal tourism in Victoria which would be managed and presented by the Aboriginal community (AGB McNair 1988).

Research objectives:

- assess the market potential of people in Victoria, NSW, ACT, and SA who are interested in learning more about Aboriginal culture and heritage;
- determine the socio-economic profile of people who have been actively exposed to Aboriginal cultural heritage and those who are interested in knowing more about it;
- determine people's motivations for wanting to learn more about Aborigines and their cultural heritage;
- determine the comparative market acceptance of various alternative Aboriginal cultural heritage experiences (eg. museum displays, guided tours of Aboriginal sites, study programmes).

The survey findings were that around 40 percent of respondents interviewed (a total of 711 people) were interested in learning more about Aboriginal culture and heritage; that the interest tended to be more for 'hands on' experimental learning; reasons for the interest in Aboriginal cultural heritage were likely to be increased visibility of Aboriginal needs and desires and an awakening of interest in Australia's 'total' history, rather than European only, attributed to the bicentenary; and finally that the Aboriginal community tourist attraction would need to be historic and focus on current Aboriginal skills and abilities.

July 1988: 'Aboriginal Culture and Tourism' Conference, Halls Gap

A two day residential conference held at the Grampians National Park Visitors Centre in Halls Gap, attended by 111 participants, including representatives from 26 Aboriginal organisations in Victoria and South Australia. The conference was designed to assist Aboriginal community leaders who were considering tourism as a potential path to economic self-sufficiency and self-determination (Victorian Tourism Commission 1988).

Gariwerd placename restoration

One initiative, stemming from the direct intervention of the Minister for Tourism, Hon. Steve Crabb, was the reinstatement of indigenous placenames for landscape features and rock art sites in and around the Grampians National Park. It was Crabb's view that as this park was one of Victoria's most significant Aboriginal places, it was appropriate to reinforce this importance by reinstating the traditional Aboriginal placenames where they were known. Research began in 1989 and in 1990 a member of the Framlingham

community, Lionel Harradine, joined the senior researcher employed by the Koorie Unit, Ian Clark, to complete the research and prepare the submission to be presented to the Place Names Committee of Victoria.

The submission was presented in May 1990 and a process of public consultation ensued. Considerable controversy surrounded this initiative and it was through this effort that the Koorie Unit gained public exposure, not all of which was positive. Despite the willingness of both the Koorie Unit and the Brambuk communities to embrace dual naming, public opposition - particularly in western Victoria - was widespread. In 1991 the Place Names Committee accepted most of the recommendations of the submission. The name of the Grampians National Park became Grampians Gariwerd National Park. When the Kennett Liberal National Party government was elected in 1991, one of their first initiatives was to announce that the dual name for the National Park was to be officially dropped.

1990 inventory of Aboriginal tourism product initiatives

In 1990 produced an inventory of Aboriginal tourism product initiatives current at that time (White 1990). The inventory was prepared from information provided by Aboriginal groups, government agencies, and tourism industry personnel. It aimed to identify and compile a resource guide of current and proposed Aboriginal tourism initiatives in Victoria.

Victoria was divided into eight 'Aboriginal tourism zones':

1. Murray River;
2. Goldfields area;
3. Goulburn area;
4. High Country;
5. South East Coast;
6. Melbourne and Dandenong Ranges;
7. Western District;
8. Grampians.

White reported that in January 1990 indigenous tourism in Victoria offered the following products:

Dance groups:

Latje Latje Dance Group (Mildura): 10-15 young people
Barwing Dance Group (Geelong): seven members

Art and craft outlets:

Kiah Craft (Mildura): jewellery, pottery, wood carving, boomerangs, t-shirts, paintings
Njernda Cultural Learning Centre (Echuca): t-shirts, windcheaters, boomerangs, emu eggs, wood carvings, artefacts, paintings

Cultural centres/Keeping places (including art and craft retail):

Aboriginal cultural learning centre (Cann River)
Brambuk Living Cultural Centre (Halls Gap)
Hamilton Keeping Place
Shepparton Keeping Place

