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Cultural Heritage in East Asia

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Content

Introduction

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The Heritage Tourism and Education Special Interest Group met for the very first time on 21-22 November 2019 in the World Heritage city and gaming hub of Macao with the generous support of longstanding ATLAS Member Institution, Macao Institute for Tourism Studies (IFTM). While the number of delegates was modest, it was a diverse and productive group hailing from Hong Kong, Macao, Mainland China, the Philippines, Singapore, Spain, and Bangladesh.

The Special Interest Group meeting had endeavoured to examine work from both cultural and natural heritage researchers and educators and to provide a common platform for meaningful and constructive discussions across disciplines. In this special issue of ATLAS Review, we showcase two such papers, one drawing from economic theories and another working within the paradigms of cultural heritage management. These papers are illustrative of the vivid discussions of emerging ideas and longstanding concerns in heritage tourism articulated in the special interest group.

In the first, Thea Vinnicombe from the Macau Institute for Tourism Studies reviewed the Contingent Valuation Method (CVM) for quantifying costs and benefits associated with tourism at cultural heritage sites. Vinnicombe's review identified the policy relevance for CVM for monuments, festivals and museums and the salience of recording and measuring both monetary and non-monetary costs and benefits. In so doing, Vinnicombe positions economics and economists as key to improving the quantification of values required in resource allocation decisions concerning heritage tourism.

In the second, Kiano Luk, Kim-ming Lee and Raymond Tam drew on three examples from Hong Kong to illustrate the dynamics of cultural heritage management in the territory. The cases include a traditional Chinese tenement house (Lui Seng Chun), a grand Chinese mansion (King Yin Lei) and a spectacular hill-top villa (Ho Tung Gardens). Using these cases, which reflect varying economic, conservation and administrative logics at play, Luk, Lee and Tam argues that the government to involve both heritage experts and tourism marketeers in formulating heritage tourism policies that balance 1) heritage property's cultural and historical values and their redevelopment market values and 2) heritage conservation and visitor practices and experiences.

Put together, these two papers unite in their consideration of economic logics, market pricing and valuation and the important roles heritage managers and experts play. Coming from one of the most rapidly urbanising and developing areas of East Asia and the world, they also point to the immense potential of heritage management studies in China's Greater Bay Area.

The contribution of economic theory to determining resource allocation to cultural tourism

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Abstract

Tourism destinations increasingly seek to leverage existing cultural resources to attract more or different visitors (Herrero, et al., 2012). These attractions include tangible heritage sites, museums, art galleries and cultural festivals. This results in costs as well as benefits for residents. It is therefore important for policymakers to compare the costs and benefits when making changes in their related resource allocation decisions. Both monetary and non-monetary costs and benefits should be included. The latter include factors such as the negative impacts of increased crowding and congestion and the positive intangible rewards associated with preserving the history and culture of a region. Economists can assist in identifying and quantifying all the associated costs and benefits and in particular, can apply techniques developed to value non-monetary costs and benefits. One such technique used in valuing cultural and heritage goods is the Contingent Valuation Method (CVM). This paper explains the contingent valuation method and by way of illustration summarizes its use in a selection of or recent tourism-related heritage valuation studies.

Introduction

Tourism destinations increasingly seek to leverage existing cultural resources to attract more or different visitors (Herrero, et al., 2012). These attractions include tangible heritage sites, museums, art galleries and cultural festivals. Such utilization involves both costs and benefits for those living in the affected destinations and typically requires changes in funding allocations (Chang & Mahadevan, 2014). Additional funds may be required, for example, to maintain heritage sites in the face of increased visitor numbers, to provide additional amenities for visitors and to deliver services (Kim, et al., 2007). These funds may be diverted from other uses in the expectation that visitors generate economic benefits which exceed the costs. However, costs and benefits may not be shared equally amongst residents and while some may be better off, others may experience negative impacts. Economic theory can provide guidance to policymakers as they seek to allocate resources to funding cultural and heritage tourism. In particular, economists can assist in identifying and quantifying all the associated costs and benefits associated to facilitate an efficient and fair allocation of resources. Some costs and benefits are readily quantified, for example, the costs of restoring or maintaining a heritage site, or of staffing a museum. Others, such as the negative impacts of crowding due to increased tourism, or the positive intangible benefits of preserving the heritage, history and culture of a place are not so readily quantified. In these circumstances, economists are able to use a survey-based technique, the Contingent Valuation Method (CVM) to place a monetary value on the benefits and costs associated with a specific or a group of cultural goods to help better inform decision-makers (Snowball, 2008). This paper explains the contingent valuation method and by way of elucidation, summarizes its use in a selection of recent tourism-related heritage valuation studies, including the Jogyesa Buddhist Temple in Seoul, (Lim, et al., 2016) and the local architectural heritage of Mani, Greece (Giannakopoulou et al., 2017). This short explanatory study is intended as a precursor to a more comprehensive compilation of such studies to identify any similarities and differences relative to the broader CVM literature.

The challenge of valuing heritage sites

As a rule, the task of valuing heritage sites and other cultural goods falls to experts, whose decisions are based on intrinsic values understood through their knowledge and experience. Experts, however, frequently disagree, may be influenced by subjective factors and may have little interest in or knowledge of benefits and costs to the broader community (Smith, 2010). As a result, expert opinions provide only limited help to policymakers as they seek to allocate resources in a way that maximizes social well-being. Explicit economic benefits of cultural/heritage tourism arise from attracting visitors and their spending, which translates into higher profits for local firms, wages for workers and future rounds of spending, investment, profit and income. These values can be captured in economic impact studies, and compared with explicit costs such as the financial costs of preservation and conservation of buildings, providing amenities for tourists and the salaries of staff. But this approach fails to include the non-money benefits which arise when funds are directed to heritage and cultural goods. The non-monetary costs which may be associated with a subsequent increase in visitor numbers are similarly excluded. Both the monetary and non-monetary costs and benefits must be accounted for if the total economic value of a good is to be known (Carson, 2000). This knowledge is vital for policymakers wishing to allocate resources in a way which achieves socially desirable outcomes.

The CVM questionnaire instrument

Although economists have developed a number of techniques for capturing non-money values, CVM has proven to be amongst the most popular. This is due largely to its ability to capture the costs and benefits of a range of goods and services. CVM was developed in environmental economics, where it has been used for almost half a century to put a monetary estimate on non-market good such as endangered species, pristine wildernesses, and conservation projects. Having similar non-market benefits, the technique is increasingly used to value heritage and cultural goods (Wright & Eppink, 2016). CVM valuations are derived from survey data collected from a sample of the population identified as reaping the benefits or suffering costs associated with the good to be valued. In simple terms, respondents are asked to place a monetary value on the total benefits (or costs) of a good by stating their willingness to pay (wtp) to receive these benefits or avoid the costs.

Over the long period of its use, CVM has met with criticism from economists who tend to be more comfortable with revealed preferences expressed in buying behavior. However, the necessity of including non-market benefits in an economic valuation is an essential element of economic theory (Vinnicombe, 2020).

