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Indigenous Cultural Bodies in Tourism: An Analysis of Local 'Audience' Perception of Global Tourist Consumers

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ABSTRACT The paper approaches cultural heritage tourism as an artefact of (cultural) globalisation and global "flows" (Urry 2007). The premise is that markets of (constructed) cultural 'heritage' and 'cultural bodies' rooted in specific 'localness', can be seen as being increasingly catered for within global cultural flows and transnational movements of tourists, with cultural commodities such as the 'Zulu dance' narratives and 'Zulu' bodies positioned to meet tourist expectations. Methodologically, the paper draws on ethnographic data generated from unstructured interviews and focus groups, and probes the *production* of locality and people through an analysis of the perceptions of a sample group of Black Africans towards the Zulu dance narrative that contrives to make African, in this case Zulu-ness as the emphatic "specificity" or condition "for intercultural participation" in tourism encounters (van Binsbergen 2003: 400). The paper examines local perception of the Zulu dance and the female dancers, probing how this category of local 'audience' perceives the positioning of dance and dancers, as items of *local heritage* and *indigeneity* for consumption within global(ized) tourism. The paper shows that an analysis of the data from the sample group reveals that local Zulu-speaking individuals believe that a strong marketing matrix contrives to sell a product of *Zulu*, that is *more* about meeting a global demand, than about showcasing what and *who* the 'Zulu' is.