Accommodation/Hospitality

Lake Condah Mission (Kerrupjmara)
Rocklyn Motel (Halls Gap, Brambuk)
Camp Jungai (Rubicon)

Guided tours

Lake Condah (Kerrupjmara, Diamantina Touring Co. & VTC)
Gariwerd/Grampians rock art (Brambuk)

In mid-1991 the Victorian Tourism Commission was restructured and the Koorie Tourism Unit was axed. The VTC's involvement at Lake Condah was transferred to the then Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands. Other unfinished initiatives, such as the massacre site trail, became the responsibility of the tourism branch of CFL, but given that there was no movement of staff from the Koori Tourism Unit to CFL, these initiatives soon lapsed.

KEY ISSUES IN INDIGENOUS TOURISM AS THEY RELATE TO VICTORIA

There is a growing perception that 'aboriginality' is one element that makes Australia a distinct tourist destination. According to Blundell (1994:252) it is not surprising that the cultural artefacts of colonized Aboriginal people have been used by colonizing groups in processes of nation building. Often these artefacts become national symbols and treasured components of a country's national heritage. Graburn (in Blundell 1994) observed that colonial countries such as Australia and New Zealand have had difficulty establishing a national identity and have had to differentiate themselves from the mother country and also from one another. To do this they have looked for a source of national identity within the colonized country itself.

In Australia the domain with the greatest potential has been the landscape and the indigenous peoples. The cultural forms of indigenous Australians have been 'borrowed' as Australians construct their national identity. Locally derived signs allow these countries to differentiate themselves as they become recognized national symbols. They also become useful promotional tools in attracting international markets. In our case Aboriginal art and boomerangs and other forms of Aboriginal culture often appear in travel advertisements. It should come as no surprise then that when international travellers visit Australia they often purchase mass-produced representations of Aboriginal forms as mementos of their trips.

Brokensha and Guldburg (1992) in a study on cultural tourism in Australia found that Aboriginal culture was a key element of 'alternative or cultural tourism' which a 'significant and growing proportion of international and domestic tourists are seeking ... as a major component of their holiday'. The assumption is that the 'Aboriginal product' is important, or potentially important, for both international and domestic tourists. Headlines in feature articles include 'Australia: tourists want more Aboriginal contact (MacMahon 1993:14)', and 'Americans tempted by Aboriginal culture (Pender 1995:11)'. In 1991 international visitors comprised six percent of tourism visitation in Victoria, interstate visitors 21 percent, and intrastate 73 percent (Bureau of Tourism Research 1991).

Altman (1992) has suggested that the evidence suggests that rather than a primary attraction, indigenous culture may be at best a secondary attraction. In this schema a primary attraction is an attraction that is influential in a tourist's decision to visit a place. A secondary attraction is a feature or product that is known about before a person visits a destination but which is not influential in shaping that person's itinerary. A tertiary attraction is something unknown pre-trip, but is discovered by a person visiting a region (Leiper 1995).

A survey of international visitors to Australia and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts, conducted in 1993 by the Australia Council, found the following:

- Forty eight percent of international tourists to Australia were interested in seeing and learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures;
- Over a third of visitors undertook an activity related to indigenous culture, such as visiting a gallery or museum, or taking a tour;
- The value of tourist art purchases by international visitors was estimated at $46 million a year in 1991, an increase from $30 million in 1990 (Department of Communication and the Arts 1994:100).

The major forms of Aboriginal involvement in tourism in Australia has been simplified by Altman (1992) into five broad types:

1. The manufacture and sale of art and material culture:

- often indirect and requires little interaction with tourists
- mass tourism may provide a potential market for souvenirs and artefacts
- danger of 'artefact culture', of local artists and craftspeople valuing their work in terms of whether it will sell to tourists, thus artistic formulae may lose their meaning
- inappropriate use of cultural forms?
- use of rock art motifs on tea towels, t-shirts, souvenirs

Artefacts made only for tourists may be meaningless in terms of traditional ritual and symbol, however as noted by Blundell (1994) these objects may be produced not primarily as representations of indigenous cultures, nor as mementos of some experience of contemporary Aboriginal life, but as keepsakes, or souvenirs.