Furthermore, the critiques are generally thought to have resulted in continuous improvements in the methodology, including detailed guidelines for users (Carson, 2012; Snowball, 2008). It is therefore possible to summarize the components of a good CVM questionnaire survey instrument and some of the pitfalls that should be avoided in a CVM study and this will be done in the following paragraphs.

Three important sections have been identified as necessary to include in the questionnaire instrument. The first or introductory section typically collects attitudinal and behavioral information, for instance, do respondents regard a specific historical building as a source of pride for their community? Does it have historical value? Do they visit it? Do they hope it will be available for future generations to visit? Answers to these questions are useful in checking for consistency in responses over the entire questionnaire, in determining reasons for higher or lower wtp, and also help “warm up” the respondents so they are amendable to evaluating the wtp scenario (Whitehead, 2006). For example, if a respondent recognizes positive benefits in the good being valued, then, in the absence of financial limitations, that person would be expected to have a positive willingness to pay for it. If not, the reasons for this can be explored. Response to behavioral and attitudinal questions can also be useful in identifying determinants of willingness to pay. Many studies have found positive associations between factors such as visit/attendance intention and wtp amounts (Bertcchini & Sultan, 2019; Giannakopoulou, et al., 2016; Lim, et al., 2016).

The next section of the survey instrument typically covers the valuation question. This is where the site or cultural artifact to be valued is presented and respondents are asked to state how much they would be willing to pay for it. It is the most important section of a CVM questionnaire and the most difficult for researchers to develop well. Most people in most countries are accustomed to making purchasing decisions based on established prices for consumer goods and services. They are typically not accustomed to thinking of heritage sites and other cultural goods in terms of money values, let alone estimating the benefits they individually derive from these goods in terms of a price. Respondents consequently face considerable cognitive challenges in providing reliable and rational money valuations (Niewijk, 1994; Tisdell, et al., 2008). It is therefore incumbent upon the researcher to simplify the associated challenges. To begin with, the item should be clearly described, using aids such as photos if these are appropriate (Whitehead, 2006). More important, however, is to present a scenario which facilitates valuations. This can be achieved through a hypothetical but realistic variation in the quality or quantity which studies show reduces the cognitive complexities of the price decision (Snowball, 2008). While interviewees generally find it difficult to estimate their wtp for an entire heritage good, such as an historic building, they are able conceptualize a project related to the good and decide whether or not they would be willing to contribute to this. This might, for instance, be a restoration program with specific goals, such as to repair the exterior, to replace a roof, or landscape the surrounds. With respect to heritage sites, the problems are somewhat simplified by their frequent and evident need for restoration work, particularly if they are to be leveraged to attract tourists and/or preserved in the face of increasing visitor numbers. Researchers can use this context to frame a clear valuation scenario. Pollicino and Maddison, 2001, for example, asked respondents their wtp for more frequent cleaning of Lincoln Cathedral in the United Kingdom. Yung and Chan, 2015, asked residents of Hong Kong if they were willing to contribute to funding the restoration and transformation of the historic Central Police Station compound into a heritage, arts, culture and tourism hub.

The format used to elicit respondents' wtp value requires careful consideration. Previous studies have shown valuations differ according to the elicitation technique (Carson, 2012). The two most common question formats are open and closed-ended questions. The former involves simply asking the respondent to state their maximum wtp for the good, and has been associated with over-valuations or unreliable responses. In consequence, it has mostly been replaced with a dichotomous choice format which provides more guidance. That is, a stated wtp amount to which respondents can give a Yes/No response is thought to be closer to a market situation. Many variations of this approach have been trailed in order to improve the reliability of valuations. A popular approach, known as the double bounded dichotomous choice technique or DBDC, is to follow the initial question with an upward or downward bid depending on whether the initial answer is positive or negative. Another variation is to display a payment card with a range of different payment options from which interviewees are asked to make a selection (Daneshdoust, 2015).

Choosing an appropriate means by which the payment is to be made, or the payment vehicle, is also critical. Respondents who lack confidence in the payment vehicle, or are unfavorably disposed to it, for example, to increases in income or property taxes, may make zero wtp bids, even if they value the good positively and would otherwise be willing to make a financial contribution towards the hypothetical scenario. These bids are known as protest zeros, and not infrequently make up a substantial proportion of responses (Morrison, 2002). This is known as payment vehicle bias. A good payment vehicle should be acceptable, easily understood, and where possible, have a link to the good being valued. For example, an entrance ticket to a heritage site. Protest zeros can be identified by comparing zero bids to attitudinal questions. Respondents with positive attitudes and zero bids represent possible protest zeros. Further confirmation can be found by using follow up probing questions which ask the reasons for positive or negative wtp. Finally, demographic questions should be included in the questionnaire. These can be used in the analysis to identify determinants of wtp.

Heritage tourism valuations

Contingent valuation is a contentious technique amongst economists due in large part to its reliance on survey data and the many forms of bias associated with this method of data collection (Vinnicombe, 2020). Two forms of bias have been alluded to in the discussion above. The first of these is hypothetical bias which refers to the possible difference between stated and actual wtp associated with the hypothetical scenario. Interviewees may provide wtp amounts that do not reflect their actual wtp because they have not properly understood the valuation scenario, or the nature of the valuation question, or they reject the scenario as lacking credibility. Good scenario design is therefore the key to reducing this form of bias (Carson, 2002). The second form of bias mentioned is payment vehicle bias, which can be minimized by the researcher's ensuring the payment method will be acceptable to most of the sample (Morrison, et al., 2002).

Coverage of all the forms of bias and other critiques of CVM are beyond the scope of this paper and have been addressed comprehensively elsewhere (Snowball, 2008). Two final issues of consequence, however, should be mentioned. First is the means by which surveys are conducted. Given the complex nature of the hypothetical scenario, face to face interviews are preferred to on-line, mail or telephone surveys. The face to face interviewer is able to clarify the scenario, respond to questions, and/or to visual clues which suggest interviewees need further clarification and may be better able to display visual aids (Whitehead, 2006). Secondly, Carson, 2000, warns that many CVM studies fail due to a failure to correctly identify the appropriate population to which mean or median values can reliably be extrapolated in order to estimate the total value of a good. The population should include all those likely to benefit or incur costs arising from the good. Sometimes the population is very large. For example, it could be argued all humankind benefit from the historical and cultural significance as well as the accomplishments in construction and engineering reflected in the Great Wall of China or the Great Pyramids. For practical purposes, however, it is reasonable to limit the relevant population to those to whom the pricing mechanism described in a CVM scenario would apply.

Valuing heritage tourism sites

Table 1 summarizes a small selection of CVM studies which value heritage goods used as tourism attractions. These studies were all published over the five year period from 2015 to 2019. The wtp figures are given in US dollars, after adjustments for inflation between the year of the study and the year 2018 based on World Bank National Consumer Price Index figures (World Bank, 2019).

