

HERITAGE CONSTRUCTION IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN VIETNAM: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

Heritage is a resource in tourism development, especially in developing countries, including Vietnam. However, putting the heritage into exploitation for tourism development to not go against the perspective of heritage conservation, always towards sustainable development, is a complex issue and not easy to solve in each country. To consider that practical problem, it is first necessary to understand how the heritage is operated in tourism development. Some heritage researchers have introduced the concept of "heritage construction" to explain the natural movement of the heritage according to the flow of contemporary context. This concept is suitable to demonstrate the Vietnamese context when the state orients tourism as a critical economic sector. However, before having a profound understanding of the practical context in Vietnam, it is essential to review the research literature in general and in Vietnam to find the research gaps and fill up with new research problems.

Keywords: heritage, heritage construction, tourism, tourism development, Vietnam

Introduction

People visiting cultural and historic resources are among the largest, most popular, and fastest-growing sectors of the tourism industry today. Heritage tourism typically relies on living and built elements of culture and refers to tangible and intangible past as a tourism resource. It encompasses existing cultures and folkways of today, such as they are inheritances from the past; other immaterial heritage elements (music, dance, language, religion, cuisine, artistic traditions, and festivals); and material relics of the built cultural environment (monuments, historic public

buildings, and homes, farms, castles, museums, archeological ruins, and relics). Although the heritage industry has in the past focused overwhelmingly on the patrimony of the privileged, there is now widespread acknowledgment and acceptance of everyday landscapes that depict the lives of ordinary people (families, farmers, factory workers, miners, fishers, women, and children) (Timothy and Boyd 2006). Heritage has been a buzzword in tourism since the late nineteenth century. Much scholarly debate concerning heritage tourism's nature persists, suggesting that heritage is an amorphous concept and a complex phenomenon in tourism development. For example, from the perspectives of heritage conservation, the authenticity of heritage is the fundamental factor determining the existence of heritage. However, that authenticity should be considered in what context it is placed? In the context of heritage's community development, when heritage becomes a resource for development, tourism is a field, and heritage must be constructed for a specific purpose. The problem is how heritage construction in tourism development should be adequately considered.

The Vietnamese government has long been attaching importance to the development of tourism. Especially after adapting the 08-NQ/TW Resolution in 2017 by the Political Bureau named "Grow tourism into a national key industry," the branch has enjoyed a strong impulse in development all over the country. Vietnam has always considered cultural heritage as an excellent resource for attracting tourists. Reality has proved that one of the most appealing factors that rocket the number of tourists every year is cultural heritage fascination. From the heritage management's point of view, the process in which the heritage is served tourism development is the process in which heritage is created for a particular purpose. Before drawing the current situation in the Vietnam context, it is necessary to have a literature review about heritage construction in tourism development to understand both internationally and nationally.

This paper evaluates Vietnam and the world's studies relating to heritage and heritage construction, tourism, tourism development, and the relationship among them. This overview also considers the specific context of Vietnam, an Asian country with a rich and diverse cultural heritage system and a rapidly developing tourism industry.

Heritage and heritage construction

Present research on heritage in the world often follows the path of assessing the UNESCO Convention's impact on the heritage of the countries participating in the Convention.

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Accordingly, scientists carry out giving heritage definitions, classifying them, evaluating their meaning and value, and at the same time, pointing out effective heritage management method in the practical context of each country following the Convention. Jokilehto, J gathered definitions and recognized 60 concepts about cultural heritage/ cultural assets (Jokilehto 2005). Out of the 60 definitions listed, UNESCO defined 18. These definitions are most commonly used in academic research and international and national legal documents in many countries relating to cultural heritage. However, whether it is UNESCO's definition or by independent scholars, these concepts all come to the consensus that "heritage" is not only physical objects but also contains mental life, so it is impossible to expect a clear division of tangible or intangible heritage (Harrison 2010).