- key issue is to produce material for the fine art market or the tourist market

Considered by Brokensha and Guldburg (1992) as the most important avenue of Aboriginal involvement in the tourist industry.

Cohen (1992) has observed that in the initial development stage of the production of tourist art the artisans appear to be 'culture brokers' or 'marginal men' - people well versed in their culture who have some acquaintance with and experience of the wider society. These people often serve as teachers of advisers to less experienced artisans entering the tourist market. He found that entrance to the tourist market involves a reorientation of production, often far-reaching changes. 'In some instances, indeed, new kinds of art emerged in response to tourist demands... these have only a tenuous connection with the traditional arts of the group. In other cases, declining or forgotten arts have been revived through the emergence of a tourist market (Cohen 1992:10)'. Production also changes from being primarily for an internal audience to a generally well-to-do external touristic audience.

The principal motive in turning to commercialized production is invariably economic - whether to supplement a principal source of income, or to turn art production into the principal source itself.

Traditionally art was produced on a small scale, either as part of widely practised leisure activities of members of households, or as specialised occupations. The tradition to tourist arts generally does not alter these small-scale forms of production, although in some instances large-scale workshops and production-line factories may emerge. Cohen suggests that there are two principal reasons for this continuity:

- - the hand made character of the products is their principal trademark
- - the limited resources of most local producers and the difficulties they experience in securing finance limit the expansion of enterprises and confine them to capital-extensive techniques of production.

Tourist art enterprises, therefore, are typically based on low investments in raw materials, implements, and machinery and they are labour rather than capital intensive. Units of production are small, and tourist art is predominantly produced by individual artisans working alone, or with the help of family members. They

are basically cottage industries: work is usually done within the home or in a workshop attached to the house.

Production of art for a tourist market often changes the structure of production. Natural raw materials are often replaced by industrial materials, for example industrial paints are used instead of naturally-found ochres. Many raw materials are bought by the artisan rather than prepared exclusively by the artisan themselves. Thus the range of activities is restricted compared with earlier times when the work of artisans embraced the entire production process.

Tourists prefer products that remain in some sense handmade. In most cases modern tools have replaced older implements. Electric tools are now used to work in wood, stone and metals.

Generally artisans are removed from the market. The simplest new organisational form of production is the putting-out system where an entrepreneur distributes orders and materials to individual artisans and pays for their work on a piece-rate basis. The artisans continue to work from home and in-effect become de facto employees of the entrepreneur. Another organisational form is producer associations, or cooperatives. In some cases these have not been spontaneously established by producers, they often suffer from management problems and internal strains and conflicts. Invariably, the more successful artisans, who have the least to gain from co-operation, tend to leave them and deal as individuals in the market place.

Cohen (1992) has identified three principal means of marketing tourist arts that are of relevance to this study:

a) *Direct purchase*: the tourist visits the artisan's locale and purchases directly from them.
   - Principally found in underdeveloped commercialization where no organized, wider marketing system has yet emerged.
   - Has the advantage of creating direct contact between producer and consumer and of remunerating the producer with the full price of their wares.
   - No need for intermediaries which reduce the producer's share in the final price of his/her product.

b) Purchase from local markets and stores in producers' countries: products are purchased in markets or stores that carry local art and craft products. They arrive there either directly from the artisan or through a local intermediary.

c) Purchase from centrally located tourist shops and galleries in the producers' country: the tourist visits a principal tourist centre and purchases Aboriginal products in shops and galleries selling a wide variety of national products. Airport terminal shopping centres and boutique shopping centres such as Southgate are examples of this.

Cohen (1992) has identified eight tensions that are emerging in tourist arts:

traditionalism vs innovation in motifs and designs

The traditionalist trend is a return to earlier, sometimes archaic or prehistoric motifs and designs; the innovative trend ranges from the adaptation of styles, motifs and designs to suit tourist tastes through to the development of new synthetic styles.

naturalism vs abstraction motifs

Naturalism or the destylization of products sees the products become more accessible to an external audience, since the motifs are more readily recognizable. On the other hand it is possible to identify a trend towards progressive abstraction or stylization.

standardization vs individualization of products

Standardization is the trend towards more standardized mass production of tourist art objects, especially in small, cheaper products intended as souvenirs and in craft production for the export market.