The five papers included cover four continents, Africa, Asia, Europe and South America. Only two studies value specific heritage sites, the Ferdowsi mausoleum in Iran and the Jogyesa Buddhist Temple in South Korea. The remaining three value collections of heritage buildings in a specific locale, which are thought to be of interest to tourists. In two cases, the difficulty of valuing multiple buildings is overcome through the use of guided tour routes which cover either all or a portion of the sites (Báez-Montenegro, et al. 2016; Bertacchini & Sultan, 2019). The tour routes also serve to clarify the scenario and provide an acceptable payment vehicle, as respondents are asked if they would be willing to pay for guided tour tickets. The populations from which the samples have been derived vary. Two studies have sought to value the goods to both tourists and residents and two have confined their valuations to tourists only. In the case of the Jogyesa Buddhist Temple in South Korea, the authors have asked Seoul households how much they would value the transformation of this site as a cultural tourism resource. All five studies have used face-to-face interviews, the most reliable means of collecting data in CVM studies. The sample size ranges from 240 in the case of the Ferdowsi Mausoleum in Iran to 1000 for the heritage buildings in the Chilean city of Valdivia. The latter is very substantial, given the resource requirements of face-to-face interviews. Mean valuations range from a low of $7.5 for the Mausoleum to a high of $38.75 for the local Greek architecture. There are some similarities in the determinants of wtp, such as age, income and visit intention or number of visits, but overall the sample is too small to draw any conclusions with respect to similarities and differences across the features highlighted.

Table 1: Selection of CVM Studies from 2015-2019

Authors	Year	Heritage Good	Scenario	Method	Sample size	Pop	Elicitation format	Payment vehicle	Protest zeros	Determi-nants	Valuations
Daneshdoust	Publish ed: 2015 Study: Not clear. (Used 2013)	Ferdowsi mausoleum, in Tus city, Iran (national famous poet)	Unclear	Face-to-face inter-views	240	Residents & tourists in the city of Mashhad .	Pay-ment card with 10 options – select 1	Ticket or donation	16 %	Age Education	Mean: $7.5 Median: $1.89
Lim, Kim & Yoo	Publish ed: 2016 Study: 2013	Jogyesa Buddhist Temple (JBT) Seoul, South Korea	Transform JBT to a cultural tourism resource.	Face-to-face inter-views	500	Seoul house-holds	Close ended ques-tion	Annual property tax increase over a 5 year period	n/a	Visit intention. Income. See a need	Mean: $6.80 per year for 5 years Total: $24.25mill per year for five years
Giannakopoulou, et al.	Publish ed: 2016 Study 2012	Local architectural heritage of Mani, Greece	Restoration & preserva-tion of the architectur al heritage	Face-to-face inter-views	230	Greek & foreign visitor numbers	Open ended ques-tion	Donation to Special fund	32%	Age Income No of visits Agree with plan 2nd home in Mani Greek national	Mean: $38.75 Total: $94,888
Báez-Montenegro, et al.	Publish ed: 2016 Study 2009	Collection of historical heritage buildings, monuments & museums in the city of Valdivia, Chile	Hypothetic al guided tour routes	Face-to-face inter-views	1000	Visitors to the area	DBDC	Tour ticket, proceeds from which would be used for conser-vation, mainte-nance & restoration	n/a	Age Income Foreign national	Mean: Between $19.65 & $20.88
Bertacchini & Sultan	Publish ed: 2019 Study 2015	Heritage buildings in the city center of Port Louis, Mauritius.	Hypothetic al guided tour routes	Face-to-face intervi ews	552	Residents & foreign visitors	DBDC	Donation, residents: Tour ticket, Visitors	22%	Residents: Income, age, male, married Visitors: Age, education, unmarried, country of origin, perceived cultural value	Mean: Residents $11.54 Visitors $15.57 Total: Estimates Residents: $1,800,725 Visitors $2,724,272

Conclusion

This short paper has sought to explain CVM and its use in valuing cultural and heritage goods which have the potential for use as tourist attractions. The need to include non-market values in estimating the total economic value of a cultural/heritage good has been described, along with the manner in which CVM is able to do this. That there are shortcomings with this methodology has been noted, and two sources of bias, hypothetical and payment vehicle bias have been highlighted. Finally, a small sample of studies valuing cultural/heritage goods for tourism purposes has been briefly examined.

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Heritage Tourism Development: Case Studies in Hong Kong

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Abstract

Heritage tourism is often regarded as one of the tools for sustainable economic development in global cities. However, a successful heritage tourism strategy not only requires the government to take initiatives but also needs to address two related sets of potentially conflicting objectives. The first set is the trade-off between the heritage's cultural and historical values (use values) and redevelopment market values (exchange values). The second set is to strike a balance between heritage management and maintenance and visitor management in terms of visitor numbers and restrictions. By examining the failure of three Hong Kong heritage tourism cases, our paper aims at demonstrating the importance of the government to involve both heritage experts and tourism marketeers in formulating a sound heritage tourism policy to address two sets of potentially incompatible objectives.

Introduction

The conservation of cultural heritage is an important aspect of sustainable development in global cities. It not only keeps the uniqueness of the city, but also strengthens the residents' sense of place and civic pride (Feeney, 2017). However, heritage is difficult to survive in a developed city due to the massive economic development projects (Yung and Chan, 2012). The problem is particularly acute in Hong Kong. As a significant proportion of the Hong Kong government revenues comes from land sale and land-related taxes (Aura, Cheung and Ni, 2015; Cheung and Wong, 2019) and the property interests are dominant players in Hong Kong economy (Poon, 2011), the urban development is mostly driven by exchange rather than use values (Yung and Chan, 2016).

The former Chief Executive of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Mr. Tung Chee Hwa has pronounced in his 1999 Policy Address that it is important to rehabilitate and preserve unique buildings for sustainable development and help promote Hong Kong heritage tourism. On the one hand, the heritage conservation can be an income generator if the heritages transform into the tourism attractions and items of leisure consumption properly (Graham et al., 2016; UNESCO, 1999). On the other hand, heritage acts as a historical record and tangible expression of Hong Kong identity (Chan and Lee, 2017; Butler et al., 2014). However, in 2020, after twenty years of Tung's Policy Address, the development of heritage tourism in Hong Kong has still been lagged behind the other destinations in Greater Bay Areas, such as Macao and Guangzhou. Even though some researchers suggest that developing heritage tourism is beneficial to the community, it is heavily depended on the government policy and guidance (Janssen et al., 2014; Li and Hunter, 2015). Thus, successful cultural heritage policies represent a balancing act of reconciling the tension between development (exchange values) and conservation (use values) (Henderson, 2008).

Due to the ownership issue of the historic buildings and current conservation policy, Hong Kong government have encountered the difficulties in declaring a monument and revitalising a heritage, resulting the heritage tourism development still remains in the introductory stage of the tourism life cycle. According to the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), cultural sustainability in Hong Kong is relatively weak and required further improvement. This paper, therefore, aims at revealing the relationship among the development of conservation, revitalisation and heritage tourism by examining several case studies in Hong Kong. Specifically, the case studies in this paper were privately owned heritages which have reflected its vulnerability and exchange values in the Hong Kong economy. Hopefully, the possible implications for future directions of heritage tourism development can be drawn after the discussion.

