

# **Cultural Tourism and Hong Kong Identity**

**Sidney Cheung C.H.**

**Department of Anthropology**

**The Chinese University of Hong Kong**

**Shatin, New Territories**

**Hong Kong**

**About the author:**

Sidney Cheung C. H. has a Ph. D. in Anthropology from Osaka University, Japan and is Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology at The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Opinions expressed in the publications of the Chinese University of Hong Kong Department of Anthropology are the authors'. They do not necessarily reflect those of the Department or the University.

Copyright 1996 Sidney Cheung C. H.

### **Abstract**

In this paper, I propose the term "frozen culture" in order to theoretically challenge popular conceptions of "the old-fashioned," "tradition," and "authenticity" in the formation of cultural heritage with the emphasis on time as an historic indicator. Especially in considering the changing social situation, "frozen culture" can reveal the selection and preservation of cultural items in the past, and deepen our understanding of the present from a socio-political perspective. In other words, the process of freezing instead of preservation reveals the selection and objectification of cultural items in the past for popular consumption with respect to particular social context. This study focuses on the symbolic meaning of cultural heritage regarding the history of Hong Kong, and can thereby help us to understand the emerging Hong Kong identity and the crisis of 1997.

# 文化旅遊與香港的身份認同

張展鴻 著

## 摘要

作者在本文提出的「冷凍文化」將有效地使文化遺產的建構作為了解身份認同的一種途徑。在歷史和文化的認知過程上、「冷凍」有別於「古老」、「傳統」和「真實性」等固有的時間確定及其分析角度、而強調在於過去和現在之間的互動關係。「冷凍文化」的概念、除了對文化旅遊的了解之外、還有助於反映出文化保存以及其相關的社會政治動態。本文探討的元朗屏山文物徑及其有關的現代香港社會文化、作者希望藉此使讀者在香港本地歷史以及面對九七問題上、對香港人的身份認同的課題上有進一步的了解。

張展鴻是香港中文大學人類學系助理教授。

# **Cultural Tourism and Hong Kong Identity**

## **I. Introduction**

In 1994, Hong Kong experienced 9.3 million tourist visits, generating 64.3 billion Hong Kong dollars in income, making the tourism industry the second largest generator of foreign currency in Hong Kong. The prosperity of Hong Kong, as one of the most favored travel destinations for people around the world, is probably closely related to the active and rapid development of its tourist industry. However, research on Hong Kong tourism has mostly emphasized the economic side, such as hotel management, development of travel, and food and beverages. Activities such as shopping and eating are two key elements being promoted to encourage tourists to stay longer in Hong Kong. This can be shown by those well-printed guide books on eating places and shopping maps under the slogan "Staying an extra day" promoted by the Hong Kong Tourist Association in the past few years. However, apart from attracting tourists with its image as a metropolis, Hong Kong has also been enthusiastically involved in maintaining heritage to represent its traditional side. If we look at local heritage tours on Sunday in the New Territories, we can recognize that cultural tourism, which vast numbers of Hong Kong people engage in, is underlain by the issue of cultural identification between individuals and the idea of "Hongkongness."

Most scholars agree that "Hong Kong identity" emerged in the 1960s, and developed especially after the riots in 1967 (Lo 1996; Siu 1993, 1996). This became clear with the popularity of the Cantonese language used in different mass media, especially in the establishment of television channels and the decline of popular culture and media in Mandarin (Ip 1994). The political relations between China and Hong Kong are also important to consider in this context: the cultural revolution in China differentiated senses of belongings in the two places, due to their polarized political ideologies. This paper studies the emergence of cultural tourism to illuminate the nature of evolving Hong Kong identity. Firstly, it examines the meanings of heritage preservation and its historical roots, as this framework of ideas is imposed on the Hong Kong population. Secondly, by examining domestic cultural tourism and the closing of certain representative "cultural" monuments in recent years, it attempts to analyze the resulting conflicts between the Hong Kong government and local communities. Finally, it considers the long-term implications of the closure of those monuments, for these are social changes taking place along the path to 1997, and the transformation of Hong Kong's political status.