Individualization of products refers to artisans becoming aware of the value of individuality in western art, seeking to imprint their work with a personal imprint and to become artists known by name. Artisans sign their names to emphasize their individuality and thereby increase the value of their product.

simplification vs elaboration of motifs and designs

Some tourist art is becoming gradually simplified and fine details are being eliminated since their meaning is often lost to an outside audience. This contrasts the trend of some artisans toward conspicuous elaboration, seeking to enhance their wares by adding ornamentation and embellishment.

restraint vs exaggeration

On the one hand there is a trend to adapt to the more subdued tastes of the western public; on the other a call for exoticism, even grotesqueness, in tourist arts.

gigantism vs miniaturization

In some contexts tourist art occasionally reaches gigantic proportions; more often they are reduced in size to facilitate production and reduce the price of products and make it easier for tourists to carry them or display in their homes.

introduction of novel materials vs return to 'native' materials

The trend towards substitution has been stimulated by the exhaustion of native resources, convenience in production, and preservation and maintenance of the products. As a reaction to this trend is a purist segment of the market which expects a return to 'native' materials, such as natural materials in basketry, natural colours instead of synthetics.

product for show vs use

Art produced for functional uses as opposed to art produced for display and show purposes.

2. ***A range of Aboriginal run small-scale enterprises, some of which provide a distinct Aboriginal product, others a mainstream service:***

    - arts and crafts wholesale and retail outlets
    - Aboriginal-owned and operated stores that service tourists
    - Aboriginal-owned and operated accommodation outlets
    - small-scale dance troupes that perform on as required basis

3. ***Enterprises that revolve around cultural tours:***

    - generally small-scale which emphasise particular elements of Aboriginal life:
    - hunting and gathering, rock art, interpretation of landscape, flora and fauna, or a combination of all four elements;
    - gregarious individuals likely to be the most willing to become national park rangers.

Many tourists with an interest in indigenous cultures are becoming well-informed in indigenous matters, they have basic questions they are keen to have answered. What happens if the Aboriginal guides are unable to answer these questions?

- it is difficult for some people to admit that they are unable to answer what may seem basic questions, such as the meaning of certain rock art, the meaning of certain words
- given the repetition of certain questions some guides will decide to give certain answers that are fabrications, and whilst this may satisfy the ill-informed enquirer, if the inquirer is informed they are likely to be aware the answer is 'made-up', depending on the personality of the enquirer this situation can 'blow-up' if they refuse to acknowledge the subtleties that may explain why the guide has fabricated the answer

4. ***Aboriginal cultural centres or visitor centres:***

MacMahon (1993) noted that although the main focus of Aboriginal tourism was the Northern Territory, Aboriginal performing art groups, cultural centres, and park rangers were important components of Australia's eastern state tourism product. Padasian (1996) confirmed that visitor centres and significant heritage sites, such as rock art sites, have become the most popular forms of attraction in the southern states whereas tourism in northern Australia revolves far more around Aboriginal people and their country.

MacCannell (in Padasian 1996) has warned that 'touristified' cultural groups are often weakened by a history of exploitation, limited resources and power and have few natural attractions to deflect the tourists' attention away from the intimate details of their daily lives.

5. ***Involvement in tourism as investors in large-scale tourism infrastructure developments such as hotels and motels or attractions:***

   - in Victoria the Brambuk communities purchased the Rocklyn Motel in Halls Gap in the late 1980s and in 1996 the Swan Hill Aboriginal Cooperative purchased Tyntynder Homestead, an important local visitor attraction.

MacCannell (1976) has highlighted that an interest in the 'real life' of others has become a primary factor in travel motivation, seeing tourists actively seeking authentic and meaningful experiences. Expectations and satisfaction levels are considered to be determined by authentic tourist experiences. Authenticity would appear to result from the character of the relationship between tourists and indigenous hosts. Padasian (1996) found that tourists in successful careers were less likely to be satisfied with staged interactions with hosts. Thus cultural tourism increases the need for Aboriginal people and communities to regulate access to themselves. They require protection of their personal privacy, and control of the ways in which Aboriginal culture is presented and affected (Ross 1991). However, depending on the market, overly controlled or staged interactions may leave tourists dissatisfied and disguntled.