Literature Review

Overview of heritage tourism

Heritage tourism and cultural tourism are used interchangeably as being two separate terms but related and overlapping phenomena (Timothy, 2011). The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines heritage tourism as '*an immersion in the natural history, human heritage, arts, philosophy and institutions of another region or country*' (Timothy & Boyd, 2003) while cultural tourism is defined as '*visits by persons from outside the host community motivated wholly or in part by interest in the historical, artistic, scientific or lifestyle/heritage offerings of a community, region, group or institution*' (Silberberg, 1995). Actually, both definitions share the common elements which reflect the high level of similarity between two terms. The ultimate purpose of both heritage tourism and cultural tourism refers to activities of visiting or experiencing heritage, taking into account its natural, cultural and urban types (Nguyen & Cheung, 2014). Hence, in the present study, the term heritage tourism would be used for convenience throughout, and it encompasses built patrimony, living lifestyles, ancient artefacts and modern art and culture.

Heritage tourism began to be recognised as a distinct product category in the late 1970s when the tourism marketers noticed that some people mostly travelled to gain a deeper understanding of the heritage of a destination (Du Cros & McKercher, 2015). It is a tourism activity in which a destination's heritage assets are presented for the consumption of tourists. Tourists could learn, witness and experience the cultural heritage of a destination by this form of travel (Wu, 2015). To fulfil the tourists' consumption, heritage assets are essentially transformed and commodified into cultural tourism products. However, such commodification may cause the tension between tourism and conservation since the consumption of extrinsic values by tourists may not be the same as the conservation of the intrinsic values by the cultural heritage managers. Moreover, the contradictions between urban construction and heritage protection are becoming more and more acute due to the intensification of urbanisation and industrialisation (Hua, 2010). It not only affects whether the heritage assets can be preserved but also impacts on whether the culture can be continued.

Apart from examining the nature of heritage tourism, understanding tourist behaviour is a blueprint for visitor management and marketing strategies from the tourism development perspective. The demand (tourists' needs) and the supply (the community assets) have to be matched to form the travel motivation to visit the destination, resulting in the growth of tourism industry. It is essential to have a clear picture of the tourist's perception of the attractions and what will satisfy their need. Isaac (2008) comments that tourist classification is one of the most effective ways to predict and explain the tourists' needs and their behaviour. However, due to the complicated and broad essence of heritage tourists, a number of researchers have tried to classify them into different categories, including accidental/adjunct/in part/greatly cultural tourists (Silberberg, 1995), generalised/specialised cultural tourists (Stebbin, 1996), core/moderate/low heritage traveller (Shifflet & Associates, 1999), and purposeful/ sightseeing/ causal/incidental/serendipitous cultural tourist (McKercher, 2002). The result shows that no consensus could be reached on the classification among academics. The complex nature of heritage tourists, therefore, increases the difficulty for the destination stakeholders to plan how to select, protect, manage and utilise the heritage for attracting the tourists. Even though the community has a number of potential assets to attract the tourists, the stakeholders may not have a clear direction on how to cater to the needs of the heritage tourists.

The dilemma between tourism development and heritage conservation

Even though heritage is regarded as one of the fastest-growing components of tourism, it is required to be managed and marketed differently (Lee and Chhabra, 2015). As aforementioned, the difficulty in understanding the tourists' needs and behaviour hinder tourism development. Moreover, the fundamental paradox between the tourism industry and heritage conversation has existed. It is because tourism industry practitioners value heritages as raw materials for their products to generate tourism activity and revenue while heritage management practitioners value the heritage for their intrinsic merits (Du Cros & McKercher, 2015). As different discipline evolved independently with different ideologies, it is not uncommon that different relationships have existed between tourism and heritage management, such as denial, unrealistic expectation, a parallel existence, conflict, and cross purposes, etc. (McKercher et al., 2004). The negative relationship has always been found, which shows the dilemma is becoming more and more severe. Somehow the tourism practitioners and destination marketers mainly focus on how to maximise visitation numbers but only have limited knowledge of the impacts of tourism activities on the heritage they are promoting. While the heritage management highlights the preservation of heritage is an asset for the community, and the cultural heritage is a cultural construct which retains the meaning of places by keeping their cultural significance and interpreting them to people (Du Cros, 2001). The transformation and commodification of the heritages for the tourists could be a way to conserve the community's built heritage, but the buildings have lost their original character and historical value (McKercher et al., 2004). The uniqueness and authenticity of local cultures may be faded under such trade-off.

Authenticity connotes traditional culture and origin, which is genuine, unadulterated, without hypocrisy and honest to itself (Turner, 1976). The central aspect of the culture of modernity is the quest for an authentic experience, while tourism is based upon the belief that authentic experience resides outside the boundary of everyday life (MacCannell, 2013). Urry (2002) proposed the tourism experience depends on particular objects upon the 'tourist gaze' which is a frame with what the tourists expect to see. In a sense, real-life and authentic culture is suspended or hidden away. This gaze is described as a destructive process, in which the important local cultural expressions are reduced to commodities, and these traditions fall out of favour with local populations (UKessays, 2018). However, due to the importance of tourist capital in many developing tourist destinations, the locals alter the cultural authenticity into something very tangible to achieve economic success. The commodification of heritages is for satisfying the tourist consumption most rather than reconstructing the past in the present by preserving the heritages so as to affirm authenticity. In the viewpoint of globalisation, complex and contradictory layers of meaning are produced in a local community, and the marketing of one's cultural expressions degrade a specific culture while simultaneously helping in its integration into the global economy. The influx of tourist capital into heritage tourist site increases the sustained viability (Yung & Chan, 2012). However, the favour of economic development projects also allows the de-culturing and destruction of many Asian cities' heritage townscape (Timothy, 2014) and Hong Kong is one of the urban tourism destinations which faces the same challenge on heritage conservation. The elements affect the heritage tourism development is shown in Figure 1 below.