Cultural tourism, defined as the reproduced experience of a vanishing lifestyle that lies within human memory (Smith 1989), can be extensively investigated as a social dynamic within Hong Kong's social context. Domestic travel and tourism, with its stress on understanding one's own history and culture, as well as on traditional lifestyles, is clearly connected with concerns about identity. Here, my analysis of domestic/local cultural tourism is based on how the ideas and also physical places conceptualized as cultural heritage are being manipulated for different

purposes by different people and different factions. Special emphasis is given here to the way tour activities to a single place reflect the construction of different identities.

## **II. "Frozen culture" in tourism industry**

Tourism, involving travel and contact between cultures or subcultures, clearly fits into contemporary anthropological concerns (Bruner 1991; Nash 1981; Nash & Smith 1991). Previous anthropological research on the nature of tourism, in relation to ritual, ceremonial, pilgrimage, play and leisure, and cross-cultural exploration appeared in the 1970s (MacCannell 1973, 1976; Nash 1978; Turner 1974); it provides us with a wide scope for understanding traveling or sightseeing as a social process. Tourism also is viewed by a variety of disciplines, from sociology, symbolic anthropology, and semiotics to cross-cultural studies, as a process of "ritual inversion" -- which has been used to explain why particular behaviors are suspended, exaggerated, or reversed, and why particular groups follow the particular and limited activities that are said to characterize their touristic behavior (Cohen 1972; Graburn 1983; MacCannell 1976; Moore 1980).

In the study of tourism, a tourist has been defined as a "temporarily leisured person who voluntarily visits a place away from home for the purpose of experiencing a change" (Smith 1989: 1). As such, tourism, through a range of choices, styles, vacation, and recreation sites, provides comprehensive insight into social relations, contemporary consumerism, class structure, self construction, and cultural symbolism (Brannen 1992; Knight 1995; MacCannell 1977, 1992; Moeran 1983; Smith 1989). Among all these clear-cut perspectives for the analysis of complex societies, MacCannell (1976) emphasizes the importance of the deep

structure of modernity for its relations to the emergence of the nation-state as a sociopolitical unit. He considers tourism in light of the contemporary first-world invention of the third-world, and points out that, "[t]he deep structure of modernity is a totalizing idea, a modern mentality that sets modern society in opposition both to its own past and to those societies of the present that are premodern or un(der)developed" (MacCannell 1976: 7-8).

Related to MacCannell's view of the dynamic of tourism as the ideological separation of the modern and non-modern, I would like to consider Hong Kong's domestic tourism, the process through which Hong Kong people are now touring their artificially preserved cultural heritage as a modern plaything. At the same time, by defining tourism as a modern equivalent of religious pilgrimage, we can see how this cultural practice is being constructed in relation to the contemporary consumer society in the 1990s, and also how the Hong Kong government has tried to localize Hong Kong identity through ideas of "history" as a means for cultural independence.

Let us first consider the notion of this constructed and consumable "history" as a specific "frozen" culture. "Frozen" is a concept I borrow from the lexicon of food preservation. It stands in contrast to the natural cycle, especially in modern food systems, with the emphasis upon choice instead of unchanging daily supply. "Frozen" food is also closely related to "brand names" through which confidence is provided for customers in making their own choices, in contrast to natural and fresh kinds of food which are not branded, but merely generic. "Frozen" items are characterized by a mode of consumption aimed at totally free choice as to time and space. In order to reject thoroughly the idea of heritage as an unchanging subject, I propose the term "frozen culture" to challenge popular conceptions such as "the old-



fashioned," "traditional," and "authentic [rural Chinese village]" in the reconstruction of cultural heritage in Hong Kong. There is constant emphasis in this perspective on time as a historic indicator, and on an ongoing process of selection and preservation of cultural items in the past for the present. Through the practice of how cultural heritage is chosen, we can see that it is not the whole village, but only the ancestral hall that is selected, preserved and "frozen" to be the heritage to represent the history of Hong Kong to contemporary domestic tourists. Especially, in considering change and continuity as a social dynamic, the idea of "frozen culture" can deepen the understanding of self-identification in socio-political perspective. In other words, the process of freezing instead of preservation reveals the selection and objectification of cultural items in the past for recalling social memory with respect to conditions underlying the construction of history. It is too easy simply to dismiss the "authenticity" of heritage as representative history; rather, through the investigation of these monuments as frozen culture, one becomes very aware of the power of discourse, and can investigate that discourse for which it reveals not about the past but about the present (Cohen 1988; Said 1978).