The presentation of indigenous culture to tourists is a legitimate concern of Aboriginal people:

- promotional literature and non-indigenous guides often portray Aboriginal people in sensational, outdated, unrealistic and unfavourable ways.
- the tourism industry's portrayal of indigenous culture as homogeneous and failure to appreciate the regional diversity among Aboriginal cultures
- leads to unfavourable comparisons between art and other cultural aspects of different regions
- importance of guide books, which have the potential of promoting appropriate tourist behaviour and introducing readers to new ways of understanding indigenous cultures, are yet to be tried (Ross 1991).

Aboriginal involvement in the tourism industry is small-scale, embryonic, and highly vulnerable. Despite the fact that the Australian tourism industry uses Aboriginal culture to promote Australia as a tourist destination, Aboriginal people have found minimal employment in the industry.

Altman (1987) suggests that commercial aspirations for involvement in tourism may include the desire for employment and/or income generation (salaries, wages, profits and subsidised services).

Benefits of involvement in tourism for Aboriginal communities:

- both men and women can be successful owners and operators
- employment opportunities exist for all age-groups
- employment opportunities exist for low-skilled and high-skilled
- it provides a positive working environment and lifestyle
- it provides an opportunity to reflect cultural pride
- tourism can be developed on a small or large scale
- tourism respects Aboriginal environments

- through tourism cultural education is possible
- tourism provides an opportunity where Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people come together, Aboriginal people can share with dignity and respect those things they choose to share. Also provides a positive setting to pass knowledge on to the youth in communities.

Tourism is asserted to be a potential source for employment for Aboriginal people, particularly in rural and remote regions, where they are considered to have both comparative and locational advantage in the provision of tourism services and elements of Aboriginal cultures. In the Northern Territory two primary tourist destinations - Kakadu and Uluru National Parks - are owned by Aboriginal people and leased-back to, and run, by the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service. Both destinations contain significant natural and cultural values.

Altman (1989) asserts that in northern Australia the economic impact of tourism on Aboriginal communities is limited but positive. This claim is based on factors that include the limited possibilities for levying lease and license fees, demand for artefacts, and the limited returns from the provision of indigenous tourism such as bush tucker tours. The two main avenues for economic advancement in the north are ownership of enterprises and employment in the tourism industry.

Indigenous participation in tourism in Australia, and in Victoria in particular, has been sporadic, small-scale, and largely indirect.

Commercial viability is a major hurdle for many Aboriginal enterprises, and joint ventures with non-Aboriginal entrepreneurs might be required initially.

Aboriginal communities need to be provided with realistic information about the risks inherent in tourism activities, about the problems of seasonality, and elasticity of demand (Altman 1987). A lead-time of several years is often required before business units begin to return net profits.

Indigenous people involved in tourism need to ensure they have a sound knowledge of the tourism industry and understand mainstream contemporary developments in order to be innovative in their work environment (Padasian 1996).

The indigenous tourism product must be tailored to the appropriate market segment. Market research is critical. The development of marketing strategies is critical - there must be detailed knowledge of the products offered by indigenous communities. We need to know who is interested in these products, and then need to determine the best marketing and promotional plans to saturate these potential markets with this information.

- cultural tourism will often need to be provided as professional entertainment for the mass market
- potential exists for marketing authentic experiences, but the market is specialized and limited
- should regions be promoted as destinations with significant indigenous values or should indigenous operators advertise.

Aboriginal involvement in the tourism industry, particularly through the sale of arts and crafts has potential

Strategies need to be policy-realistic: tourism will not provide an instant panacea for Aboriginal economic disadvantage

For sustainable Aboriginal involvement in the tourism industry to occur a gradual approach of product development, testing and marketing may be the best approach

Impact and sustainability issues

Tourism involving Aboriginal places has the potential to produce negative environmental impacts.

