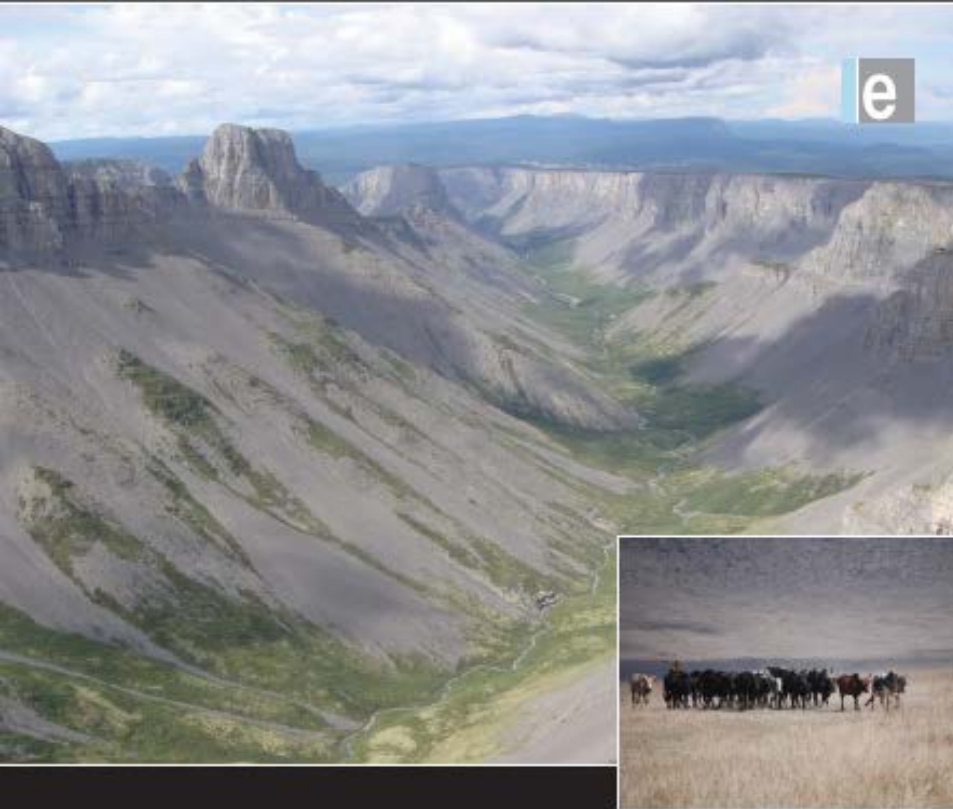


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# Authenticity in World Heritage

Nigel Dudley



# AUTHENTICITY IN NATURE

MAKING CHOICES ABOUT THE  
NATURALNESS OF ECOSYSTEMS

NIGEL DUDLEY

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This presentation  
draws on a book  
published in 2011,  
which looks at issues  
related to  
*authenticity in nature*  
and itself drew  
heavily on thinking  
within UNESCO World  
Heritage





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Angkor Wat in  
Cambodia is one of  
the most  
extraordinary  
cultural sites in the  
world – but it was  
heavily damaged by  
the Khmer Rouge



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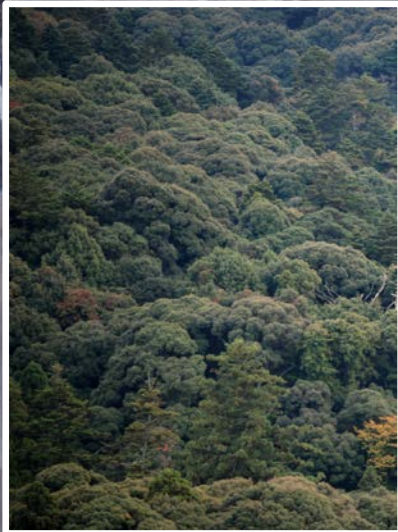
When we visited in  
2004 it was being  
repaired





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This is standard  
practice in countries  
with many wooden  
buildings ...





... but not in others,  
where Romanticism  
gave particular  
value to ruins





And the significance  
of the original  
craftsperson is  
considered to be  
important





This has caused an  
active debate in  
World Heritage –  
e.g. in Mostar in  
Herzegovina





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## This debate spills into natural World Heritage sites





Scientists, activists  
and sociologists all  
seek to define  
naturalness – a  
politically charged  
discussion







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**Forests:** virgin forest,  
natural forest, forest  
undisturbed by man,  
frontier forest, high  
conservation value  
forests, wildwood,  
native forest, primary  
woodland, intact forest  
landscape, old-growth  
forest, ancient forest



Naturalness is not a  
black and white  
state but something  
that ebbs and flows





A challenge: to find  
a definition of  
naturalness that fits  
the real world –  
maybe World  
Heritage cultural  
ideas about  
authenticity can  
help?







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An authentic ecosystem  
is : *a resilient ecosystem  
with the level of  
biodiversity and range of  
ecological interactions  
that would be predicted  
as a result of the  
combination of historic,  
geographic and climatic  
conditions in a particular  
location*



**HISTORIC:** This  
addresses issues  
relating to invasive  
species...





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...human impact, etc





## GEOGRAPHIC ...making predictions from what we know about similar ecosystems





CLIMATIC: taking  
account of climate  
change and the  
emergence of novel  
ecosystems ...





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This raises questions  
about management,  
restoration, human  
intervention, and the  
aims of World Heritage