A key feature of the analysis presented here is how the promotion of cultural heritage in the New Territories helped in the construction of identities at different levels. By investigating the work of the Antiquities and Monuments Office (AMO) in the past few decades, we can grasp the organization of ideas of locality within Hong Kong. And through the touristic literature that AMO provided for the public, we can see how the idea of heritage gradually shifted from archaeological and historical concerns to contemporary culture. This study focuses on the symbolic meaning of cultural heritage regarding the history of Hong Kong in order to understand the

emerging Hong Kong identity and the arrival of 1997. In the New Territories, the popularity of Hong Kong's local history has been increasing, especially through the promotion of domestic tourism. For example, Ping Shan Heritage Trail, like most of the not-for-profit heritage sites in the New Territories, has been one of the most popular destinations in domestic tourism. Ping Shan, because it combines natural landscapes, developing rural areas, and a number of different lineage-oriented monuments, still claims the attention of Hong Kong people.

Ping Shan, described in *Yuen Long Historical Relics and Monuments* published by the Yuen Long District Board, "is located on fertile land in the New Territories, comprising 36 villages. To its east is Yuen Long Town; to the north, Deep Bay. Marked by luxuriant forests, verdant hills and clear springs, Ping Shan was a scene spot, and its beauty has been compared to the Yang-tzu region. Rice, sweet potatoes and sugar cane were produced in abundance" (Fung 1996: 29). But as Fung (1996) points out, "[i]n Hong Kong government documents, the name 'Ping Shan' was originally used to depict the several villages situated below the Ping Shan Police Station -- including Sheung Cheung Wai, Kui Tau Wai, Fui Sah Wai, Hang Tau Tsuen, Hang Mei Tsuen, Hung Uk Tsuen and Tong Fong Tsuen" (Fung 1996: 30). The area that I seek to investigate is basically Hang Mei Tsuen, where the Ping Shan Heritage Trail is mostly located, and also the relations between the village and the police station right up on the top of the hill behind the Tang ancestral hall.

Referring to the construction of the so-called heritage in the daily lifeways of the villagers in Ping Shan, let me now consider the "freezing" process of some of those buildings, including the ancestral hall, study halls and temple. Such "freezing" of the past is a kind of objectification or dehistoricisation, in which particular items of

the past are pre-selected for the present. The most obvious manifestations of the emergence of a manufactured cultural heritage, especially in the New Territories, are the numerous domestic and overseas heritage tours offered by the Hong Kong Tourist Association, local travel agents, regional volunteer associations and *fung-shui* (or *fong-shui* in Mandarin) societies as well. As the most explicit case of this kind, we can observe that those *fung-shui* societies teach the practice of *fung-shui* by making use of the so-called "traditional" Chinese architects to give live demonstrations to their members, in order to prove their theories by historical evidence in terms of the powerful clans of the past. By comparing the detailed descriptions offered by these *fung-shui* societies with the brief histories given by those *chui ma hon fa* (or *zou ma kan hua* in Mandarin; in English, this means "to appreciate flowers on a running horse") type of daily tour, we can recognize how heritage is being used to meet different ends in relation to the emergence of cultural consumerism. Looking at those guided heritage tours, their customers include both overseas visitors and local people living in Hong Kong. According to the figures recorded at the Ping Shan Heritage Trail, there were approximately 5,000 visitors guided by different organizations on every Sunday in early 1995. At the same time, the different kinds of touring patterns and the associations involved in organizing them make it obvious that these domestic/local tours, mostly of the so-called "Hong Kong One Day Travel" sort, need to be looked at in terms of the corresponding social commitments of the organizers. Individual participants made up only a small percentage of the heritage tours. Regional groups, as well as volunteer associations, for the most part, are actively involved in organizing local tours as a social response to public concerns about the future of Hong Kong after 1997.

