

# Capital and the Transfiguring Monumentality of Raffles Hotel

DANIEL P. S. GOH

*Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore*

**ABSTRACT** *Celebrated as a leading luxury hotel in the world, the Raffles Hotel stands as a monument to Singapore's status as a global city of commerce. The century-old Hotel also represents successful postcolonial heritage conservation. Drawing from archival and published sources, I analyze the Hotel as a changing cultural form in the historical transformation of Singapore by the circuits of global capital, from imperial capitalism, through the postcolonial development of national capitalism, to the current phase of neoliberal globalization. Together with developments in the surrounding urban heart of Singapore, Raffles Hotel is a space of cultural disjuncture transfiguring through the three ages of capital. I argue that the Hotel took the dominant form of white male domesticity in British Singapore, nostalgic authenticity in the postcolonial period and cosmopolitan hybridity in the current global phase. In each phase, the form elided the racial, class, gender and sexual contradictions of transnational capital and produced social relations of relative mobility. It shows that the global city is not made by transnational capital but by the developmental state harnessing economic flows for global city-making with the ensuing spatial-cultural politics in tow.*

**KEY WORDS:** Capitalism; development state; monument; hotels; Postcolonial; cultural form

## **Transfiguration and Monumentality in a Mobile City**

Built in 1887, the famous Raffles Hotel of Singapore was, first, a manifestation of the colonial domesticity of the British Empire, providing homely respite for white travelers. It was and still is, second, a national monument of authentic history, legally inserted in 1987 into a postcolonial discourse that draws the equivalence between Stamford Raffles' establishment of Singapore as a colonial entrepôt and the Anglicized postcolonial ruling elite's transformation of a wrecked post-War city into an export-oriented industrialized city-state (Holden, 1999). It is, today, a monument to the neoliberal globalization of Singapore, its branding globalized and transnationality branded in the Raffles Hotels built in cities across Asia, America, Europe and the South Seas.

The Hotel is intricately bound to the transnational capitalism that Singapore has been enmeshed in since the nineteenth century. But instead of seeing the Hotel as an

---

*Correspondence Address:* Daniel P.S. Goh, Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore, AS1 #03-06, 11 Arts Link, Singapore, 117570. Email: socgohd@nus.edu.sg

1745-0101 Print/1745-011X Online/10/020177–19 © 2010 Taylor & Francis

DOI: 10.1080/17450101003665010

example of how Singapore has adapted itself to the changing vicissitudes of capitalism, successfully promoting itself as a global brand while conserving local heritage and culture (Henderson, 2001), I want to discern, in this article, what the changing monumentality of the Hotel can tell us about the culture of transnational capitalism and, therefore, Singapore as a 'mobile city' traversed by the flows of capital embodied in travelers, artifacts and cultural forms. In other words, instead of seeing Singapore as a global city that, because of its dense transnational network linkages, is able to affect economies, politics and cultures far beyond its shores, I take the position of seeing Singapore and the Raffles Hotel as manifest forms emerging from and shaped by the flows that pass through them and sustain their very existence.

For the cultural theorist, this project should evoke Marx's (1976, pp. 163–77) theorization of the commodity form as a fetishistic product of labor that takes on a life of its own and enters into relationships with each other and with people, its seemingly independent life and autonomous value thereby obscuring the social relations that underlie its production and exchange. This fetishism reaches its zenith in capitalism because the realm of exchange becomes dominant and pervades other realms, particularly for Marx the realm of production in the very constitution of free wage labor, and for our purposes here the realm of cultural forms, where culture is no longer tied to localities but propelled into circulation carried by migrants, goods, images, technology and ideas shot through with shifting disjuncture (Appadurai, 1990). Culture is not incidental to the flow of capital embodied in these cultural forms but *intrinsic* to it; capital cannot move without taking on explicit cultural forms. Thus, instead of treating capital as an instrumental and economically rational force that encroaches on local culture and absorbs it to the modern form of abstract value, it is more appropriate that we take transnational capitalism to be a system of cultural flows that *possess* local things and spaces with its logic of split values (use and exchange values) and historical significations (signifiers and their meanings), thus *transfiguring* them to become transcultural entities.

The concept 'transfiguration' points to the central problematic of moving beyond the question of translatability (between values and significances) into the question of the mutation of forms in the circulation of cultural flows in and across contiguous matrices (Gaonkar & Povinelli, 2003). At stake here is our ability to imagine and understand an accelerating mobility of cultural objects without reducing them to static moments of gravitas. As a matter of analytical strategy, my focus is deliberately trained on what we would expect to be a static moment of gravitas *par excellence* that is at the same time inextricably connected to the logic of transnational capitalism in a city as pervaded by global cultural flows as Singapore: a monument that is at the same time a commercial tourist attraction. We expect monuments to be socially constructed as timeless representations of a particular event or ethos of a period, the memory of which is to be culturally constrained to fit the dominant political and economic agenda of the present. Monuments are therefore supposed to be static and meaningful at any historical juncture. Ostensibly, they stand, against the wear of social life and tear of historical change, as a memorial testament to the immemorial. Can they be transfigured, or, are they and have they been constantly transfiguring before our very eyes because the context is itself shot through with shifting disjuncture arising from the flows of people, images, ideas, capital and technology? How are the transfigurations linked to the mobilescares afflicting the social spaces of the city as it passes through the historical phases of

cultural flows? What kind of derivative memories, histories, meaning-values, translatability, authority and power are therefore produced?

I analyze the changing monumentality of Raffles Hotel briefly described in the opening paragraph as moments of transfiguration, when the form of memorial representation is manifested from the tussle between the mobilescares of capitalism and the social forces that seek to discipline and exploit them. Its transfiguration in each of the three ages of capital was influenced by the relative juxtapositions of spatiality, authority and temporality expressed through the categories of race, gender, class and sexuality that emerged from the tussle of the age. I argue that the Hotel took the dominant cultural form of domesticity in British Singapore as it became a homely symbol of safe haven for weary white colonial entrepreneurs, authenticity in the post-colonial age of independence when it stood for the national accomplishments of the developmental state in making over Singapore's colonial origins, and hybridity in the current global phase as state-owned capital grapples with the neoliberal order by sending its assets into the cultural orbit of global commerce.

### **Imperial Capitalism and Colonial Domesticity**

As the story goes, the Sarkies brothers, scions of Armenian traders and businessmen, scouted for a good site to establish a hotel in Singapore and chanced upon a colonial bungalow on the downtown beachfront owned by the Alsagoffs, prominent Arab traders and property owners. The bungalow was situated next to the Raffles Institution, a premier English school established by Stamford Raffles for the enlightenment of the native, which inspired the name of the newfound hotel. Raffles Hotel quickly became one of the three premier hotels of British Southeast Asia operated by the Sarkies.