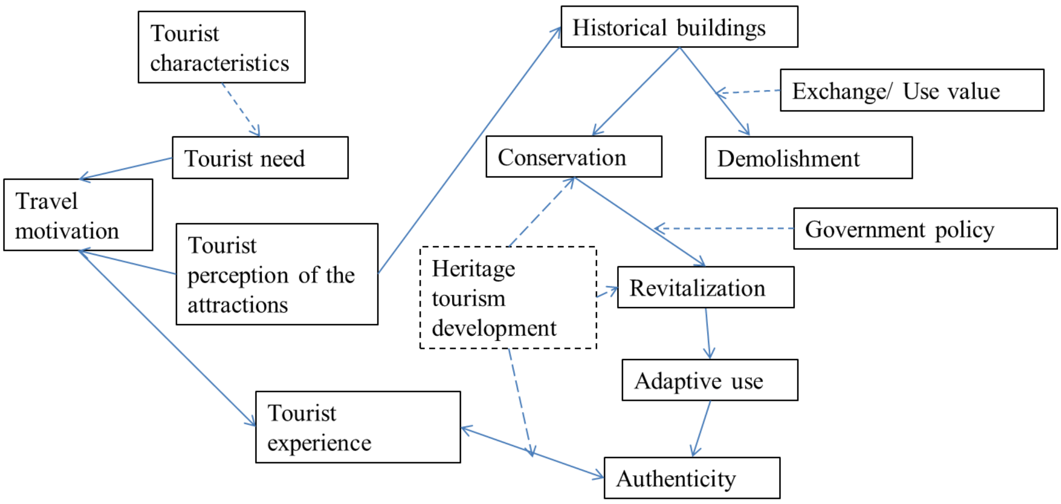

Figure 1: The elements affect the heritage tourism development

Hong Kong Tourism

Mainland visitors have driven Hong Kong tourism since the introduction of the Individual Visit Scheme in 2003. In 2018, 78.3% of total visitors came from Mainland China. However, more than half of the total tourists (55.1%) were same-day visitors. The total same-day in-town visitor spending amounting to HK$78.76 billion in 2018, of which 86.7% were on shopping. In contrast, the expenditure for overnight visitors amounted to HK$139.55 billion, of which 51.0% were on shopping. With regards to the places most visited by tourists, the top five were the

Peak, Tsim Sha Tsui Harbourfront Area, Hong Kong Disneyland, Ladies' Market and Temple Street (Hong Kong Tourism Board, 2019). These figures suggest that Hong Kong tourism relies heavily on being an international shopping centre and Hong Kong culture and history currently play a minor role. As worried by the Hong Kong Tourism Board, any appreciation of the Hong Kong dollar against other currencies, especially RMB, may hamper the further development of Hong Kong Tourist industry (Tourism Commission, 2019). Even worse, what happens when mainland tourists lose interest in shopping in Hong Kong? Some scholars and lawmakers suggested heritage tourism as a way out. But heritage tourists are the most sophisticated tourists who demand something that is not available anywhere else (Chow, 2015).

In order to diversify the industry, the government in 2017 issued the Development Blueprint for Hong Kong's Tourism Industry which contains four strategies: attracting more high value-added overnight visitors, diversifying tourism products (heritage tourism, green tourism, creative tourism, MICE tourism, and event tourism), developing smart tourism, and upgrading the service quality of the industry (Tourism Commission, 2017). With regard to heritage tourism, the Blueprint only concretely mentioned three destinations as short-term initiatives: Dr Sun Yat-sen Historical Trial, Tai Kwun, and Tai Hang Fire Dragon Heritage Centre. Nothing was explicated in the mid-term and long-term initiatives, as compared to green tourism, MICE tourism, and event tourism. Why does the government not develop and preserve more historic and cultural sites to promote heritage tourism?

Hong Kong heritage tourism development

Heritage conservation is the first step of starting heritage tourism and was first introduced in Hong Kong in 1976 when the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government enacted the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance with the aim of protecting historical monuments and to promote awareness of heritage values (Chu & Uebegang, 2002). Under the Ordinance (Cap.53), the Antiquities Authority can declare a place, building, site or structure for protection from excavation, demolition or alteration. Up to now, in Hong Kong, over one thousand four hundred historic buildings are identified with high heritage value by the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO), which is under Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD). AMO aims at protecting and conserving Hong Kong's archaeological and built heritage, and increasing public awareness of the cultural heritage and facilitating the public access. For the sake of implementing heritage conservation and revitalisation projects, AMO is supported and guided by the Commissioner for Heritage's Office (CHO), which is under the Development Bureau (DEVB). Besides AMO, the Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB) has also implemented an administrative grading system for classifying historic buildings into three grades (namely Grades 1, 2 and 3), for those of outstanding merits, special merits and some merits (HKSAR, 2013).

The limited usable land is undoubtedly the biggest challenge to Hong Kong heritage conservation. The redevelopment is always on the top agenda due to the current land policy and increasing population. It is impossible to balance the benefits for all stakeholders, but Hong Kong society has been skewed towards the revenue of consortiums. Smith (2000) asserts that much of the city's historic buildings have already surrendered to the prevailing commercial and profit-making imperative, pegged almost to monetary considerations. Apart from these, there are several obstacles hinder the heritage conservation, such as lack of conservation policy, mechanism to compensate developers and property owners, and fragmented priorities and inadequate coordination between government departments, etc. (Chu & Uebegang, 2002). According to Du Cros (2001), cultural heritage tourism ideally brings economic benefits to the destinations and provides a way for them to manage their cultural heritage and enhance its sustainability. However, the reality is—a number of heritages have been trade-off which affects the conservation of cultural values, and eventually, the goals of heritage tourism development cannot be achieved. It hinders the diversification of tourism products in Hong Kong. Three different cases will be discussed in the following part, which illustrate the friction between development and conservation; authenticity and access; and tourist experience.

Methodology

Case studies method is used in this research. Our case selection is based on three criteria. First, the cases have to be important historic buildings containing important cultural, historical and symbolic meanings. The Hong Kong government categorise historic structures into three grades. Those assessed with Grade I status may be proposed as declared monuments. Once a building is a declared monument, the government would protect the building against any alternations that reduce its heritage values. Since we want to see how the emphasis on use and exchange values affects the development or demolition of a heritage site, we select those historic buildings with Grade I but without declared monument status. Second, only cases with private ownership will be selected. As sites or buildings with public ownership can be easily dealt with when controversies arise, the heritage preservation of historic buildings with private ownership will genuinely show the tension between use and exchange values and the roles of the government in determining the path of heritage tourism. Third, the cases have to be widely discussed or exposed in the mass media. High exposure in mass media indicates deep public concerns of these buildings. It also exerts pressure upon the government to take a more active in preserving the site. By examining the news reports containing the keywords' heritage conservation', 'tourism', 'historic buildings', 'authenticity', 'Grade I status', 'privately-owned', and 'cultural landmark' between 2009 and 2019, three cases are identified for thorough scrutiny: Lui Seng Chun, King Yin Lei, and Ho Tung Gardens.

These three cases are selected because of the differences of their owners in the use-and-exchange-values emphasis. The owners of Lui Seng Chun stressed the cultural meanings of the building. In contrast, the owners of Ho Tung Gardens just considered the market values. The owners of King Yin Lei were in between. The heritage conservation consequences of the three sites are different: Ho Tung Gardens demolished, while the other two became tourist spots. Nevertheless, neither of them could be described as successful according to the news reports. Thus, through examining the heritage management and visitor management of these two sites, we may gain insights into why they fail even when use values are emphasised over exchange values or on par.

Case discussion

Lui Seng Chun

Lui Seng Chun is the first case we are going to discuss in this paper, which is located at 119 Lai Chi Kok Road, Mong Kong, at the junction with Tong Mi Road. It is a four-storey traditional Chinese tenement (tong lau) which was built in 1931 and designed by the architect W.H. Bourne. The ground floor of the building was occupied by a Chinese bone-setting medicine shop called "Lui Seng Chun". The name of the building was derived from a pair of rhymed couplets, meaning Lui's medicine could bring patients back to life. Lui Seng Chun originally owned by Mr. Lui Leung (alias Lui Hung Wai), a famous businessman who moved to Hong Kong from Taishan county of Guangdong province. Mr Lui engaged in transport and trading business and was one of the founders of the Kowloon Motor Bus Company Limited.