### **III. The meanings of "heritage" in Hong Kong**

Since the mid 1980s, Hong Kong has been increasingly involved in packaging and presenting a view of cultural heritage that is thought to represent the Territory's history. This process of restoration and consolidation of Hong Kong's image was revealed in the activities of the AMO, such as reconstructing former rural lifestyles in the New Territories, as early as the 1970s. Yet it is difficult to chart the direct relation between the AMO's work and the public's awareness of local history, tradition, and heritage in Hong Kong. It is clear that after the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984, Hong Kong people became aware of the critical turning point of July 1 1997, and started asking the following questions: Who are we going to be after 1997? What kind of nationalities will we be able to choose? If we choose to stay, can we still ask for our rights with respect to the economic and political system of Hong Kong society? Can Hong Kong still continue to be "Hong Kong" after 1997? With these questions in mind, some volunteer associations have been seeking to enhance the understanding of civil rights among Hong Kong people. Through organizing heritage tours for members to better understand Hong Kong's history, volunteer associations are able to show their concern over and commitment to the future of Hong Kong after 1997. Especially after the Tianamen incident of June 4 1989, Hong Kong's people have tended to be more politically concerned and concerned about those cultural issues related to their awareness of being Hongkongese.

My objectives for analyzing the heritage tour in Hong Kong are not only to investigate the construction of history in terms of heritage preservation, but also to clarify how cultural heritage in the New Territories helps the construction of identity

for the participants, especially local Hong Kong people. In recent years, everyone in Hong Kong has had to decide whether to stay or to leave in 1997. But whether people want to leave or to stay, the desire to know more about Hong Kong has increased. On the one hand, this might be due to the search for nostalgia or "the good old days" which is initiated by the mass media, or the psychological depression brought about by uncertainty over the future. On the other hand, this might also be a result of local researchers' and scholars' efforts to raise the importance of local history and of Hong Kong culture. Since the Sino-British Joint Declaration of 1984, we can see that the AMO has been composed increasingly of members of the general public, chosen by the Governor for their interest in and knowledge about heritage conservation. This has been true particularly since 1986.

Historical identity -- here defined as self-identification with regard to one's origins -- is important for local people who aim to construct their own origins in the past, and also for their understanding of how Hong Kong society might cope with current political relations between China and Taiwan. In Hong Kong's case, because of the continuous immigration from mainland China and the similar socio-cultural backgrounds involved, the issues of self-identification and the idea of Chineseness are always controversial, because people are to some extent oriented by different institutions. In studying cultural identity in South China, Siu (1993) points out that economic and political power has been stratified with regard to different groups, such as those local-born, western-educated young professionals in Hong Kong who consider themselves Hongkongese, as compared to merchants in the Pearl River delta who shape tradition for economic ends and consider themselves Chinese even though they see themselves as being different from northern mainlanders. In these terms, the

variation in self-identification among Hong Kong people varies in relation to the specific cultural distance between China and Hong Kong.

Let us now look at a representative exhibition concerning the history of Hong Kong in the Hong Kong Museum of History. *The Story of Hong Kong*, the most popular demonstration of the uniqueness of Hong Kong, presents Hong Kong history through nine different historic eras. They are: (1) the natural environment; (2) the early settlers; (3) the village; (4) the city -- cession and early development 1841-1951; (5) the city -- growth of society and expansion of the territory 1852-1862; (6) the city -- development of trade, industry and establishment of social organizations 1863-1893; (7) the city -- revolution of ideas and lifestyles and new perspectives to the city 1894-1941; (8) the Japanese occupation 1941-1945; and (9) modern Hong Kong. This exhibition starts with the introduction of nature, stone-age life, and ends up with different kinds of local business in the late 20th century. The last part is spatially and symbolically the main theme of the whole exhibition: the development of Hong Kong from a fishing village to an important metropolis is explicitly emphasized. Questions might be raised by people who have seen the exhibition: How can the story develop without any co-related elements in between? And how do these fragmentary parts represent the social development in Hong Kong? In order to answer these questions, we must understand how the locality and uniqueness of Hong Kong is being exemplified, and ask how heritage is being dismantled, controlled and manipulated in the popular discourse.