The Hotel's founding upon a colonial bungalow signified an origin of colonial domesticity. The colonial domestic space was a fragile space fraught with tensions. The colonial bungalow was open to the native gaze and was therefore an additional site for the performance of racial difference and imperial prestige. For the colonials under the siege of alien cultures and climates, it was a refuge for the sustenance of metropolitan cultural identity. Colonial domestic space was paradoxically an anxious-comfort zone in the contact zones of empire. On the one hand, the anxieties of colonial control over the circuits of capital, natives and power were resolved in the controlled intimacy of homely colonial comfort, where the white woman was the gentle mistress. On the other hand, the inevitable presence of native servants in the bungalow needed to maintain the homely comfort entailed an anxious policing of race, gender, class and sexuality (Clancy-Smith & Gouda, 1998; Collingham, 2001; Stoler, 2002).

However, at Raffles Hotel, colonial domesticity is transfigured by the mobility of its guests in the imperial capitalist networks beyond its doors. Raffles Hotel was not the domestic space of the colonial settler or the elite colonial official, but the place of refuge from imperial networks for the weary white entrepreneur and sojourner on the high seas of commerce or exploration. Increasingly, as the plantations of Malaya took off with the triumph of rubber, European planters from the domesticated interior sought breaks from the rigors of extracting value from trees and coolies and swarmed the Hotel with regularity. As a space of colonial domesticity for passing travelers, it mirrored the ambivalence of anxiety and comfort in a different manner. It was an invented space of timelessness that stood apart from both the colonial city and the

native lands beyond. It was an androgynous space separated from the competition between male bodies and the desires visited by female bodies, where the colonial male can recharge himself for another foray into the imperial frontier.

The new building erected to replace the bungalow in 1897 exuded a simple French Renaissance style of non-descript neoclassical columns, arches and ornaments melting idyllically into the stone façade of tall windows with wooden shutters and capped with a tiled red roof. It signified androgynous timelessness out of place in a tropical colony and standing apart from the statuesque and masculine neoclassical monumentality of colonial public buildings a stone's throw away. Its sister hotels signified other temporalities. The masculine Strand in Rangoon mimicked grandiose, late-Victorian neoclassical modernism in a conquered colony that boasted a competing Theravada Buddhist civilization replete with its own monumental architectural traditions. The hybrid Eastern in Penang stood miniature minarets on its French Renaissance artifice and integrated an oriental dome of perfect symmetry into its lobby, thus identifying with Penang's status as the gateway to the peninsular Malay states, which were celebrated as Islamic sultanates regenerated by British protection. In contrast, and suited to Singapore, which had no interior and was thus not a gateway, but which was rather a cosmopolitan node that rose from the intersections of imperial capitalism, Raffles Hotel appeared to be an architectural expansion of the colonial bungalow, growing upwards and outwards to encompass, in the words of explorer-author Carveth Wells, 'an immense rambling structure, with huge courtyards full of coconut palms and lovely tropical flowers' that were surrounded by 'tiers of wide verandahs on to which open lofty bedrooms, twice the height of any ordinary hotel room' (1994, p. 242).

The Hotel was marked by the domesticity visiting an old colonial bungalow. An advertisement posted by the Sarkies in the *Singapore Free Press* in 1887 promised 'every convenience and home comfort' (cited in Sharp, 1981, p. 23). Arriving in Singapore to enlist in the colonial service in 1890, Colonel R. V. K. Applin spent a 'painful and sleepless night under a large mosquito curtain' and tackled his bath 'in a dark place with a concrete floor, in the middle of which was a large earthenware jar some four feet high' (1994, p. 144). Though boasting of being the earliest hotel with electric lighting and fans in the colony, the domesticity resisted modernity. Up to 1918, the large earthenware jar standing on a wooden grating remained the visitor's bath of scooping and pouring water over one's head. It was only in the late 1930s that Wells, on a return visit to Singapore, reported that the 'artistic earthenware jar had been replaced by an ugly galvanized iron tub underneath a brass tap' (1994, p. 243). In the mid-1920s, Horace Bleackley compared the 'cool and airy' Raffles with its chief competitor, the Hotel de l'Europe, and found that the former must 'give precedence' to the Europe, which was 'a first-class hotel' preferred by elite British travelers and haughty British officials despite its 'old-fashioned' building that was 'ill-suited to the tropics' (1994, p. 205). Raffles was left to the middling colonial classes: clerks, writers, adventurers, junior bureaucrats, mid-rank military officers, planters, sailors and the other foot soldiers of Western imperialism. A cast-iron portico was added to the front porch facing Beach Road in 1913, but even this modern appendage was domesticated by intricate Art Nouveau designs, its machined-edge construction softened by the curvilinear bending of metal characteristic of mass-produced middle-class aesthetics of the age.

The portico gave way in 1920 to a large rectangular marquee that doubled as dining area in daylight and ballroom in the evenings. This was essentially a verandah that protruded into the social space of the surroundings. King (1995, pp. 265–267) discusses the verandah of the bungalow as a colonial space of leisure, where the white colonial sitting in his rattan chair looking out into native society turned it into a symbolic space of economic and political status. Studying the architecture of colonial exhibitions, Morris (1983, pp. 45–46) describes the verandah that was commonly grafted unto pavilions of tropical colonies as transition zones mediating the rigid conventionality and propriety of colonial life and the exotic and sensuous native life represented inside the pavilion's galleries. Lai (2005, pp. 145–148) combines both insights to analyze the courtyard verandah of the Malayan pavilion at the 1924 British Empire Exhibition in Wembley as an imaginary zone of acclimatized domestic life, where the fantasy of safety in a domesticated colony was experienced by white visitors seated in rattan chairs observing natives and colonials interacting.

In Singapore, the verandah takes on an added political significance, as the municipal authorities who sought 'open, clearly visible, public spaces ... essential to the policing and surveillance functions of the colonial state' (Yeoh, 2003, p. 246) battled the complexity and versatility of multiple Asian usage of urban space centered on the verandahs that extended over public walkways. In its daylight manifestation as dining area, the extended verandah of Raffles Hotel took on this space of transition and politicized domesticity. Here, the colonial could seek shelter from the seething life of the Beach Road area, which popular British travel writer W. Robert Horan described as a 'rabbit-warren of hovels, Chinese artisans' shops and factories, movable open-air restaurants, licensed opium-shops, pawnbrokers, second-hand clothes and junk dealers, and the hordes of strange people who throng this evil-smelling artery of Singapore' (1994, p. 222). The metonymy of strange businesses, commodity objects and exotic natives highlight the Hotel's surrounding social space as an 'artery' of the imperial networks. This artery gave colonial significance to the Hotel's domesticity. Sitting in the extended verandah, the white colonial male could gaze safely at the sensual manifestations of the imperial networks traversing the public verandahs of the colonial city.