Additionally, the concepts emphasize the transferability of the heritage. Nuryanti asserts: the word "heritage" itself implies that something is passed on from generation to generation, which conveys historical values from the past and hands them over to present generations as part of a cultural tradition of a society (Nuryanti 1996). Following this point of view, David Lowenthal said that heritage, monuments are utterly not history, nor the way to read the past. It is only a shell of the past. It is just a confession of faith in what has been built in the past to serve present purposes (David Lowenthal 1997). Laurajane Smith inherited it to give a strong voice about heritage when it is considered not something but a social and cultural process connecting the past's memory with the present's work and purpose. From that understanding, L.Smith established the concept of "authorized heritage discourse," which is understood as a phenomenon where knowledge and values of the past created by privileged stakeholders to the heritage can govern and adjust current heritage practices (Laurajane Smith 2006).

This view of L.Smith helped studies of present heritage management no longer see heritage as a static element but always in a state of movement with new meaning and values born. The concepts of "heritage construction/reconstruction" and relating concepts such as "making/remaking heritage," "creating/recreate heritage," "heritage revitalization"... is used by Smith himself to explain phenomena at heritage sites such as "heritage, gender, and identity" (Lsmith 2008); "Heritage, labor and class" (Smith et al. 2011); "Heritage, identity and power" (Lsmith 2015), etc. The issues of "the politics of heritage" or "heritagelization" are also considered from the point mentioned above (Smith 2006). It has greatly influenced Oscar Salemink's perception and assessment of Vietnam's heritage. His studies show that Vietnam's

current heritage is changing in three directions. The first is the trend of "monumental politics of heritage claims" as a way for political factors to interfere in the process of heritage creation through state discourse (Salemink 2013). Secondly, the trend of "This process of folklorization of culture" to restore past elements that no longer existed in the natural movement process now is restored for a certain purpose (Salemink 2003). The third direction is the process of "heritagelization" when the local community and the government agree on a typical playground, a playground of honor and post-honor power (Salemink 2016).

Meanwhile, there are problems of heritage and tourism. One of the first studies referring to "building a new heritage" was carried out by Ashworth G.J and his partners, which affirms tourism has given a new cultural identity to some heritage sites in Europe (Ashworth et al. 1994). Following this point of view, in *The cultural "work" of tourism*, L. Smith sought heritage creation in experiencing the authenticity of travelers at heritage tourism sites (Smith 2012). Additionally, in some other works, Zhou and Smith also assessed the relationship among the stakeholders relating to heritage tourism, based on the discourse on heritage created by each party (Zhou et al., 2019). These are the primary references for our research to build a theoretical framework for assessing heritage construction in tourism development in Vietnam today.

Apart from re-interpreting the concept of heritage based on the UNESCO's definition, the *Vietnam Cultural Heritage Law 2001*, and the *Law amending and supplementing several articles of the 2009 Cultural Heritage Law*, domestic studies have emphasized the role and value of heritage in the current context. Nguyen Thi Kim Loan and her colleagues believe that cultural heritage is a national asset and a development resource; it is the soul that unites the people; embody the cultural identity; is an expression of the diversity and richness of human culture; is a factor for the formation of new value systems (Nguyen Thi Kim Loan 2014). Nguyen Thi Thu Ha sees that with the current development of science and technology, the inclusion of heritage forms into cultural industries is a way to help heritage promote their values (Nguyen Thi Thu Ha 2013). Nguyen Quoc Hung affirmed that cultural heritage is increasingly making essential contributions to Vietnam's development. Many heritage sites have become essential destinations in tourism routes, contributing significantly to the national and local budget revenues (through the revenue from entrance tickets, jobs creation, foreign investment, local infrastructure up-gradation) (Nguyen Quoc Hung 2006). Also, in the direction of identifying cultural heritage as of great importance in the process of tourism development in Vietnam, Le Hong Ly and his partners

affirmed the essential position of cultural heritage in tourism formation. The authors have listed several heritages and stated their appropriate characteristics, which prove them to be cultural tourism products (Le Hong Ly et al. 2010). As a continuation of point of view, Nguyen Pham Hung also mentioned the role of cultural heritage in tourism development, but according to him, all activities in tourism include cultural value, and heritage's role exists in all shapes of tourism. (Nguyen Pham Hung 2016).