Comparing the 110-year interval in period no.4 with the 4-year interval in period no. 8, I wonder how Hong Kong history is being considered in a socio-political perspective. Apart from the unclear separation of time with regard to change

and continuity in development, it is important to consider how culture is being used to create an identity reinforcing the idea of Hongkongness in a historical perspective. This constructed history of Hong Kong through the display of a series of archaeological discoveries and architectural exhibits is explicitly disseminated over the population. This was the result of the involvement of government officials in promoting the preservation of Hong Kong's heritage, which can serve as a mean of self-identification at the community level. During the last decade, old houses in the villages of the New Territories have been transformed into the so-called cultural heritage, and a large number of these buildings are objectified and magnified for presentation by the tourist industry. This process of creating cultural heritage can also be claimed for works of cultural preservation started in the mid 1970s, with the shift from rock-carving-oriented monuments to ancestral-worship-oriented monuments, and particularly with the possibilities of declaring pre-war Chinese-style apartments to be cultural heritage for the future.

*The Heritage of Hong Kong*, as another official discourse on the uniqueness of Hong Kong, is constructed and reinforced particularly through three heritage phases (Hong Kong Antiquities and Monuments Office 1992): the archaeological heritage, the historical heritages and the cultural heritage. The archaeological heritage phase endows Hong Kong with a 6,000-year history, and provides historical continuity to link up so-called "origins" with present-day Hong Kong society. The historical heritage phase views Hong Kong as a Crown Colony, characterized by its early twentieth-century municipal government buildings, western-style residential buildings, and churches. With its emphasis on the authority symbolized by the historical heritage, the establishment of the colonial government is interpreted as the

foundation of Hong Kong's successful economic and political development. Lastly, the cultural heritage phase is revealed in the buildings in the New Territories, testaments to the earliest Chinese immigrants' existence through the preservation of traditional lifeways in the form of ancestral halls, study halls, and walled cities and shrines.

With the recent decline of rural areas and the rapid expansion of urbanization in the New Territories, the contrast between the cultural heritage areas, and the new town areas with their modern facilities for most leisure activities, became more marked than ever before. A modern transportation network, and tourist-oriented authentic Chinese traditions such as *lo bo beng* (a regional Chinese-style baked sweet cake) and *puhn choi* (a festival as well as banquet food in Chinese villages, especially in the New Territories) combined to provide both convenience and nostalgia on the Ping Shan Heritage Trail.

I propose here to raise a broader question by looking at the social consequences of the theme of cultural heritage, through an examination of the *Hong Kong One Day Travel* trips organized mostly by the volunteer groups. Generally speaking, *Hong Kong One Day Travel* is a kind of packaged tour including visits to rural Hong Kong temples and natural settings, and tasting vegetarian food prepared in temples or shrines, as well as other foods such as *puhn choi* and roasted goose. These tours are mostly organized by housing estates, social service groups for elders and the handicapped, and other volunteer associations. I suggest that touristic activities of this sort have served to promote the idea of Hong Kong identity, in contrast to the prevailing, more traditional sense of localized identity. Domestic cultural tourism, in Hong Kong's case, is a social activity for putting individuals



together into groups made up through voluntary associations. It serves as a means for enhancing the social commitment shown by members, in conveying the understanding of Hong Kong as their common home.

It might be contended that cultural heritage, on common land, is intimately related to the commonsense notion of belonging to Hong Kong, and that is the way that participants' identities are being shaped through these one-day experiences. But my own observations are that the local tourists did not identify with the monuments through these visits, so much as identifying with each other as Hongkongese, through the experience of touring. In Hong Kong, there is always some tension between the idea of being a Hongkongese and the idea of being tied to one's regional community. Of course, there may be more than one pattern for the ways in which the emergence of cultural tourism has influenced the cultural, social and political life in Hong Kong society.