At night, when the extended verandah was turned into the ballroom, the gaze was reversed. In the darkened streets, the natives now peered into the brightly lit marquee and observed immaculately dressed colonials dancing with improbability. Bleackley described the two ballrooms in Singapore, of the Raffles and Europe Hotels, as 'a scene of youth and beauty', not only because the colony was largely peopled by youth, but also because 'when folks become elderly' and stay on in the colony they 'do not cumber the dancing-floor' (1994, p. 207). On his stay in 1936, travel writer H. D. Harben complained that the Hotel was 'far from a pleasant place to stay in' (1994, p. 232). A seasoned traveler traversing the imperial networks, his complaint juxtaposed the colorful but noisy surrounding 'artery' with the discomfiting domesticity of colonials dancing 'nearly every night till quite late', of 'the sound of feet on the stone' coming through 'the trellis shutters' as they walked about the modernity-resistant Hotel because there were 'no carpets and no windows' (1994, p. 232). But if the gazing native population found this a spectacle of eccentric decadence (Sharp, 1981, p. 41), the youthful colonials were dancing the night and their tropical anxieties away to enact the transcolonial timelessness of Hotel and Empire. This timelessness was asserted through to the last dance on the eve of the British surrender to Japanese

invaders in February 1942, with, in the words of the fire service chief, ‘everyone jampacked on the ballroom floor’ and jovially in denial of the ‘idea of a fall’ (quoted in Sharp, 1981, pp. 52–53).

The Hotel celebrates Somerset Maugham for not only writing many of his popular Malayan stories while staying at the Hotel in the 1920s, but also for collecting some of the materials for his stories at the Hotel (Flower, 1986). By no coincidence, Maugham begins many of his Malayan stories with a scene at the club or hotel. What is significant is that transgressions and violence either follow the colonials as they step out into the colonial spaces and imperial networks outside the hotel or enter the safe and timeless space of the hotel as news, confessions and stories. Holden (1996, p. 100) points out that Maugham’s Malayan stories are located in a colonial discourse in which white women function as symbolic boundary markers in anxieties over ‘racial separation and sexual continence’. At the same time that white women were brought to the colony to separate white men from enchanting native women, white women must be protected from native male wiles. The domesticity of Raffles Hotel was similarly gendered. The native staff mostly consisted of domesticated native ‘boys’ clad in hybrid Indian-Malay-European uniforms (Sharp, 1981, p. 87). Only a handful of native women were employed and not as chambermaids or waitresses, a gender preference that lasted till the 1960s (Pregarz, 1990, p. 21). On the dance-floor, available white women were in short supply, and the social interaction of white women visiting the Hotel without their husbands was regulated by gossips (Sharp, 1981, pp. 41–42). In contrast to the feminine domesticity of the colonial bungalow, the domesticity of the Hotel was an androgynous domesticity where sexuality was occluded and white women functioned as the boundary to the imperial mores out there so that masculinity could recover its bearings.

### From Decolonization to the Developmental State

In the post-War twilight of Empire, the timelessness of the Hotel decayed as the historical forces of nationalism and socialism disrupted the mobilities of capital. Commandeered by the Japanese as an elite guesthouse and then by the British military as the same, by the time it was returned to civilian oversight, the politics of decolonization affected the Hotel. In the 1950s, conservative Anglicized Chinese businessmen were introduced to the board. Tan Chin Tuan, active in the pro-colonial Progressive Party, became the board’s chairman in the late-1950s. Perceived as a colonial relic, the Hotel had a prickly relationship with autonomous transitional governments led by nationalists, leading Tan to proclaim, ‘one oftentimes wonders whether the authorities are sincerely trying to develop the tourist industry’ (*Raffles Hotel Annual Report* 1958, hereafter *RHAR*). The Hotel attempted to adapt to the political realities by Malayanizing its identity and activities. Traditional Malay dances were introduced in the ‘Malayan Night’ floorshows in 1956 (Sharp, 1981, p. 75). A souvenir scarf of the period shows the semiotic association of the Hotel with Malay icons, including a kampong house, a couple in Malay dress and coconut trees (Flower, 1986, p. 44). Beneath the image of rustic native tranquility, the local workforce was a thorn in the Hotel’s side. Radical labor unions, an integral part of the anti-colonial movement, led the local workers in skirmishes with the Hotel management from the five-day hotel strike in 1955 to the mass labor strike in 1963. Significantly, during Maugham’s last

stay in the Hotel in 1959, he reportedly said, 'The Raffles I knew then was nothing like it is today', and, 'The East is a very different world from the one I knew' (quoted in Sharp, 1981, p. 106).

Indeed it was. The networks of production and trade upon which colonial empires were constructed had transformed into postcolonial networks managed and harnessed by sovereign national states for their developmental programs. The political dimension of the networks was disciplined by authoritarian regimes split along communist, non-communist and anti-communist lines. Anti-communist, authoritarian developmentalism was the order of the day in Singapore. This solved the labor problems and the relationship between Hotel and government improved, but not unequivocally. In 1968, the Hotel management assisted the developmental state in setting up the Hotel and Catering Centre to help train hotel staff required for the expansion of the tourist and hotel industry, but expressed 'doubt as to whether the pace of development [was] not too fast' (*RHAR*, 1968 ). As the Singapore economy rapidly developed, competition became intense. The Hotel was losing both well-trained staff and high-paying guests to new modern luxury hotels (*RHAR*, 1971 ) and experienced losses to its balance books for the first time in the 1970s (*RHAR*, 1973 & 1975 ). The Hotel struggled with rising costs and low room rates despite the fact that the number of tourist visiting Singapore grew more than four times from 579,284 in 1970 to 2,562,085 in 1980 (Singapore Government, 2000, p. 24). The *Silver Kris*, Singapore Airlines' in-flight magazine, described the Hotel in 1978 as 'a pale relic from a bygone era', where 'the curious, the nostalgic' stopped by 'to look at the remains of a legend' (Hutton, 1978, p. 31).

But by all indications, the Hotel was holding on to its staple coterie of middle-class travelers who sought an 'authentic' experience of Singapore as part of the exotic ex-colonial East. At the beginning of the decade the management was 'encouraged by the continuing support of discriminating visitors who require their hotel to be part of Singapore rather than the stereotyped accommodation which the new hotels provide' (*RHAR*, 1971 ). At the end of the decade the management was pleased that the Hotel continued 'to be very popular with visitors to Singapore' but sounded the warning that continuously rising costs threatened its profitability (*RHAR*, 1980 ). The Hotel's middle-class guest list could no longer support the costs of timeless domesticity. The Hotel needed a makeover that would attract high-heeled guests and, at the same time, enhance its authenticity to match the transnational capitalism of the age.

Up to this point, the developmental state was still focused on primary industrialization and the promotion of tourism and heritage was still a secondary and piecemeal affair. This quickly changed at the end of the 1970s after successful industrialization. However, the development of tourism had to be reconciled with urban heritage conservation. In 1979, the Development Bank of Singapore, a state-owned bank and the owner of the land on which the Hotel stands indicated that it might be entering into a joint venture with the Overseas Chinese Banking Corporation, the holder of the Hotel's land lease and a major shareholder in the Development Bank's proposed adjacent Raffles City development. The intention was to modernize and rationalize the Raffles Hotel with the new development (*Business Times [BT]*, 1979). Failing which, the banks were keen to preserve the Hotel in its current state and let global hotel chains run it to profitability (*Straits Times [ST]*, 1980a). Heritage conservation did not figure in the banks' plans. On the other hand, the government and its Singapore

Tourist Promotion Board were keen to preserve and enlarge the Hotel by developing adjacent land behind the Hotel (*Asia Wall Street Journal*, 1980; *ST*, 1980b). In addition, the government pushed a plan for extensive renovation of the Hotel, to restore it 'to its former elegance and maximize its historical value' and demolish parts 'not considered architecturally worth preserving' and 'of no historical importance' (*ST* 1980b; *Singapore Monitor*, 1982).