Tourism has been a force for preservation of significant sites and has provided new markets for crafts and traditions that were threatened with extinction (Reynolds 1992:117).

The financial returns from tourism may be so low or inequitably distributed that they might undermine an incentive to participate in tourism. Costs may outweigh benefits.

- cultural tours can only accommodate small numbers of people for limited periods and the need to price tours competitively makes overall commercial viability virtually impossible.

Aboriginal people seeking to become involved in tourism need to have a long-term commitment to the industry and complex interactive processes.

Most Aboriginal people have had limited management or business experience;
shortage of competent Aboriginal entrepreneurs often sees a reliance on outsiders which frequently results in mismanagement and embezzlement;
capital is scarce owing to high poverty and welfare dependence;
individuals often face significant educational and cultural hurdles in attempts to establish tourism ventures or even to communicate with tourists;
reliance on government financial assistance often results in the establishment of enterprises with corporate structures that stifle initiative and undermine incentives to perform;
the nature of Aboriginal community politics may mean significant opposition to enterprises from sections of participating communities or groups
Parker (1993:401) states the challenge is to be 'culturally oriented 'business' people'.

Need to do proper planning, need to identify carrying capacity, to develop a tourism development strategy (Parker 1993).

Success factors in Tjapukai Dance Theatre include

- joint venture between Aboriginal artists and non-Aboriginal management
- private sector financing
- accurate assessment of visitor expectations and quality assurance

Policy issues:

Aboriginal preference for indirect, rather than direct, industry participation. Kesteven (1987) goes so far as to argue that Aboriginal attitudes to employment are such that they are unlikely to seek employment in the service industries owing to a cultural imperative to be involved in activities that enable the forming of long-term personal relationships. She argues that Aboriginal people are more likely to seek positions that enable them to become 'cultural brokers' in which they liaise or mediate between tourists and agencies or owners of facilities. She also notes that many people are ineligible to act as guides because they do not speak English clearly. Another reason is that they may be unable to talk about certain aspects of culture or go to certain Aboriginal places. Altman (1989) suggests it may be possible to distinguish two groups of Aboriginal people: 'tourist seekers' and 'tourist avoiders'.

Resolution of this is to have form without content, presentation without indigenous purpose, particularly in relation to ceremonies, art, and other practices.

Aboriginal aspirations may be different in situations where tourism access can be limited compared to those where it cannot be controlled and is imposed. In the latter motivation to be involved may revolve around managing impacts; in the former it may revolve around a desire for economic returns.

Where Aboriginal communities have control over access to their lands and to sites likely to be of interest to tourists, they are less likely to adopt a position that concerns avoiding tourism impacts, since they already have a property right which allows the establishment of an enterprise. Similarly, communities without an access veto are more likely to seek to use their monopoly power in relation to their Aboriginality, to enable

them to exert sufficient commercial and political leverage to establish an enterprise and/or control access (Dillon 1987).

The existence of a property right allows tourism impacts to be controlled. Their absence implies that general impacts must be accepted and attention focussed on controlling them.

In the immediate future a great deal of Aboriginal involvement in tourism will occur via the arts and craft sector - it will be indirect, part time or occasional and will only supplement existing sources of income.

Role of government to facilitate Aboriginal industry involvement, informing them of the nature of tourism demand, and enabling access to ancillary management services for Aboriginal entrepreneurs.

Education and training are important. Aboriginal groups interested in tourism need to recognise the demands associated with operating tourism ventures that are both commercial and highly competitive.

Organisational and corporate structures: what are the major characteristics required by Aboriginal organisations operating in the tourism industry? How might they retain their Aboriginality whilst maintaining their effectiveness as commercial entities? What are the appropriate revenue-retention policies for these organisations, and for the individuals, groups, and community councils that own them (Dillon 1987)?

Regional facilitation: need for regional Aboriginal tourism associations? Need for memoranda of understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal tourism associations clarifying roles and responsibilities?