With such an important role and value, cultural heritage management is always a question for domestic studies. Most of them are focused on theoretical issues, practical experience of managing, preserving, and promoting cultural heritage value in industrialization and modernization, integration, and development, from which propose solutions and recommendations for each specific case. The first is the research introducing theoretical perspectives on heritage management, taking that like a needle for measures to manage and conserve specific cultural heritage (Bui Hoai Son 2005). One of such viewpoints is the interdisciplinary approach as a necessary and appropriate solution to the current practice of the cultural heritage management system in Vietnam (Dang Van Bai 2010). From a theoretical point of view, applied in the context of extensive innovation and international integration in Vietnam, the research aims to propose practical management models, methods, and measures. The management content is mentioned on two aspects: 1 / State management: including the promulgation of legal documents, which show guidelines and policies of the Party and State on conservation cultural heritage; 2 / Non-business development: focusing on analyzing the advantages of monuments conservation activities such as the state has invested all funding for the revolutionary relics and relics which received investment for restoration and anti-degradation has become thrilling attractions (Phan Hong Giang et al. 2012). In particular, the more concerning issue is the role of state management with heritage. Considering this as a critical issue, state management, through legal documents (including legal documents on the protection and promotion of cultural heritage values; decisions on planning mechanisms, organizations and development plan; management decentralization decision, etc.); the decentralization of monuments management; the organizational system of conservation industry and budget investments for the monuments management agencies – are decisive factors to enhance management efficiency (Dang Van Bai 2001). In conclusion, regardless of the direction, domestic studies come to a consensus in the view of managing cultural heritage as a balance

between "preserving" and "promoting" their values (Ngo Duc Thinh 2001, Dang Van Bai 2007, Bui Hoai Son 2009).

Thus, in the studies published in the country today, no work has mentioned "heritage construction" as a necessary movement process of heritage in contemporary life. If that issue is considered, it is often seen as a phenomenon that goes against heritage management's conservation perspective (Nguyen Quoc Hung 2004, Cao Tu Thanh 2013, Nguyen The Hung, 2013). It is the gap for our research to recognize heritage by its characteristics, roles, and functions in Vietnam's current context.

Tourism and tourism development

Tourism is a cultural, economic, and social phenomenon of ancient origins, and it continuously develops from its inception to the present. Therefore, the history of tourism research also has a corresponding thickness. In the world, there have been many scientific works and theoretical studies on tourism. Christine N. French, Alan Collier, Stephen J. Craig-Smith in *Principles of Tourism* analyze the context of world tourism development and provide an overview of the tourism industry structure (Christine N. French et al. 1995). At the same time, such researches assess the tourism economic role and the impact or regulatory factors of tourism activities. Meanwhile, Rober W. McIntosh, Charles R. Goeldner, J.R. Brent Ritchie, through *Tourism, Principle, Practices, Philosophies*, provide an overview of the principles, practices, and philosophies that influence the cultural, social, economic, psychological, and marketing aspects of tourists and tourism (Rober W. McIntosh et al. 1995). Inheriting the achievements of previous researches, Chris Cooper and C Michael Hall have provided a system of contemporary tourism theory that consists of four parts: the tourism system (basic concepts: tourism, tourism market, travel products); tourists (tourism behavior, development flows of tourism, tourism marketing); tourism destinations and tourism industry (Chris Cooper et al. 2008).

Theoretical issues for tourism development are concerned in many different angles. From an economic perspective, tourism is a super profitable industry. Robert Lanquar introduces issues about the situation and the impact of tourism on the economy; indicate requirements on tourism, tourism consumption, tourism production, tourism investment, and employment; tools and means of tourism economy (Robert Lanquar 1993). From an environmental perspective, Krippendorf or Jungk is the first to warn about environmental degradation (both natural and social) caused by

tourism activities at the destination with the concept of "hard tourism" in order to aim at a tourism strategy that respects the environment (Krippendorff 1975, Jungk 1980). Alan A. Lew, C. Michael Hall, and Allan M. Williams stand from geography to learn about tourism. Because they believe that the nature of tourism is an interest in a place, a spatial relationship, and a clear resource-oriented field (Alan A. Lew 2004). Resources are the main driving force behind tourism development in destinations. Among resource types, cultural heritage is a vital resource. It has been proved by practice and summarized in several theoretical studies. Although heritage tourism is thought not to be new, it has emerged as an engine with the first human trips (McKercher et al. 2002). However, it is overgrowing in recent times, especially in developing countries, where the richness of heritage is considered a motivation for poverty reduction and local economic development (Dallen J. Timothy et al. 2009).