The total gross floor area of the building is 600 square metres. Its architecture reflects the Neoclassical style, which is characterised by a square-shaped frame and a row of decorative balustrades in front. The deep verandas help prevent rain from flooding the house, block sunlight and keep the indoor area cool. Similar as all the typical "Tong-laus" at that time, the ground floor of Lui Seng Chun was used as shops while the upper floors were used as dwellings. It is also regarded as the representative of "Kee-lau" (Chinese verandah) of the pre-war period in Hong Kong. According to HKBU (2019), since the 1960s, the Lui family began to move out of the building as the family continued to grow in size. The building became vacant in the 1970s. The AAB designated Lui Seng Chun a Grade I historic building in 2000. With the vision of preserving the building and to contribute to society, the Lui family decided to donate the building to the government in the same year. In 2008, the Lui Seng Chun building was selected in Batch I of the "Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme" initiated by the government. After a bidding process, the building would be converted into a Chinese medicine healthcare center and managed by Hong Kong Baptist University. The revitalisation work was completed in 2012 and adopted adaptive reuse form of refurbishment.

In the Hong Kong context, given very high land values that prevail, the best decision from a purely financial perspective would be to demolish Lui Seng Chun and build a high-rise tower. However, in the Lui Seng Chun case, the pressure of the redevelopment and conservation was released since the heritage was donated to the government. The government, therefore, could only restrict to original or alternative uses for the current building form. The government not only took the full responsibility for the primary restoration cost but also sought an operator to manage this historical building in the long run. The huge amount of cost for revitalisation has been borne by the government. However, in order to comply with the modern building safety regulations, the requirement of barrier-free accessibility and the operational needs of the clinic, the heritage was substantially altered. The original building verandas were enclosed with glass for increasing the amount of space in each floor, and a modern lift was added to the building.

Picture 1: Lui Seng Chun (from heritage.gov.hk)

This heritage converted to the clinic is put to good use and at the same time generate reasonable profits for the operator, but in the way, the government just save the hardware of the heritage, but it has lost a part of its original character. The adaptive reuse of the heritage affects its authenticity while the authenticity of the building has been a trade-off for gaining access to the heritage by modern standards. As authenticity is the central attribute to make heritage tourism sustainable, it is a critical component of a meaningful tourist experience. In terms of heritage conservation, it tried to retain the original architectural features and conserve the building as far as possible, but its setting, meaning and historical values have been lost. The fading authenticity of the heritage decreases the tourists' perceived value and satisfaction, which reflects that the heritage may not be appealing to the heritage tourists who seek the authentic experience and nostalgia.

As long as Lui Seng Chun is now a proper public medicine center, no special appointment is required for a visit. It is surprising that the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) has been promoted it as one of the heritage attractions in its website. However, for the heritage tourists, it is in doubt that whether they would be interested in visiting a medical clinic during their trip, particularly that the historical building now is not mainly for the tourist visitation but medical consultation. The reuse of historical building is a means of conserving it, but it also destructs the valuable intangible heritage which is crucial for the heritage tourists to evoke a sense of continuity of culture and link with the past to make sense of the present. According to the report of Audit Commission (2013), there were no requirements for the minimum number of guided tours and open days specified in the tenancy agreement of Lui Seng Chun. The tenants were also not required to submit the visitor information such as the number of visitors, types of visitors, visitor feedback, etc. Therefore, the popularity of the revitalised buildings and the visitors' satisfaction cannot be assessed by the Commissioner for Heritage's Office (CHO). The tourist visitation of Lui Seng Chun is far lower than the expectation.

King Yin Lei

King Yin Lei is a good example where development and conservation and government policies were at odds. Originally named "Hei Lo", King Yin Lei was built by a notable merchant Mr. Shum Yat-chor and Mrs. Shum Li Po-lun in 1937. The building was sold in 1978 to Mr. Yeo Chei Man and his son Mr. Yow Mok-shing, who renamed the building as "King Yin Lei". The building was then resold to its previous owner in August 2007 (HKSAR Development Bureau, 2016). The mansion was designed by British architect A.R. Fenton-Rayen. It sits on a 50,650 square feet site above Happy Valley Racecourse. The compound comprises a three-storey building with red bricks and green tiles and a private garden festooned with plants, various pavilions and terraces. The building is full of Chinese architectural features and Western architecture's influence in structure, material and plan which can be defined as an outstanding work of Chinese Renaissance style that reflects the design and construction excellence in both Chinese and Western architecture in Hong Kong's pre-war period. In addition, as the Peak area was a traditional residence of foreigners, the location of King Yin Lei symbolises the rise of the Chinese merchant class. It also represents an earlier phase of Hong Kong history when the upper-class residential area took shape in the Mid-levels.

Picture 2: King Yin Lei (from heritage.gov.hk)

Actually, the owner of King Yin Lei had already expressed his interest in selling the property to the government on the notation that the property would be preserved. However, under the existing government policies and bureaucratic workings of the government prevented the deal from materialising. In this case, the owner had to destroy the building partially to get the general public and government's attention. Following reports by the media concerning the removal of the roof of the house, strong public opposition was reported in the news media and radio talk shows. The government then acted urgently and caused it to become a "proposed declared monument" which stopped the demolition and preserved the building. This was swiftly followed with the land exchange, which gave the property possession to the government for preservation. The owner received a generous package from surrendering the whole site of King Yin Lei to the government for the exchange of an adjacent man-made slope site of roughly the same size to the owner for private development. Apart from paying full market value premium for the land exchange in accordance with the established policy, the owner had to carry out and fund the restoration works of King Yin Lei to the satisfaction of the AMO.

In order to restore King Yin Lei, the government had done extensive research on the building materials and paid painstaking efforts to make it as authentic as possible. They conducted in-depth research and went to the small villages in China to invite the craftsman for rebuilding the roof tiles by the traditional skill and method. Through the works of the Government, King Yin Lei has been restored to its former glory. The heritage has been successfully preserved and maintained its original characteristics. In 2011, before the renovation was completed, the CHO gave out 20,000 free guided tour tickets to the public. The overwhelming interest and frequent visits by the public resulted in the damage of some of the antique tiles on the walls and the floor. It affects future planning on limiting the number of visitation and the number of visitors.

Keeping the authenticity of the heritage offers cultural sensitivity and the ability to convey accurate and sympathetic messages about the culture being presented through the building. King Yin Lei is a viable and authentic tourism attraction which has the potential to gain profitable returns. However, in order to protect its authenticity and learn a lesson from the overwhelming visitation in 2011, the heritage is only opened six days per year for the visitation nowadays. The visitors have to obtain the tickets in advance to gain access to the site. The ease of visiting a heritage is directly linked with tourist motivation. From the tourist perspective, the very limited accessibility of the historical building would reduce their motivation for visiting the heritage, resulting in the goals of the heritage conservation promotes heritage tourism cannot be achieved. It is questionable whether King Yin Lei is able to assist the heritage tourism development in Hong Kong or preserve the building solely so as to minimise the noise from the general public and meet their expectation.