The uncertainty remained but there was little local public interest. Unlike the redevelopment of other historic landmarks like the National Theater, which sparked public protests, the population was apathetic about the Hotel. Its fate lied in the overlapping rationalities of finance capital and the developmental state, with the former interested in the profitability of investment and the latter concerned about reconciling heritage with tourist development. Discussions about the redevelopment carried on into the mid-1980s with little progress until they were finally abandoned in 1985 (*RHAR*, 1983, 1984, 1985). The government finally threw down the gauntlet. Releasing its Tourism Product Development Plan, the government announced that it wanted the Hotel to be turned into a suites-only hotel reserved for state guests and other elite visitors and threatened to take the lead in redevelopment if it failed to persuade the two banks (*ST*, 1986; *BT*, 1986). The Hotel became part of the developmental state's grand plan to remodel the old city centre to promote tourism, by preserving heritage buildings while renovating them for modern commercial uses.

In 1987, the state moved to force the fate of the Hotel. First, the Hotel was named a national monument and placed under the legal protection of the Preservation of Monuments Board. Second, the government put out the lease of the adjacent land for public tender, to be sold to the party with the best development plan, therefore effectively imposing its redevelopment design plan on the Hotel (*ST*, 1987b). Of the nine proposals submitted for the tender, the proposal with the lowest bid by the two banks won the tender because, the government announced, the design closely followed 'the architectural style and intensity of use of Raffles Hotel' (*BT*, 1988b), which the banks had earlier announced that they were committed to restore to its 'colonial splendour' (*BT*, 1988a). Even then, the final renovation plan was delayed because of 'the keen interest which various bodies are taking in the project' (*RHAR*, 1988). The Hotel finally closed in March 1989 for renovations.

### **Developmentalism, Nostalgia and Authenticity**

Through this period of decay and uncertainty as the networks of capital adapted to the sovereignty of nation states, the domesticity of the Hotel transfigured into a space of nostalgia and authenticity shared by expatriates, local business and governmental elites and state agencies, all groups that were closely associated with the new networks of capital. The Hotel became a space for reflection on the legacies of colonialism and the politics of postcolonial identity and authenticity, its monumental timelessness became a question of its temporal location between past and present as a national monument. But at the same time, the Hotel was a space pervaded by the emerging transnational networks of capital, which were beginning to make their effects felt in Singapore as the developmental state prepared the spatial infrastructure to engage and harness the networks for sustained economic development after successful primary industrialization. The temporal location of the Hotel between past

and present became a question of whether the past may be preserved profitably in a globalizing world, whether nostalgia can be a commodity.

At the height of the uncertainties caused by state intervention in the 1980s, some 10 books were published on the Hotel, from British-born Ilsa Sharp's tone-setting *There is Only One Raffles* to American-born Gretchen Liu's *Raffles Hotel*. The latter was the curator of the Raffles Hotel Museum and the wife of architect and urban planner, Liu Thai Ker, who headed the committee that picked the winning redevelopment design for the 1988 tender. In these books, legends, stories, myths, memories, photographs, old and new, and personal experiences were intertwined with historical facts. The Hotel published a few of these, and 50,000 copies of these books were reportedly sold between 1984 and 1989, at the height of the uncertainty over the Hotel's fate, in the Hotel alone (Pregarz, 1990, p. 10). The authors represented an emerging stratum of transnational elites living and working in Singapore, who could harness the symbolic means to prove to the government elites, in the words of one regular guest-turned-author, Raymond Flower, in his foreword to former manager Roberto Pregarz's book, 'how profitable nostalgia can be' (1990, p. 8). An Austrian author and his Singaporean co-writer, while doing research on their Raffles Hotel book in 1987, found the 'priceless original building plans' of 1897, the discovery of which Sharp wrote in an article in the daily, *Straits Times*, would accelerate 'the impetus for restoration' (*ST*, 1987a).

Renovation followed the principle of profitable nostalgic authenticity advocated by the transnational elites. The Hotel insisted it was 'restoration' rather than renovation, with the question being one 'of bringing back the past to sell it in the future' (*BT*, 1989). According to the plan, the Hotel returned to its original six social and business outlets, the Raffles Grill, Writers' Bar, Tiffin Room, Palm Court, Bar and Billiard Room, and the Lobby, though the location of each was moved and they were extensively renovated to reflect the mood and character of each outlet. For instances, the Writer's Bar received a wall of first-edition works by famous writers connected to the Hotel, the imperious Raffles Grill displayed Chippendale furniture, period landscape paintings and silverware, and the Bar and Billiard Room reflected the 'chauvinism of the 20s' with its 'masculine teak furniture and rugged flooring' (*BT*, 1989). Here, authenticity was not about the reality of the past or the actuality of physical manifestation, but the accentuation of the essence of a particular place that was nostalgically represented rather than historically appraised. Relic silverware and chinaware found in the storerooms during restoration were themselves restored for use by guests, in accordance with 'the hotel's theme to recapture the atmosphere of the 1920s...to enhance the nostalgic 1920s feelings' (*ST*, 1989b). Even the uniforms of the employees were modeled on the principle, with the staff of each outlet having its own unique uniform to capture its nostalgic essence. For examples, the Bar and Billiard Room staff wore period clothes that mimicked colonial wear in the 1920s, with women in long flowing skirts and fluffy cotton tops and men in tuxedo-vests and bowtie, while the Tiffin Room staff wore Asian-collar jackets, a cross between the Mao and Nehru suits, and batik sarongs for the females to serve local delicacies and curries. Sikhs, an ethnic group traditionally employed in the colonial security forces, were employed as doormen.

But if the authentic 1920s was the vantage point for the nostalgia of the inner social space of the Hotel, the planners set 1915 as the benchmark year for the authenticity of the original architecture (Urban Redevelopment Authority and Preservation of

Monuments Board [URA & PMB], 1997, p. 9). A set of six postcards on sale at the Hotel, reproduced from original drawings in the Hotel's collection, presents the narrative, from a view of the main building in 1900, the two views of the Bar and Billiard Room, before and after its 1907 renovation, the Bras Basah Wing opened in 1904, the cast-iron portico built in 1913, to the last overview of the Hotel astride the artery of the transcolonial networks, with the caption, 'By 1915 all of the hotel's historic buildings were in place'. As a result of this historicization, the ballroom at the front of the Hotel, which represented the nostalgic 1920s more than any other place in Singapore, was demolished and the intricate cast-iron portico the ballroom had replaced restored to serve as the grand entrance to the Hotel, as can be seen in Figure 1. An unaware Hotel spokesman remarked, 'It was at this portico that the beaux of the day dallied with romantic intent as young ladies arrived in their finery to dance the night away' (ST, 1990). The Hotel went to great lengths to research the portico, visiting archives in Singapore and Glasgow and the original Scottish company that made the portico, so that an American foundry could reproduce the portico as accurately as possible (ST, 1991).