- Development of federal, state, and local tourism agreements to facilitate Aboriginal tourism interests.
- Issue of localisation (employment of local Aboriginal people) versus issue of Aboriginalisation (employment of Aboriginal people)

The idea for an interpretive centre in the Grampians Gariwerd National Park stemmed from Lorblanchet's 1975 recommendations. The Aboriginal community did not become involved until 1984 when the national park was declared. Thus the original idea for the centre did not originate from within the local community. In a sense they were forced to come on board so that they could have some input and involvement in tourism and future developments in the national park. The same pattern of initial non-involvement was replicated at Lake Condah.

The site for the Brambuk centre was an unfortunate choice, it is too far from the commercial hub of Halls Gap, and it should never have been situated near the national park's visitor centre. The siting of the cultural centre on the same site as the visitor centre, with both centres sharing the same parking arrangements, is another example of poor planning and a fundamental misunderstanding of how tourist attractions evolve. The fact that the cultural centre is the most distant from the central car park is significant. Once tourists arrive at the car park they must use the entrance path to enter the cultural centre. The entrance path or the approach is vital for it conditions the visitor for a certain experience. The mental set or anticipation of an attraction has much to do with visitor reception and approval when the attraction is reached. The national park visitor centre violates the 'atmosphere' of the Brambuk cultural centre, it encroaches on the immediate vicinity of the cultural centre, and is detrimental to tourists' experiences of the centre. The purpose and function of the visitor centre must be changed so that it is in greater harmony with the cultural centre. If it cannot be appropriated by the cultural centre, and utilized in some way, then it should be removed.

Padasian's (1996) analysis of the Brambuk centre found that management needed to raise the level of cultural authenticity, in particular its cultural tours, cultural displays and artefacts offered for sale to visitors. He considered that the selling of non-local artefacts and displays of non-local musical instruments and dances seriously affected the cultural integrity of the centre. The long term commercial success and the

centre's viability will depend significantly on the ability to ensure visitation is sustainable. Constraints were identified such as the lack of ownership of the site.

Jackson (1996:96) has argued that in northern Australia 'where Aboriginal cultures and conceptions of country are considered non-threatening to economic development, or advantageous, they are presented to tourists and cultural industries as worth preserving'. Where relationship with country is perceived as antagonistic, it is assumed that the urban landscape must be cleared of such encumbrances. Parallels may be seen to exist in the Victorian tourism landscape.

Where the tourism industry in Victoria is operating successfully in primary destinations, attracting increased visitation, and returning increases in receipts, it is interesting to note that there are very few, if any, indigenous attractions. Of the 13 product regions identified by Tourism Victoria, the primary destinations include Melbourne, The Island, Bays and Peninsulas, The Murray, Great Ocean Road, and Goldfields, and Legends, Wine and High Country (Tourism Victoria 1997:49). As these regions are successfully meeting tourism demand they may argue that they do not need Aboriginal tourism, they are performing successfully without it. In fact there may be a resistance to develop indigenous tourism on the grounds that they don't need it, and in particular they don't need an indigenous tourism project to be developed only to have it fail in a short period of time, thus producing a negative outcome for the region. This attitude would best be expressed by the saying 'if it isn't broken don't fix it'.

An example of this is the marginal position of indigenous tourism in the goldfields region of central Victoria that includes the cities of Ararat, Ballarat, Bendigo, and Stawell. In particular, Sovereign Hill in Ballarat, Victoria's most successful heritage theme park, which is a recreation of a gold mining town in the 1850s, is relatively silent on indigenous culture. Despite the fact that Aboriginal people were presence in gold towns throughout Victoria during this period, the theme park has chosen to exclude this presence in their recreations. Admittedly, the living conditions and health of Aboriginal people living on fringe camps on the margins of mining towns provide a challenge to an attraction that uses volunteers to recreate period aspects, however the silence of the attraction over this issue confirms the worst fears of the Aboriginal community that, like 'mainstream' history, heritage tourism is not willing to show or 'tell it like it is' or was.