The case reflects that the government is lack of a clear direction between heritage preservation and heritage tourism development. The government was being reactive rather than proactive on the decision-making process, and the coordination among the various units such as AMO, CHO and LCSD was weak. Without a clear mechanism on conservation of heritages, the government was led by different stakeholders and doing heritage conservation and tourism passively. The King Yin Lei case also illustrates the predominance of economic and political considerations within heritage conservation over the intrinsic historical and cultural values of heritage itself. In conclude, King Yin Lei is a good heritage example of keeping the authenticity but low accessibility for the tourists. It may not be an appealing heritage for tourists which can assist the heritage tourism development in Hong Kong.

Ho Tung Gardens

The final case to be discussed in this paper is Ho Tung Gardens. It is an example where economic development forces triumphed over conservation. Ho Tung Gardens, also known by its Cantonese name 'Hiu Kok Yuen', was a villa on the Peak, Hong Kong. It was built by Robert Hotung and his wife Clara in 1927. They referred to it as "The Falls", because of a stream in the vicinity. The compound has a two-storey main building which was designed by Palmer and Turner Architects in a Chinese Renaissance style. Within the extensive gardens are a pavilion and a five-storey pagoda, built with reinforced concrete and Chinese roof-tiles. At the time, based on the Peak Reservation Ordinance, only Europeans were allowed to live on Victoria Peak. Robert Hotung, who was an illegitimate Eurasian son of a Chinese mother and a Dutch father, was already living on the Peak when the law was enacted. It reflects his upward social mobility and special social status in Hong Kong society. Even though Robert Hotung occasionally resided in the Gardens, a number of eye-catching social events were held in the Gardens, such as the visit of US Vice President John Garner in 1935. The Gardens was commandeered as a military base to fight the Japanese Imperial Army in 1941. In short, the Gardens does arouse historical recollection and signifies Hong Kong unique history, culture and value.

Picture 3: Ho Tung Gardens (from Hong Kong Economic Journal)

In 2011, the Gardens was listed as a Grade 1 historic building by the AAB. Invoking the relevant section of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance for the fourth time in history, it was declared a "proposed historic monument" by the government in 2011. Although such declaration did not confer statutory protection to Ho Tung Gardens, it imposed a 12-month moratorium on the redevelopment of the site, pending negotiations with the owner. During that time, the government had invited a number of scholars to conduct various types of research in order to showcase the importance of conserving the Gardens and its impacts on the community. The owner was willing to sell the property to the government to be conserved.

However, due to the billion dollars requested by the owner, the government believed that the public would not support such conservation on the private heritage sites by spending the huge amount of public money. Negotiations between the owner and the government to save the mansion were failed and demolition work was completed in October 2013. The case shows that the private owners' uncertain wish and final decision lead to different types of conservation outcomes. The dilemma between the legal protection of private property right and the quasi-public goods attributes of private historical buildings is the major factor hindering the development of heritage tourism. Historical reflection and a search for connection with heritage can support urban planning processes. Throughout the processes, the sense of belonging and identity could be established. The economic value, however, has been overwhelmed the heritage conservation and heritage tourism development in this case. No matter the authenticity, the accessibility and the tourist experience were all lost due to the strong development forces, resulting in the historical building could not be preserved. It highlights the tension between the political will and the importance of cultural heritage conservation. The economic drive is often of paramount importance in Hong Kong society and the development has been always given primary consideration as it is seen as a major means to promote the Hong Kong economy.

Conclusion

The success of developing heritage tourism depends on balancing two seemingly contradictory goals: conservation and commodification. The former emphasises maintaining the intrinsic values of the historic and cultural sites, while the latter stresses the extrinsic values experienced by tourists through a process of commodification. In the Hong Kong context, heritage tourism development is also hindered by the scarcity of land, which can be used for more profitable projects. Our cases highlight the above problems encountered by heritage tourism development in Hong Kong.

The government did a good job in preserving Lui Seng Chun and turning it into a Chinese medicine healthcare centre. However, the government officials totally failed to align the intrinsic values of the building to tourists' extrinsic values. Although the hardware of the building is preserved, the cultural and historical values embedded in it have difficulties being 'felt' by visitors. Most people visiting Lui Seng Chun is not about appreciating the architectural features of the building or understanding the Chinese medicine development in Hong Kong, but just for dealing with health problems. On the other hand, both cases of King Yin Lei and Ho Tung Gardens demonstrate the detrimental effects of high land prices on heritage conservation and the hesitation of the government in preserving historic sites. The government initially did not take any action to preserve King Yin Lei. Only under public pressures and the beginning of the owner starting to demolish the site, the government reached an agreement with the owner and declared the mansion a monument. However, the government has no idea how to turn the site into a viable heritage tourist spot. For Ho Tung Gardens, although the government's action to list the site as a Grade I historic building, the conservation efforts ultimately failed due to the high compensation demanded by the owner.

Tourism remains one of the economic pillars of Hong Kong. Nonetheless, as the Hong Kong tourism development depends too much on shopping and event capital, the government decides to diversify tourism products and attract more high-value overnight visitors. Heritage tourism is one of the targets emphasised by the government. A destination devotes maximum efforts to conserve its cultural heritages instead of exploiting it for tourism would fail in business terms. On the contrary, the cultural heritage would lose its culture and tradition if the destination maximises business goals of developing tourism by using the heritages. The future of heritage development is hampered by two factors. First, the government officials are simply bureaucrats without any ideas how to balance or align the intrinsic values of the heritage sites and the extrinsic values of tourists' experiences. Second, the high land values preclude developing any heritage tourist spots without incurring a large amount of taxpayers' money. Moreover, the absence of a supported heritage conservation policy, an inability to coordinate existing government departments, and a deficit in the statutory mechanisms to implement heritage conservation further obstruct the heritage tourism development.

To ensure the financial return of developing the heritage, the more visitors and less restriction on visitors would be better. However, stringent visitor management in term of limiting the number of visitors and restricting certain visitors' behaviors is required to conserve the heritage better. To resolve these two sets of conflicting objectives, both heritage experts and tourist marketers have to be involved in formulating a sound heritage tourism policy. This paper uses three cases to illustrate the importance of reconciling these two sets of conflicting objectives in developing heritage tourism. We choose the cases based upon the use-and-exchange value dimension. The owners of Lui Seng Chun stressed the cultural meanings of the building.

In contrast, the owners of Ho Tung Gardens just considered the market values. The owners of King Yin Lei were in between. We attempt to show that the Hong Kong government took a very passive role in developing heritage tourism. Without a clear conservation strategy, the way the government to deal with the conflict between use and exchange values depends on the goodwill of the owners of the heritage and public opinions. As a result, the Ho Tung Gardens was gone, and there were maintenance problems for King Yin Lei.