Why was the portico so fetishized by the urban planners and restoration architects? Why did they opt for the portico over the ballroom? At the heart of the question here was anxiety with the authenticity of the Hotel in representing the nation. Many locals dismissed the Hotel as a colonial hangover and a symbol of European elitism and prejudice. The government-led restoration of the Hotel into a world-class hotel for the



**Figure 1.** The main entrance of the Raffles Hotel, with the cast-iron portico greeting and sheltering guests alighting from vehicles.

global jetsetters added fuel to the fire. The restoration of the cast-iron portico represented two complementary re-inscriptions of historical memory that resolved this criticism. First, the European heritage was cleansed of its decadence and remembered for its benevolence. In the preservation guidelines, the URA and PMB describe the Hotel as reflecting ‘the European roots of the social and cultural development of the country’ and testifying to ‘the aspirations of Singapore’s multi-racial population’ (1997, pp. 2–3). But the inherent contradiction in this view is that the roots are colonial, in which racial discrimination was the rule rather than exception. Thus, in the guidelines, the Europeans are remembered instead as ‘a small, friendly and hospitable community in the cosmopolitan society in Singapore often interacting freely with their Asian counterparts’ (URA & PMB, 1997, p. 13). Historical amnesia went hand in hand with the demolition of the ballroom, the symbol of European decadence, prejudice and denial, and colonial domesticity was re-written as nostalgia for a cosmopolitan age of authentic relations between Europeans and Asian. In establishing the Hotel as national monument, the developmental state adopted the narratives of the transnational elites published in the 1980s and 1990s, eliding the racial, gender and class divisions of the past so that present divisions could be disciplined. Considered together with the conservation of Chinatown, Kampong Glam and Little India as tourist attraction and national heritage sites in the same period (Kong & Yeoh, 2003), Raffles Hotel formed the ‘Others’ component, often represented by Eurasians, in the monumentalizing of the state’s official Chinese-Malay-Indian-Others multiracialism.

The cast-iron portico, an artifact of the Art Nouveau aesthetics of industrialization, or as acknowledged in the preservation guidelines, ‘an influence of the Victorian industrial movement’ (URA & PMB, 1997, p. 18), represented instead the meeting point of European and Asian aspirations, linking the developmental state’s economic programs of industrialization with the Victorian industrialization that built Singapore and an Empire based on trade. Thus, the pro-government *Straits Times* wrote in response to criticisms of the restoration, that ‘Raffles should not be looked at in isolation’, but as ‘part of a bigger complex of historic buildings that grew with Singapore’, with the buildings blending ‘into a charming colonial era look which over the years has taken on a distinctive Singaporean personality’ (ST, 1989a). This was the spatial component of the utopian Singapore Story being invented in this period: successful national development on British colonial legacies, in which racial, class and gender divisions were overcome to realize the authentic cosmopolitan city that Singapore had always been in essence. With the portico, sojourners of the emergent transnational networks disappeared into the Hotel. There was no longer any outward verandah gazing at scurrying natives in daylight, nor the reversed gaze at performances of timelessness at nighttime, but an impervious cast-iron barrier of postcolonial authenticity and profitable nostalgia exuding the state-led Asianization of European industry.

### **Millennial Capitalism, Cosmopolitanism and Hybridity**

The renovated Hotel and its adjoining new development, called the Raffles Hotel Arcade, opened in late 1991. The re-opening poster is an exercise in minimalist graphics showing the rooftop of the Hotel’s distinctive front façade on a backdrop of a dark blue sky that occupied most of the poster. The words ‘Today at 10 a.m. a little bit of history will be made at the corner of Bras Basah and Beach Roads’ hovered above the

Hotel at the center of the poster. An emphatic 'The Legend Resumes' at the bottom of the poster heralds the reopening. But its simplicity says a lot about the Hotel's coming transfiguration, prophesying that the continuation of the legend would see the Hotel transcending the very domesticity and nostalgic authenticity it is grounded in. The mobilities of capitalism have shifted from the imperialist control and nationalist developmental harnessing of capital circuits in the earlier two eras to accelerated capital and commodity flows in a new transnational market order. In the subsequent decade and a half, the story still running as this article is written, the Hotel transfigured into a magical space of 'millennial capitalism', which the Comaroff and Comaroff describe as 'a capitalism that presents itself as a gospel of salvation', 'that if rightly harnessed, is invested with the capacity wholly to transform the universe of the marginalized and disempowered' (2000, p. 292). In the same year as the Hotel reopening, the Singapore developmental state launched its strategic plan to harness millennial capitalism to become 'a developed country in the first league' in three to four decades, with 'economic dynamism, a high quality of life, a strong national identity and the configuration of a global city' as the main targets (Singapore Ministry of Trade & Industry, 1991, p. 2).

As the Comaroffs (2000, p. 305) point out, neoliberal globalization intensifies 'the abstractions inherent in capitalism itself', alienating labor from its human context, substituting society with the market and building a cosmopolis of 'aggregated transactions'. In the context of our discussion, the city space that Raffles Hotel is situated in has been transformed into a flow of consumption between the vernacular and the cosmopolitan, in which citizens are called to have a taste of the capitalist paradise of perpetual shopping, eating and drinking. The civilization of commodities forms a triangle around Raffles Hotel. To the west and south stand the hypermodern Raffles and Suntec Cities, with their international convention centers, towering world-class hotels and high-end shopping malls. The civic cultural district spreads out to the north, consisting of conserved and new buildings housing museums, libraries, a business university, drama centers and art schools. To the east is found the former artery of the imperial networks, the area around Bras Basah and Bugis roads, now remade into the vernacular of repackaged old trades, street food and nightlife, or, as the Prime Minister describes, 'It's something new and exciting but also something old and nostalgic about Bras Basah, Bugis' (*ST*, 2005). The symbolic axis of the space balances between the cosmopolitan elite and the vernacular masses, with the commodified cultural production organized by the developmental state as mediation. The Singapore Tourism Board thus produces 'Uniquely Singapore' as 'an overarching brand' that 'captures our mix of cultures and languages, our history and traditions, our cosmopolitan society and heartland living'. Government officials cite Singapore's hawker food centers and the Hotel as icons of the vernacular and the cosmopolitan (*ST*, 2004).