#### **IV. The Struggle over Culture, Identity and Power**

In studying traditional Chinese lineages as a cultural invention, Faure (1989) has pointed out that single-surname village organization in the Pearl River Delta, with lands and rituals centered around ancestral halls, was the product of particular historical junctures in the state-making policy of the Ming and Qing dynasties. In these lineages, people who were able to gain official status, the so-called degree holders, came to be the local leaders, and mediated between the town and the government: between the governing and the governed. This relations can be seen through the arguments between the government and the Tang lineage at the time.

Let us take a look at when and how these monuments, especially the ancestral hall and study hall were built. The ancestral hall and study hall are parts of the Ping Shan Heritage Trail, near Yuen Long, in the part of the New Territories occupied by the Tang Clan. The Tangs were the first of the Five Great Clans to come to Hong Kong in the 10th century during the Song Dynasty. They originated from Jiangxi Province and disturbances in the north forced them, and later the other clans, to come further and further south until they settled in Guangdong and then in what is now the New Territories (Baker 1966; Potter 1968). As described by Ping Shan's villagers, the first village was established in Kam Tin on the advice of a geomancer, and spread far and wide throughout the New Territories in the following centuries.

Looking through those monuments, such as the ancestral hall and the study hall, they are obviously well established in Ping Shan, Ha Tsuen, and Lung Yeuk Tau, near Fan Ling. The Tang ancestral hall in Ping Shan was built by the 7th generation of Tangs who came from Kam Tin. The clan continued to prosper and do well and in the middle of the 19th century, Kun Ting Study Hall was built to commemorate the 21st-generation ancestor, Tang Kun Ting. These ancestral halls and study halls were subsequently turned into the heritage of the Hong Kong people. Ping Shan Heritage Trail was partly supported by the Lord Wilson Heritage Trust, established in December 1992, which has the object of preserving and conserving the human heritage of Hong Kong. With the emphasis upon the cultivation of public interest in Hong Kong, the organization of the Primary School Quiz with the emphasis upon local heritage was held after the establishment of the Lord Wilson Heritage Trust.

However, the idea of heritage is always contestable, especially when it is used for the construction of historical identity. In May 1995, the Ping Shan Heritage Trail was closed in an argument between the government and Tang lineage. This reflects how the ancestral hall and other monuments representing heritage could be used in power bargaining. A key feature of this argument was the 200-year-old graveyard belonging to the Ping Shan's Tang lineage in Nim Wan, Tuen Mun (which is located at the northwestern part of the New Territories). Located next to a deep coastal bay, the cemetery was supposed to be moved because of a large West New Territories landfill project. The conflict over the 200-year-old graveyard, as reported in one of Hong Kong's English-language dailies, the *South China Morning Post*, arose through the different understandings of *fung-shui*. *Fung-shui*, a belief system underlying traditional geomantic spatial arrangements, can be considered an allegory through which property, in terms of land, can be conceptualized as "traditional" in Chinese society. Parts of the two columns read as follows:

An indigenous villager said: "The grave has been there on our land for more than 200 years, long before the invasion of the British into Hong Kong. The British have no rights to move the things belonging to our ancestors."

"It could result in serious fung shui problems if we moved the grave, which hold the bodies of two of our ancestors. And fung shui problems can only be solved by fung shui methods."

"If the Government can demolish the Ping Shan police station, we might consider allowing it to move the clan grave."

*"Deal demand on grave issue: Police station should go in 'fung shui swap scheme'" (Ng 1995a)*

While the properties are owned by villagers, they agreed with the Government to open the relics to the public in exchange for government funding and expertise in restoring the architecture. But the agreement has no legal effect and villagers have the right to close them to outsiders, according to the Antiquities and Monuments Office.