However, those regions that are secondary or tertiary destinations that have a greater need to increase their appeal to the tourist market, seem to be more willing to appropriate indigenous culture and heritage. Destinations with weak economies perceive tourism, and in particular indigenous tourism, as a vehicle that will bring economic and social benefits (Padasian 1996). In this situation Aboriginal cultural heritage is considered part of the rich mixture of attractions and products that tourists may experience. In these secondary and tertiary destinations Aboriginal cultural heritage is often linked to special interest tourism - particularly ecotourism or nature-based tourism, and ethical tourism and cultural tourism - where 'tourists can learn from a host society and experience a different culture in a non-exploitative manner (Hall and Weiler 1992:9)'. The exact size of the special interest tourism market is not clear, but it is generally considered to be a growing segment of international travel and western domestic markets. Indigenous tourism, it must be remembered, is a 'niche' within the special interest market.

A consequence of this perspective, assuming it has validity, is of course that those product regions which are performing successfully, and where presumably greater opportunities exist for Aboriginal communities, are to some extent closed-shops.

BALANCING DEMAND AND SUSTAINABILITY IN INDIGENOUS RELATED TOURISM.

It is possible to measure the success or otherwise of an indigenous tourism enterprise by its capacity to attract and accommodate visitors on a sustainable, long-term basis. Sustainability relies upon the ability of a place to support visitors in social, economic, environmental and cultural terms as well as the existence of a continued demand for the attractions that are offered. Therefore it is important that prior to establishing a

tourism enterprise, preliminary research is undertaken to assess whether or not there is sufficient demand for the product, and what level of visitation is appropriate to achieve sustainability.

There is presently a lack of information concerning the demand for tourism experiences that involve elements of Aboriginal Australian culture. Unfortunately the absence of such material makes it extremely difficult to predict the potential popularity of a fledgling ventures. Indeed there is a risk that the demand for Aboriginal tourism in Victoria is simply not high enough to enable tourism enterprises to be economically sustainable over the long-term.

Of course it is possible that the tourist attraction itself may generate the demand, a situation whereby the activities of tourists are driven by the very existence of an attraction rather than the tourist's desire to participate in a particular type of tourism. However, tourism is an extremely competitive and growing business sector, and tourists are being offered an increasingly wider choice of attractions and activities. The tourist is therefore likely to choose what interests them in particular resulting in a situation of predominantly demand driven tourism.

Current tourism literature reveals an increase in the overall popularity of nature and culture based tourism. This does provide optimistic clues as to the potential for a rise in Aboriginal tourism in Victoria. However, it is doubtful that a State as small as Victoria will be able to support much duplication in the types of Aboriginal tourism attractions that are made available. For instance, tourists to Victoria may choose to visit an Aboriginal cultural centre but are unlikely to visit more than one in the State (and perhaps in the entire country). Competition to attract tourists will become strong and the success of one enterprise may be at the expense of another. It is therefore necessary for Aboriginal tourism in Victoria to be carefully planned to ensure that the demands of tourists are being met by building diverse and regionally based attractions.

There is a general contention in literature about Aboriginal tourism that the Northern Territory holds an advantage in attracting tourists. Many tourists associate Aboriginal people with the Northern territory believing that the Aboriginal tourism products offered there are somehow more authentic and interesting than those which are offered elsewhere. This attitude is largely a product of stereotyping that leads the tourist to believe that authentic Aboriginal culture only exists in its pre-European state. It denies the strength and adaptability of Aboriginal culture by refusing to accept its existence in contemporary forms. The ramifications of such stereotyping are wide ranging sometimes manifesting in racism against those who do not display the features of 'traditional' Aboriginal culture. Victorian Aboriginal tourism enterprises can work towards dispelling such attitudes by presenting historical and contemporary images with an emphasis on the enduring and dynamic nature of Victoria's Aboriginal cultures. The challenge lies in devising products which will attract tourist whilst also being authentic and regionally focused.

Much can be learnt from the mainstream tourism industry about what type of products are popular with tourists. This is not to say that these products should be duplicated by Aboriginal people but rather that where appropriate and most importantly, where desired by Aboriginal communities, indigenous Victorian tourism can cater to a variety of genres of tourism. In this way products will express the complexity and adaptability of contemporary Aboriginal cultures which can be presented in a wide variety of ways. Authenticity is not compromised and the risk of over duplication will be reduced.

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