Domestic studies on tourism began to appear after the period of openness and international integration. The first ones to appear are the works explaining the concept of "tourism," "tourism products," and its components and functions (Vu Duc Minh 1996, Tran Duc Thanh 2008, Tran Thi Mai et al. 2009). Then, the study of the characteristics of tourism products goes deeper into the topic. Tourism products are a combination of goods and services based on rational exploitation of tourism resources to meet tourists' demands in tourism activities (Tran Van Thong 2002). In other word, tourism products is the whole tourism program, tourism services along with tourism resources exploited for tourism activities and components including travel products; tourism products and services which are concretized in different service areas: accommodation, catering, and supplementing services; specific services when directly serving tourists: souvenirs, drinks, food, etc. (Dinh Trung Kien 2005). The interpretation of tourism products shows that tourism is a commodity product and has a clear market orientation. Therefore, tourism product development must be based on understanding the tourism market, tourist trends, and people's tastes. Therefore, market research, product development, and marketing are a continuous link in the tourism product development process (Truong Quang Dung 2014). In the current context, tourism product development plays an essential role in improving the competitiveness in Vietnam's integration with regional and international tourism (Nguyen Duc Tan 2016). In particular, "cultural tourism" is a product that takes cultural resources as an object of exploitation in order to serve the needs of understanding, enjoying, experiencing, and feeling cultural, social, and human values at tourist destinations (Tran Thuy

Anh 2011, Nguyen Pham Hung 2016). Domestic studies have yet to come up with a specific explanation for the type of "heritage tourism" where cultural heritage is considered a constituent of cultural tourism products.

The relationship between heritage and tourism

Studies of the relationship between heritage and tourism result from case studies or years of experience of managers, policymakers, and practitioners in the field. Researches in the world mainly go in two directions. The first direction confirms the incompatible/ conflict relationship between tourism and heritage. Kerr said that what is suitable for conservation is not necessarily good for tourism, and what is right for tourism is rarely suitable for conservation (Kerr 2012). This contrasting and conflicting relationship is further highlighted when conservationists assume heritage tourism is trading conservation goals for profit. In the International Cultural Tourism Charter, ICOMOS mentioned the possibility of a conflict between tourism and heritage due to the dynamic and ever-changing resources and values of these two industries. The cultural heritage industry considers that the cultural value of the heritage is being traded for profit.

In contrast, the tourism industry feels that tourism values are also being traded when a managerial attitude believes any cultural tourism product has a negative influence (ICOMOS 2010). Nuryanti has placed a complicated relationship between tourism and heritage in the tension between tradition and modernity. As a channel to convey cultural and historical values of the past, heritage is considered part of society's cultural tradition. Meanwhile, the concept of tourism is a form of modern awareness. Tourism's nature is dynamic, and its interaction with the heritage often results in the reinterpretation of the heritage (Nuryanti 1996). Cohen argues that this is a link between the production of culture and tourism consumption (Cohen 1972, 1979, and 2002).