*"Trail closed in grave row" (Ng 1995b)*

Concerning how *fung-shui* is used in negotiation, Hayes (1983) points out in his study of rural communities in Hong Kong that *fung-shui* cannot be understood only as the particular piece of land involved, because the change in surrounding landscape will bring a drastic change to the corresponding *fung-shui*. The protest against the cemetery's removal included the statement based on the Proclamations issued by the Magistrate of the San On District and the Viceroy of Canton Regarding the New Territories signed in Guangzhou on March 27 1899, which states, "The graves in the leased territory are never to be removed." The argument over the removal of the ancestral graveyard from the landfill site and the request for closing the police station as a bargaining chip has not yet been settled. However, the closure of the Ping Shan Heritage Trail by the Tang lineage can be considered a demonstration of the Tang lineage's right to control the property of which they consider to be "their" own heritage.

Since Ping Shan Heritage Trail was one of the most popular destinations in domestic cultural tourism, let us look at the relation between the public and the Tang lineage. During my interviews, local people suggested that by closing their monuments, they could get the public's attention about the government's initiative to move their 200-year-old graveyard, and gain support because of their strong opinions on local and traditional (or *fung-shui*) matters. This seems accurate, at least as a

partial representation of the reality of the social process. Yet, I would ask why so-called cultural heritage is considered a desirable resource, and why local people and government must struggle over its control.

Again, I must emphasize that I am looking not only at how cultural items are being frozen in terms of preservation, but also at how they are being manipulated for present purposes. Local tourists are not very interested in knowing more about Chinese traditional architecture, the lineage structure of early settlers in the New Territories, or Chinese rural lifestyles in the old days. Indeed, it seemed to me, through the tours, that the local visitors were not provided with sufficient information and do not know, for example, what the ancestral hall was used for. In practice, tourists read directly from the names of the monuments (study hall for studying, ancestral hall for ancestral worship, and so on.). In other words, because those monuments can neither serve as a cohesive cultural category, nor as something traceable to common historical experience, their impact on different individuals may differ markedly.

In the case of Ping Shan, "heritage" has to be understood from a socio-political perspective: how it was defined, constructed, and dismantled by the government, the public or the volunteer groups, and by members of the Tang lineage. Why "heritage" should have been invented or reinvented in the rural areas in the form of pre-colonial customs as well as of Hong Kong history has to do with current political issues rather than the past. Even in the debate over *fung-shui*, we are able to see differences of interpretation which have to do with contemporary identities in Hong Kong society.

### V. Conclusion: Cultural Heritage as a Personalized Capital

In his essay *Pilgrimages as Social Processes* in the book *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors*, Turner (1974) discusses pilgrimages with sacred and devotional characteristics symbolizing the center of holiness, as opposed to pilgrimages with routine, secular and social-oriented characteristics symbolizing a kind of social structure with particular relatedness. This latter understanding of pilgrimage is what we can investigate from the activities held by the Tangs of Ping Shan in the Tangs' ancestral hall. The heritage tours organized by housing estates, social services groups and voluntary associations seeks not only to enhance communication in touring activities; more importantly, visiting those heritage sites of Hong Kong, as opposed to ordinary socially-structured reality, serves as a mean to express a promise/obligation with its characteristic as a social commitment.

As an example of domestic cultural tourism, the "Hong Kong One Day Travel" reveals itself to be a form of cultural experience for self-identification--especially for volunteer groups with a social mission. The conflict surrounding the Ping Shan Heritage Trail similarly suggests the disparity of identities of Hong Kong people, who differ among themselves in their political responses to the question of 1997. The tensions reflected through different cultural discourses about the same ancestral hall have to be understood from two different perspectives. On the one hand, the hall represents a sphere of local and exclusive cultural forms, structured around lineage relations which also serve as personalized cultural capital. But on the other, the hall is also a sphere of international and inclusive forms, structured around tourist relations. The discrepancy shows how cultural heritage, manipulated by different identities, reflects the reinvention of "origin" in fostering self-conceptions

related to historic continuity. But it also shows the operation of political power which is reflected by different groups' bargaining for their own ends.

