

PHD THESIS TITLE PAGE

**The Impact of Tourism Development on the Sustainability of
Colonial Built Heritage: Case Study – Portuguese Colonial
Built Heritage in Macau**

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SUMMARY

Title:

The Impact of Tourism Development on the Sustainability of Colonial Built Heritage: Case Study – Portuguese Colonial Built Heritage in Macau

Research Question and Aims

The hypothesis put forward in this thesis is that tourism can be the agent for the sustainable development of the valuable legacy of colonial built heritage by capitalizing on its tangible and intangible assets. The key variable is the recognition of the intrinsic value of both iconic and non-iconic properties and sites that constitute the extrinsic value of the cultural attractions of the tourism destination. The research problem is concerned with assessing the impact of tourism development on these attractions and identifying the issues affecting preservation and realization of asset potential. The research aims to support the collaboration between tourism professionals and cultural heritage stakeholders committed to resolving issues and problems for the destination identified with the stages of the tourism destination's life cycle of evolution (Butler, 1980).

Objectives and Methodology

The main objective of this research is to conduct a tourism impact assessment of colonial built heritage in a specific destination study area identifying both negative and positive impacts of tourism development. The case study focuses on the Portuguese Built Heritage in Macau, China. The methodology utilizes survey instruments derived from primary and secondary sources on tourism planning and management, cultural heritage preservation and management. Destination-wide and site surveys were conducted to collect empirical data identifying the generic state of preservation of the colonial built heritage and to ascertain the threats posed by tourism to the cultural landscape. Positive as well as negative tourism

impacts on the tangible and intangible economic assets of both iconic and non-iconic attractions are identified. Primary data on social and cultural impacts was also obtained by means of participative observation and interview techniques derived from the disciplines of cultural anthropology and visual anthropology. Case studies of tourism impacts on specific properties and sites are presented.

Findings

The research findings reveal that failure to address threats caused by tourism impacts on the postcolonial tourism destination may result in: depreciation of the cultural landscape through loss of authentic colonial built heritage and cultural assets; diminished economic value of colonial built heritage attractions and unrealized potential for tourism product development; depreciation of the cultural capital of the destination for cultural and urban tourism markets; loss of sustainable competitive advantage over destinations able to exploit similar resources more effectively; loss of community consciousness of the cultural values of the colonial built heritage legacy; over reliance on dominant and outside stakeholders to sustain tourism product base; irrevocable branding of the destination as a tourism environment with imported replicated cultural attractions serving the demands of a sole market segment not valuing authenticity and uniqueness; higher costs required to maintain and upgrade imported attractions compared to lower costs involved in optimizing assets of colonial built heritage; stagnation of the tourism product and depreciation of the image of the destination; loss of investment opportunities from leading tourism generating countries and regions historically associated with the destination.

Conclusions

The conclusions prescribe a framework for examining issues affecting the evaluation of colonial built heritage for cultural tourism planning: the threats posed by tourism development to colonial built heritage preservation; the

selection and exploitation of colonial built heritage assets; the optimization of the real value and potential value of colonial built heritage assets for cultural and urban tourism; the financing of tourism development and built heritage preservation in postcolonial tourism destinations; the impact of casino tourism on the cultural landscape of the postcolonial tourism destination; and the investment costs in commodification of colonial built heritage attractions compared to other tourism infrastructure products; the characteristics of the cultural tourism market segment in postcolonial cultural environments.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

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