But Raffles Hotel is not merely or wholly an elite cosmopolitan space. Rather, in its transfiguration in the new transnational networks of capital, the Hotel is a space that contained and ordered the triangle of cosmopolitanism, the vernacular and commodified cultural production. The Hotel is a space of hybridity containing these sometimes contradictory multiplicities. The restored old portion of the Hotel is the space of cosmopolitan elitism, closed off to the common public and increasingly frequented by the very important and the famous. In this space, the cosmopolitan-vernacular hybridities of globalization are celebrated. Behind the cast-iron portico, their racial, gender, class and power conjunctions and disjuncture are safely shielded from the

critical gaze of the masses. At the Hotel in 2006, Queen Elizabeth II awarded a Singaporean membership in the Order of British Empire during her state visit for his work in developing youth 'self-reliance, perseverance and a sense of responsibility through expeditions, community service, skills development and physical recreation' (ST, 2006a). The postcolonial irony lies in a white female monarch rewarding a middle-class Chinese male citizen of a former colony of her state a colonial medal for promoting what are, in fact, the values of rugged and disciplined capitalist-gentleman masculinity similar to her country's Victorian tradition during its imperial heyday.

Popular criticisms of the race-gender-class vectors of cosmopolitanism in the intimacy between Caucasian expatriates and local women are neutralized by the mainstream press in the symbolic space of Raffles Hotel. Its executive assistant manager, a Nigerian-born Singaporean Indian, was celebrated in 2003 for his engagement to a Brazilian-Czech hotelier. The *Straits Times* characterizes this as part of the Reverse Pinkerton Coupling trend of white woman who 'embraces all things Asian, including the men', marrying Asian man who is 'a confident global nomad, unafraid of the expressive Caucasian woman' (ST, 2003b). In relation to Maugham's gendered tropes, the dangerous femininity of the white woman and the dangerous masculinity of the Asian man are serially combined here to create a pairing to offset the postcolonial anxiety of rich white men seducing and running off with naïve native women, which is itself symbolic of the fear of Western neo-imperialist capitalist exploitation. But in relation to the opposition of cosmopolitan and vernacular in neoliberal discourse, all danger is erased in the reverse coupling, with the couples exemplifying social, cultural and physical mobility, demonstrating the possibility of being both cosmopolitan and vernacular, being 'global in their outlook' but 'as Singaporean as they come' in their 'day-to-day lives' (ST, 2003b).

The new Arcade extension is the primary meeting point between cosmopolitan and vernacular in the Hotel space, where visitors could walk in from the streets and move around freely. Here the differences of past and present, East and West, cosmopolitan and vernacular are commodified and erased in the hedonistic fantasy of mobility and hybridity. The Hotel's reopening press release announces that it 'has carefully balanced the best of East and West by juxtapositioning high fashion, exclusive jewelry, watches and luxury leather goods with an array of Asia's finest craftsmanship including Chinese and Thai silk, cloisonneware, carpets, pewter and antiques' (Raffles Hotel, 1991). A visitor entering the Arcade's main entrance facing the Bras Basah-Bugis area would encounter some of these commodities displayed in museum cases not unlike the nostalgic displays of authentic artifacts in the Raffles Hotel Museum on the upper floor of the Arcade.

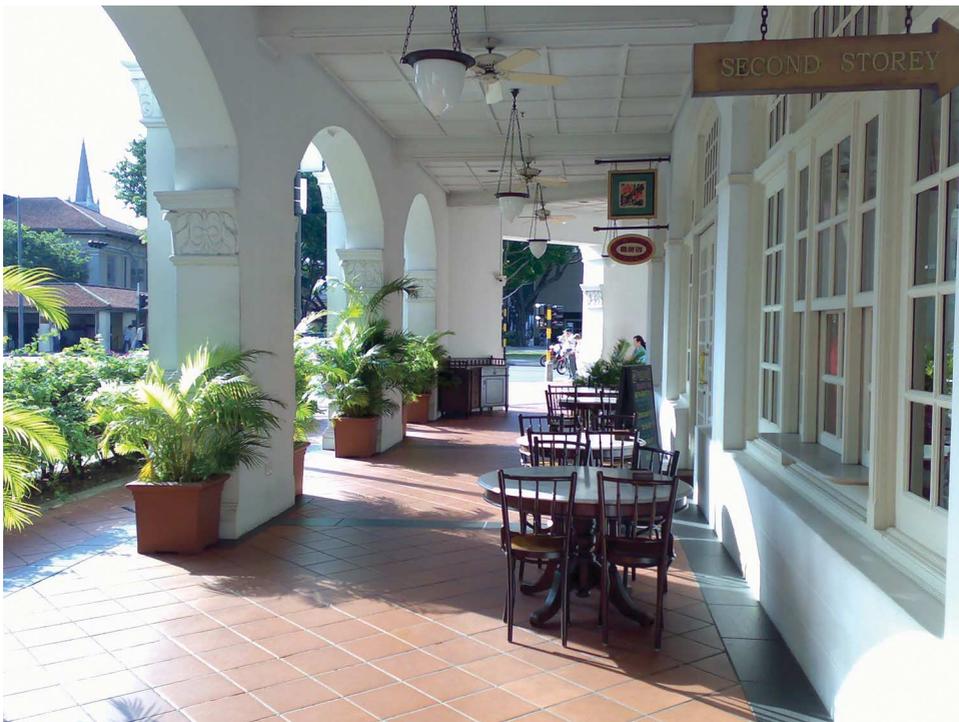
A Victorian-style theater in the Arcade provided entertainment, while a range of outlets served food and drinks exuding global hybridity, including the Empire Café, 'a typical 1920s Singapore coffee house', Seah Street Deli, 'a typical New York-style delicatessen', Doc Cheng's, a restaurant serving 'Western cuisine created with an Asian twist', the Royal China, 'a top international Chinese restaurant operator based in London', and Ah Teng's, a bakery serving 'delicious pastries, biscuits and cakes, as well as steaming hot dim sum' (Raffles Hotel, 2007). Inside the Arcade, the old colonial domesticity can be experienced in a hybrid form at the Raffles Courtyard, shown in Figure 2, described by the Hotel as 'a timeless structure with white arches flanked by tropical palms and native plants', its 'colonial cocktail bar' and 'traditional



**Figure 2.** The colonial-themed Raffles Courtyard that is open to the public for food and drinks, with the skyscrapers of Raffles City in the background. A replica of the cast-iron portico can be seen at the far end of the Courtyard.

alfresco kitchen', which serves Asian seafood, making it 'a pleasant place for patrons to watch the passing parade of visitors' (Raffles Hotel, 2007). To complete the experience of gazing, the towering presence of the hotel and office buildings of Raffles City in the background returns the gaze of the transnational networks, albeit in an abstract and benevolent way unlike the malevolent gaze of the native into the old extended verandah, with the Courtyard customer experiencing imaginary transnational elites peering down on them through mirrored windows as they eat and chatter the night away in the new fantastic timelessness of millennial capitalism.