## Notes

Research expenses were partly supported by the Identity Project of the Comparative Literature Programme, Research Institute for the Humanities, CUHK. A earlier version of this article was presented at the April 1996 Association for Asian Studies meetings in Honolulu.

## References cited:

Baker, Hugh D.R.

1966 The Five Great Clans of the New Territories. *Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 6: 25-47.

Brannen, Mary Yoko

1992 "Bwana Mickey": Constructing Cultural Consumption at Tokyo Disneyland. In *Re-made in Japan: Everyday Life and Consumer Taste in a Changing Society*. Joseph Tobin ed. pp. 216-234. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Bruner, Edward M.

1991 Transformation of Self in Tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research* 18: 238-250.

Cohen, Eric

1972 Rethinking the sociology of tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research* 6: 18-35.

1988 Authenticity and Commoditization in Tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*. 15: 371-386.

Faure, David

1989 The Lineage as a Cultural Invention: The Case of the Pearl River Delta. *Modern China*, January: 4-36.



- Fung, Chi Ming  
1996 *Yuen Long Historical Relics and Monument*. Published by Yuen Long District Board.
- Graburn, Nelson H. H.  
1983 *The Anthropology of Tourism*. *Annals of Tourism Research* 10: 9-33.
- Hayes, James  
1983 *The Rural Communities of Hong Kong: Studies and Themes*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.
- Hong Kong Antiquities and Monuments Office  
1992 *The Heritage of Hong Kong*. Hong Kong Antiquities and Monuments Office, Recreation and Culture Branch.
- Ip, Pui Yee  
1994 *The Uses of Sam Hui: An Investigation of the Formation of Cultural Identity in Hong Kong*. (unpublished M.Phil. thesis), The Chinese University of Hong Kong.
- Knight, John  
1995 *Tourist as stranger? Explaining tourism in rural Japan*. *Social Anthropology* vol.3, part 3: 219-234.
- Lo, Shiu-hing  
1996 *Hong Kong: Post-colonialism and Political Conflict*. In *The New Rich in Asia: Mobile phones, McDonalds and middle-class revolution*. Richard Robison and David S.G. Goodman eds. pp. 161-181. London: Routledge.
- MacCannell, Dean

- 1973 Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings. *American Journal of Sociology* 79(3): 589-603.
- 1976 *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*. The MacMillan Press Ltd.
- 1977 The Tourist and the New Community. *Annals of Tourism Research* 4: 208-15.
- 1992 *Empty meeting grounds: The tourist papers*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Moeran, Brian
- 1983 The Language of Japanese Tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research* 10: 93-108.
- Moore, A.
- 1980 Walt Disney World: bounded ritual space and the playful pilgrimage center. *Anthropological Quarterly* 53: 207-17.
- Nash, Dennison
- 1978 "An Anthropological Approach to Tourism." In *Tourism and Economic Change*. Valene L. Smith ed. pp.133-152. Williamsburg, Virginia: William and Mary Press.
- 1981 Tourism as an Anthropological Subject. *Current Anthropology* 22 (5): 461-481.
- Nash, Dennison and Valene L. Smith
- 1991 Anthropology and Tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research* 18: 12-25.
- Ng, Kang-chung
- 1995a Deal demand on grave issue: Police station should go in 'fung shui swap scheme.' *South China Morning Post*, May 3, 1995.
- 1995b Trail closed in grave row. *South China Morning Post*, May 19, 1995.

Potter, Jack M.

1968 *Capitalism and the Chinese Peasant: Social and Economic Change in a Hong Kong Village*. California: University of California Press.

Said, Edward W.

1978 *Orientalism: Western Conceptions of the Orient*. New York: Vintage Book.

Siu, Helen

1993 Cultural Identity and the Politics of Differences in South China. *Daedalus* 122 (2) Spring.

1996 Remade in Hong Kong: Weaving Into the Chinese Cultural Tapestry. In *Unity and Diversity: Local Cultures and Identities in China*. Tao Tao Liu and David Faure eds. pp. 177-197. Hong Kong University Press.

Smith, Valene ed.

1989 *Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Turner, Victor

1974 *Dramas, Fields and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.