Although both Lui Seng Chun and King Yin Lei are preserved, they fail to be successful heritage tourist spots. This is because the government failed to resolve the conflict between heritage maintenance and visitor management. After Lui Seng Chun has become a Chinese medicine clinic, it can attract a large number of visitors, but these visitors are patients who may not be interested in the heritage values of the building. In contrast, King Yin Lei encountered maintenance problems because it attracted too many visitors and had too few visitor restrictions. The major lessons we learn from these cases. To develop heritage tourism, the government has to take the initiative to develop a sound conservation policy that can balance use and exchange values, without skewing towards the latter. Moreover, a sound heritage tourism policy requires the inputs from both heritage experts and tourism marketers.

Based on the abovementioned issues, it is suggested that the government should initiate an integrated management system to ensure the long-term growth of heritage tourism and preservation of the tourist-related heritages. The collaboration between different government departments is required, including HKTB, Town Planning Board (TPB), Lands Department (LandsD), AMO, CHO and AAB, etc. The heritage conservation and tourism is a multi-dimensional issue which involves the stakeholders in different industries. From the tourism perspective, HKTB should be invited to play a more important role in the protection and maintenance of heritage sites. Since HKTB is the destination marketing organisation (DMO) for promoting Hong Kong tourism features, it is suggested that more investigations of the characteristics of heritage tourists, such as their perceived image of Hong Kong heritage, their desires of authentic experience, the needs of heritage tourists. Hopefully, a more all-rounded strategy of heritage tourism development could be formulated; otherwise, merely preserving the heritages without a tourism plan is a waste of heritage and could not help its sustainability at all.

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What is ATLAS

The Association for Tourism and Leisure Education and Research (ATLAS) was established in 1991 to develop transnational educational initiatives in tourism and leisure.

ATLAS provides a forum to promote staff and student exchange, transnational research and to facilitate curriculum and professional development. It currently has 156 members in 55 countries worldwide.

What are the objectives of ATLAS?

- To promote the teaching of tourism, leisure and related subjects.
- To encourage academic exchange between member institutions.
- To promote links between professional bodies in tourism, leisure and associated subjects and to liaise on educational issues, curriculum development and professional recognition of courses.
- To promote transnational research which helps to underpin the development of appropriate curricula for transnational education.

What does ATLAS do?

ATLAS promotes links between member institutions through regular meetings, publications and information exchange. The main activities of ATLAS currently are:

- Organising conferences on issues in tourism and leisure education and research. International conferences have been held in Canterbury, UK (September 2016), in Viana do Castelo, Portugal (2017),Copenhagen, Denmark (2018) and Girona, Spain (2019). Regional conferences are also held in Africa, Latin America and the Asia-Pacific region.
- Information services and publications, including the ATLAS website and members' portal, the annual ATLAS Reflections, Facebook and LinkedIn.
- Running international courses, such as the ATLAS Winter University in Europe and the Summer Course in Asia.
- Organisation of and participation in transnational research projects, for example on cultural tourism, sustainable tourism, and information technology. ATLAS is participating in two major European projects. The Next Tourism Generation Alliance (NTG) for implementing a new strategic blueprint approach to sectoral cooperation on skills and the INCOME Tourism project to develop soft skills into higher education curricula and to strongly cooperate with businesses.
- Research publications and reports.

What are the benefits of the ATLAS membership?

- Regular mailings of information, updates on ATLAS conferences, meetings, projects, publications and other activities.
- Access to the members' portal on Internet with exclusive access code.
- Participation in the ATLAS information lists for everyone within ATLAS member institutions, as well as for the different Special Interest Groups.
- The annual ATLAS international conference, which provides an opportunity to network with other members.
- Conferences organised by regional sections.
- ATLAS members can participate in a wide range of projects run by ATLAS in the areas of tourism and leisure education and research.
- Members have access to research information gathered through ATLAS
- International projects.
- ATLAS members are listed on the ATLAS website, giving teachers and students easy access to information about member institutions via Internet.
- Distribution of information about member events, programmes, projects and products via the ATLAS mailing list and ATLAS website.
- ATLAS members are entitled to substantial discounts on ATLAS conference fees and selected ATLAS publications.
- Contacts and lobbying through ATLAS links with other international organisations.
- Opportunity for students to take part in an established academic and research network.

ATLAS Special Interest Groups

Members of ATLAS can form and join Special Interest Groups related to specific education and research topics or for specific geographical areas. Special Interest Groups run research programmes and can organise special events and publications related to their area of interest.
The current Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are on:

- Cultural Tourism
- Gastronomy and Tourism
- Business Tourism
- Events
- Volunteer Tourism
- Dark Tourism
- Heritage Tourism and Education
- Space, Place, Mobilities in Tourism
- Urban Tourism
- Visual Tourism
- Climate Change and Tourism

ATLAS Regional Sections

ATLAS is also represented at regional and local level by sections such as ATLAS Europe, ATLAS Asia-Pacific, ATLAS Africa and ATLAS Latin Americas. The regional sections of ATLAS have developed their own programme of activities and publications to respond more closely to the specific needs of members located in these regions and those with related research interests. Membership of ATLAS regional sections and Special Interest Groups of ATLAS is open to all ATLAS members at no extra costs.

The ATLAS publication series
As a networking organisation, one of the main tasks of ATLAS is to disseminate information on developments in tourism and leisure as widely as possible. The ATLAS publication series contains volumes of selected papers from ATLAS conferences and reports from ATLAS research projects. The ATLAS Tourism and Leisure Review gives ATLAS members and participants of the ATLAS conferences and meetings a platform to publish the papers they have presented. The editing will be carried out by an editorial board / field editors. All publications can be found and ordered in the online ATLAS bookshop at: shop.atlas-euro.org.

Join ATLAS
ATLAS membership is open to bona-fide educational institutions and professional bodies with educational, research or professional interests in tourism, leisure and related areas. If your institution is interested, complete the application form on the ATLAS homepage at www.atlas-euro.org.

How much does the ATLAS membership cost?
The annual institutional membership fee for ATLAS is € 325. For organisations located in countries in Central and Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America the fee is € 200 per year.

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ATLAS Future events

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Mobilities Transforming Destinations
ONLINE
27 November 2020

ATLAS partnership webinar series
University of Pretoria Campus Tours: Before, During and After Covid-19
ONLINE
2 December 2020, 15.00 CET

ATLAS Africa Webinar
The Impact of COVID-19 on the tourism industry in Africa
ONLINE
9 December 2020, 10.00 CET

ATLAS SIG Business Tourism Conference
The New Normal in Business Tourism
Leeuwarden, Netherlands
21-22 January, 2021

ATLAS Annual conference 2021
Tourism as a driver of regional development and collaboration
Prague, Czech Republic
7-10 September, 2021

ATLAS SIG meeting Gastronomy and Tourism
Lockdown gastronomy: Changes and challenges in food tourism
Girona, Spain
16-19 February, 2022

For more information please visit the ATLAS homepage at: www.atlas-euro.org

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