Outside Ah Teng's Bakery, where the Hotel structure covers the street pavement and turns it into a verandah, the hybridity is reversed. Figure 3 shows the verandah. Located at the junction between the cosmopolitan west, the civic-cultural north and the vernacular east, passersby are enticed to grab a bite under the shade of the Hotel's street verandah, sit at the traditional marble-top tables of old Asian coffeeshops and gaze at the flow of people going about their business in the civilization of commodities. The Hotel becomes a monument of *serial* hybrid imaginations, that is, in the 'bound seriality' Anderson (1998, pp. 29–45) discusses as global imaginations of similarity and difference running through bounded and essentialist categories. The significances of race, gender, class and sexuality are reversed, recombined and played around in simulations of signs, but the categories and their essentialisms remain intact. It becomes neither a monument for the colonial elites nor the nation but the postcolonial elites participating in the transnational networks of neoliberal capital. As



**Figure 3.** The vernacular street verandah turned nostalgic cosmopolitan sidewalk complete with old Chinese coffee-shop tables outside Ah Teng's Bakery.

the *Straits Times* comments, the images of empire at the Arcade ‘invite us, the once colonized, to occupy the position, if only imaginatively, of the colonizers’, with the ‘English-educated, in particular, succumb[ing] to the temptation’ (*ST*, 2003a). It is a monument that gestures to the vernacular, but only to draw the vernacular into cosmopolitanism and transform it into cultural commodities to defuse the criticality of postcolonialism.

The selling of hybridity and mobility is not limited to the Hotel’s Singapore space. Raffles International was formed in 1989 to ride the waves of globalization and plant its brand of utopian hybridity in other parts of the world. Today, the group operates Raffles hotels in Europe, the United States and Asia. The Raffles Beijing Hotel, a joint venture with the Beijing Tourism Group, opened in 2006 following the formula of serial hybridity fusing historical and present, Western and Eastern significances. The Hotel occupied a historic wing of the Le Grand Hotel de Peking, ‘where dignitaries such as Chinese revolutionary leader Sun Yat Sen and French general Charles de Gaulle once hobnobbed’ (*ST*, 2006b). Refurbished ‘in a mix of French colonial and Oriental styles’ (*ST*, 2006b), Raffles Beijing celebrates the dramatic rise of contemporary China, with a touch of French anti-Americanism, and defuses its terrifying implications, which Napoleon predicted if the sleeping giant should awake. Shaped as a pyramid and housing a tropical garden modeled after Singapore’s famous Botanic Gardens, Raffles Dubai, a joint venture with a member of the emirate’s ruling family, opened in 2008 to the fanfare of a Chinese lion dance. It is not the Raffles brand *per se* that makes the successful globalization of the Hotel possible, but this formulaic hybridity that makes it a successful global brand.

As such, Raffles Hotel is no longer about the cultural production of a commodity space, but a cultural product in its own right. Thus, there was a hardly a protest when the national monument was sold along with Raffles International for a big windfall to local capital, both state-owned and privately held, to American global investment company Colony Capital and Saudi Prince Alwaleed bin Talal’s Kingdom Holding in 2005. Nothing was or can be substantially changed, since the law protects the Hotel as a heritage site. In any case, the new owners are interested in the global brand name rather than the Hotel *per se*, and plans for expansion to global cities in the Gulf kingdoms, Canada and the United States are afoot. The international Raffles chain remains under Singaporean management, thus indicating that the sale is a strategic move to foster transnational elite connections that would place Singapore as a key node in the booming tourist industry stretching from the Middle East to East Asia and North America. This is the very logic of Singapore’s globalization as it partakes of the neoliberal order of regulated free markets and constitutional politics, in which it builds its own commercial empire through alliances and stakeholder relations with both established Western capital and emerging Asian capital by touting the very brand of Singapore. State-led capital brands and sells Singapore as a unique global city with its utopian hybridity that promises to break down the divisions of East and West and pacify the age-old racial, class and gender divisions of capitalism.

## Conclusion

Monuments express power. Some monuments express this in an explicit and epic way, like the Stalinist statue, the Lincoln Memorial or the Arc de Triomphe, their

semantics and psychic resonance clearly evident in their directly interpolating form. Others are more subtle, like the Vietnam War Memorial or Singapore's Civilian War Memorial, which is a towering four-pillar structure symbolizing the country's four major races and located across from Raffles Hotel. Neither epic nor subtle, monuments to capital like the Raffles Hotel are insidious in their expression of power, because they transfigure according to the changing commodity logic of capitalism. Their transfigurations, resonating with the capitalist logic of the era and the subjects capital produces, prevent them from becoming fossilized into the merely ideological or becoming political sites of discursive struggle. They function in the reproduction of elite subjectivities and the needs and desires of these subjectivities in the different ages of capital. As I have shown, the Raffles Hotel transfigured from a manifestation of colonial domesticity in the colonial age, to one of nostalgic authenticity in the national period, and to a monument of cultural hybridity in the transnational age.

As monuments to capital, hotels give us access into the secret symbolic processes of the rapidly changing mobile city. Transnational capital flows can be indexed by numerical figures, but we need to see how these flows, carried in commodities, cultural images and tourists, physically and symbolically transform the city as they traverse and circulate through its streets. They also transform state and society as state actors and other social agents attempt to control, harness and facilitate the flows through spatial production. In the process, race, class, gender and sexuality are mediated through each other, so that the ruling elites of the age can manage these social categories through the changing spatiality of the mobile city. Hotels, particularly heritage hotels, as icons of urbanity and mobility occupy a key place in the process. The hotel space is not so much the space of historical erasure or modern abstraction as the space of *formal* management and manipulation of cultural signs and significance, that is, in the case of Raffles Hotel, the manipulation of racial, gender, class and sexual meanings through the forms of domesticity, authenticity and hybridity that are manifested in the architecture of the Hotel. Therefore, by digging into the layers of changes to the Hotel's architectural space, we can see the otherwise ephemeral cultural manifestations of capital flows and the ensuing cultural politics that shape state and society in different eras.

This is a cultural archaeology of capitalism as well as an urban sociology of spatial-cultural politics. It shows the mobile city to be socially stratified, such that the varying mobility of segments of the population as it is shaped by the urban architecture corresponds to the opportunities for their social mobility. We find thus the Raffles Hotel opened and closed to specific groups of people through the ages of capital, from the Hotel as a place of white refuge amidst bustling native streets during the colonial era to the struggles over control of the space by unions, the local bourgeoisie and the state in the postcolonial era. Today, the Hotel space is an intricate complex of public access and restriction that manage the pedestrian and consumer traffic through its courtyards, arcades and verandahs and define the cosmopolitan elite hosted in its exclusive inner sanctum against the mobile masses coursing through the city outside. The process is dialectical and complex and shows that the global city is not made by transnational capitalist forces but, in the Singapore case, by the developmental state harnessing and facilitating capital flows for *global city-making* with the ensuing spatial-cultural politics of mobility in tow. Wharton's (2001) analysis of Hilton hotels as artifacts of

globalizing Americanism during the Cold War suggests that features of the Raffles Hotel transfiguration are seen in global hotel chains. The building of Raffles Hotels throughout globalizing Asia with its Singapore branding and utopian hybridity suggests a new age of Asian capitalism is upon us, in which developmental city-states play a central role in actively making mobile cities.

### Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Natalie Oswin, Brenda Yeoh, Philip Holden, Chua Beng Huat, Elaine Ho, Kelvin Low and the reviewers and editor of *Mobilities* for their critical comments.

### References

- Anderson, B. (1998) *The Spectre of Comparisons: Nationalism, Southeast Asia and the World* (London: Verso).
- Appadurai, A. (1990) Disjuncture and difference in the global cultural economy, *Public Culture*, 2(2), pp. 1–24.
- Applin, R. V. K. (1994 [1937]) Bathing at Raffles Hotel, in: J. Bastin (Ed) *Travellers' Singapore: An Anthology*, pp. 143–146 (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press).
- Asia Wall Street Journal* (1980) Sadly the next ball at Raffles may be a Wrecker's, May 15, Hong Kong, pp. 1, 9.
- Bleackley, H. (1994 [1928]) The Europe and Raffles Hotels, in: J. Bastin (Ed), *Travellers' Singapore: An Anthology*, pp. 202–213 (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press).
- Business Times* (1979) Raffles Hotel at the crossroads, Singapore. March 15.
- Business Times* (1986) Making Raffles Hotel a crown jewel, Singapore. December 24.
- Business Times* (1988a) \$55 million facelift for an old lady, Singapore. February 25.
- Business Times* (1988b) Raffles Hotel owners win site tender, Singapore. August 1.
- Business Times* (1989) Back to the past and into the future, Singapore. June 24.
- Clancy-Smith, J. & Gouda, F. (Eds) (1998) *Domesticating the Empire: Race, Gender, and Family Life in French and Dutch Colonialism* (Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia).
- Collingham, E. M. (2001) *Imperial Bodies: The Physical Experience of the Raj, c. 1800–1947* (Cambridge: Polity Press).
- Comaroff, J. & Comaroff, J. L. (2000) Millennial capitalism: First thoughts on a second coming, *Public Culture*, 12(2), pp. 291–343.
- Flower, R. (1986) *Year of the Tiger* (Singapore: Raffles Hotel).
- Gaonkar, D. P. & Povinelli, E. A. (2003) Technologies of public forms: Circulation, transfiguration, recognition, *Public Culture*, 15(3), 385–397.
- Harben, H.D. (1994 [1936]) The most colourful town in the world, in: J. Bastin (Ed) *Travellers' Singapore: An Anthology*, pp. 231–236 (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press).
- Henderson, J.C. (2001) Conserving colonial heritage: Raffles Hotel in Singapore, *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 7(1), pp. 7–24.
- Holden, P. (1996) *Orienting Masculinity, Orienting Nation: W. Somerset Maugham's Exotic Fiction* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press).
- Holden, P. (1999) The free market's second coming: monumentalising Raffles, in: P. G. L. Chew & A. Kramer-Dahl (Eds) *Reading Culture: Textual Practices in Singapore*, pp. 83–98 (Singapore: Times Academic Press).
- Horan, W.R. (1994 [1935]) Singapore's seething life, in: J. Bastin (Ed) *Travellers' Singapore: An Anthology*, pp. 213–223 (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press).
- Hutton, W. (1978) Grand hotels of Asia: 2, *Silver Kris*, May-June: 29–33.
- King, A. (1995) *The Bungalow: The Production of a Global Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press).

- Kong, L. & Yeoh, B. S. A. (2003) *The Politics of Landscapes in Singapore: Construction of 'Nation'*, (New York: Syracuse University Press).
- Lai C.-K. (2005) Concrete/concentric nationalism: The architecture of independence in Malaysia, 1945–1969, Unpublished thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 2005.
- Marx, K. (1976 [1867]) *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy, Volume 1*, trans. B. Fowkes (London: Penguin Books and New Left Review).
- Morris, J. (1983) *Stones of Empire: The Buildings of the Raj* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Pregarz, R. (1990) *Memories of Raffles: 22 Years with a Grand Old Hotel* (Singapore: Treasury Publishing).
- Raffles Hotel (2007) Dining in Raffles Hotel. Available at <http://singapore-raffles.raffles.com/z912/restaurant.html> (accessed 13 February 2007).
- Sharp, I. (1981) *There is Only One Raffles: The Story of a Grand Hotel* (London: Souvenir Press).
- Singapore Government (2000) *Singapore Annual Report on Tourism Statistics*. Available at <http://app.stb.com.sg/asp/tou/tou03.asp> (accessed 9 September 2007).
- Singapore Ministry of Trade and Industry (1991) *Strategic Economic Plan: Towards A Developed Nation* (Singapore: SNP Publishers).
- Singapore Monitor* (1982), December 28, Singapore.
- Singapore Monitor* (1982) New tower block for Raffles Hotel, 28 December, p. 12.
- Stoler, A. L. (2002) *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press).
- The Straits Times* (1980a) Incentive offer to preserve Raffles? 16 July, p. 1.
- The Straits Times* (1980b) Raffles Hotel owners to go it alone, 16 August 16, p. 9.
- The Straits Times* (1986) When prestige counts – a suites-only Raffles Hotel, 11 December, p. 14.
- The Straits Times* (1987a) Restoration of Raffles to start soon? 4 April, p. 19.
- The Straits Times* (1987b) Raffles' growth hinges on who gets land next door, 9 December, p. 26.
- The Straits Times* (1989a) Much ado about the Raffles, 15 March, p. 27.
- The Straits Times* (1989b) Treasure trove of relics found at Raffles Hotel, 23 June, p. 2.
- The Straits Times* (1990) Raffles Hotel globe-trots in search of lost portico design 7 December, p. 5.
- The Straits Times* (1991) A grand old lady returns, June 26, pp. 1–2.
- Straits Times* (2003a) When laws of the jungle fail in the jungle..., April 4.
- The Straits Times* (2003b) Sarong party boys, 5 October, p. 8.
- The Straits Times* (2004) Why 'Uniquely Singapore' 24 March, p. 19.
- The Straits Times* (2005) Remaking Singapore as a vibrant global city, 23 August, p. 6.
- The Straits Times* (2006a) UK award for man who put youth on right track, 26 March, p. 14.
- The Straits Times* (2006b) Raffles Hotel – in Beijing, 28 June, p. 3.
- Urban Redevelopment Authority and Preservation of Monuments Board (1997) *Raffles Hotel Preservation Guidelines, Volume I* (Singapore: The Authority and Board).
- Wells, C. (1994 [1940]) Raffles Hotel, in: J. Bastin (Ed) *Travellers' Singapore: An Anthology*, pp. 242–249 (Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press).
- Wharton, A.J. (2001) *Building the Cold War: Hilton International Hotels and Modern Architecture* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press).
- Yeoh, B. S. A. (2003) *Contesting Space in Colonial Singapore: Power Relations and the Urban Built Environment* (Singapore: Singapore University Press).