Scholars in the second direction of research emphasize the shared benefits that tourism and heritage can bring to each other since the two industries share the same governance object – heritage. There lie the contradictions and conflicts in this relationship, but they both head to a state of compromise and compatibility to achieve the ideal cooperation between the two when considering the benefits and sharing that they can bring is necessarily achieved (McKercher et al. 2002, Deepak Chhabra 2010, Michael Hitchcock et al. 2010, Deepak Chhabra 2010). Many scholars have studied the collaborative relationship between these two objects as an ideal state

represented by the point located at the beginning of an axis. The state of conflict holding the existing position at the other end shows the relationship, whether negative or positive. Cultural heritage and tourism are not always seen as two characters who always have conflicts, contrast, or as two separate worlds, but they can be seen as socio-cultural industries formed by connection (McKercher et al. 2002). To achieve this integration, it is necessary to have an objective view of what tourism and heritage interact with each other. If we see the "reinterpretation of heritage" as an adverse effect of tourism on the heritage, it is clear that we will not find a familiar voice for both fields. However, if that is considered a value built for its heritage to live its life in the present context, it will be closer to the adaptation in tourism and heritage management. It is the "development conservation" perspective that Ashworth GJ has made when making heritage management perspectives in a postmodern context based on comparing the integrity and inheritance conservation perspective (Ashworth GJ 1997). Our approach for the research is based on assessing the constitutive elements of the current tourism development in Vietnam to find sustainable compatibility among them.

There have not been many systematic and long-term studies on the relationship between heritage management and tourism development in Vietnam besides some articles discussing the role of tourism in conservation and promoting heritage values in some research journals or conferences about tourism and heritage. The works mentioned and considered this relationship but mainly clarified issues such as the organic/dual relationship between tourism and cultural heritage (Bui Hoai Son 2010); reciprocal impacts between the two sectors such as the positive and negative impacts of tourism on the community, heritage, and environment (Dang Van Bai 2001, 2013); cultural heritage potential in tourism development (Nguyen Quoc Hung 2004, 2006); development orientation to limit the impact of tourism (Nguyen Thi Thu Ha 2013). Since the Politburo's Resolution No. 08-NQ / TW of 2017 on "Developing tourism to become a key economic sector," the issue of promoting the value of cultural heritage for tourism development has been increasingly receiving attention from essay writers and researchers in the direction of exploiting the potential values of each type of heritage to meet the needs of tourists (Le Thi Thu Phuong 2017, Trinh Le Anh 2018). In particular, Nguyen Thi Thu Ha's thesis initially mentions the relationship between cultural heritage management and tourism development based on the conflict/cooperation model of McKercher, B and du Cros, H, 2002. However, this work approaches from a perspective describing the relationship at the destination on the positive to

negative dimensions but has not recognized the above effects of the heritage (Nguyen Thi Thu Ha 2016). Thus, considering how the heritage movement concerning tourism development or how the heritage was created from the effects of tourism activities is an open direction for the research.

Conclusion

Through understanding some typical works about heritage, tourism, and their relationship, the result shows that this is a problem that has been concerned as a phenomenon with practical impacts on the economy, culture, society in countries and localities, and there is a need for the theoretical basis to interpret and manage it. However, there are still shortcomings between the approach of international and domestic studies:

- Firstly, studies on heritage in tourism development ở Việt are still very modest and sporadic. Even, it is in the form of applying foreign ideas to explain the domestic practice. It is not necessarily appropriate because the advocacy practice in each country is different.

- Secondly, it is necessary to recognize that the heritage is always in the inevitable self-advocacy process. Domestic studies only recognize heritage from a static perspective, and when applying the management view of "conservation" or "promoting," they are also ways to see the impact from the outside on the heritage. The movement of heritage in specific contexts makes them always create to adapt, in which the trade deal with tourism development is typical.

- Thirdly, domestic tourism studies have not fully recognized the heritage's role and function without considering it as a distinct type of tourism with its advocacy process but a form of literary tourism. It has led to the absence of in-depth studies on the interaction between tourism and heritage at the destination.

- Fourthly, domestic research has interested in the relationship between tourism and heritage. However, no work has been approached from how the heritage was constructed in the movement process with interactions in tourism development.

The movement of practice goes far beyond the theoretical framework in many countries, especially developing countries like Vietnam. Therefore, these gaps are the basis for implementing research on heritage construction in tourism development in Vietnam and countries with the same context as Vietnam. It helps to reinforce the theoretical foundation to understand the practical context in each country. These studies will also contribute to enriching case studies for heritage studies and tourism studies in the world.

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