Promoting postcolonial destinations: paradoxical relations between decolonization and 'East meets West'

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Abstract

The 'East meets West' concept has been widely used by tourism promotion agencies and destination management organizations engaged in marketing postcolonial tourism destinations in Asia. However, the decolonized identity-making process behind this tourism promotion concept is neglected in the literature. This paper explores the identity-making behind the 'East meets West' tourism promotion of the Hong Kong and Macau Special Administrative Regions of China. Through critical discourse analysis of tourism promotional texts and in-depth interviews with tourism and cultural experts, the findings reveal that, although tourism has been used effectively as a tool to decolonize Hong Kong and Macau and reposition them as Chinese cities, power struggles influence the repositioning of the two cities as 'East meets West', with very distinct impacts on the cities' identities and tourism promotion. Tourism management implications are outlined for both destinations as well as future research avenues related to the study findings and limitations.

Keywords: identity, decolonization, cultural heritage, colonization, Hong Kong, Macau

1. Introduction

Tourism promotion and destination marketing professionals have always been eager to tell a unique story to attract international tourists. The 'East meets West' marketing cliché is one of the dominant narratives deployed to fascinate tourists. The idea has been applied in the promotional materials of multicultural cities like London, as well as regions located between Europe and Asia (e.g., Turkey), and for many postcolonial destinations including India, Singapore and Malaysia (Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005; Chang, 2005). In fact, the 'East meets West' marketing cliché has been so widely used in so many different contexts that it has ceased to have a precise meaning. It has been broadly applied to denote multiculturalism or even 'old meets new'. Thus, Sarajevo and Marrakech are examples of destinations that employ the 'East meets West' marketing cliché because they offer a mixture of contemporary heritage buildings and assets that attract tourists and create a sense of place (Bellingham, 2013; Kelly, 2015). However, for postcolonial destinations, the idea of 'East meets West' showcases their unique multicultural and transnational heritages embedded in colonial discourses. Arguably, any tourism promotional efforts are based on a rationale that strongly contrasts with that of decolonization projects, which primarily focus on rejecting the influence of Western colonization and (re)crafting an independent 'East' identity (Loomba, 2005). While the binary division between East and West has long been an important topic in tourism-related research (see for example Chang, 2005; du cros, 2004; Henderson, 2004; Chang & Yeoh, 1999; Teo, 2003; Wong, McKercher & Li, 2016; Okano & Wong, 2004), there remains little understanding about the paradoxical connection between decolonization and the 'East meets West' concept. Many questions remain unanswered, including: is 'East meets West' tourism promotion the same for all postcolonial destinations; what are the relationships between 'East meets West' and decolonization projects; and most importantly, what has been (re)produced and maintained to support the 'East meets West' promotion, and what has been silenced during the decolonization process?

By focusing on the idea of 'East meets West' as both popular tourism promotion and one of history's grandest narratives (Bryce & Čaušević, 2019), this study investigates the extent to which the (re)production and maintenance of 'East and West' heritage discourses during the decolonization process explain the discursive identity-making and rationale behind the use of such tourism promotion. Heritage tourism has become the primary medium to showcase unique stories of people and places, largely due to the strong connections between heritage, identity and tourism (du Cros & McKercher, 2020; Frew & White, 2011; Palmer, 1999). In terms of postcolonial identity-making, one of the greatest challenges is selecting

which heritage story to tell (Zhang *et al*., 2018). This challenge lies in the unbalanced power relations between the West and the East, making it difficult for postcolonial destinations to take their heritage in their hands and achieve decolonization (Hoobler, 2006).

Some critical postcolonial scholars (e.g., d'Hauteserre, 2011; Hall & Tucker, 2004) have focused on how asymmetric power relations between colonizers and colonies complicate cultural imagery and on how tourism reinforces such imagery. It is suggested that even though decolonization and subsequent independence seem widely 'successful', tourism has prohibited former colonies from defining a national identity of their own (Morgan & Pritchard, 1998). Indeed, many destinations have combined their indigenous culture with an imposed Western culture as unique selling points to attract affluent tourists, mostly from former colonizers (e.g., McKercher & Decosta, 2007; Carrigan, 2011). Recent critical postcolonial tourism scholars (e.g., Bryce & Čaušević, 2019; Chambers & Buzinde, 2015) have argued that past studies primarily focused on understanding colonial heritage as a static phenomenon consumed by tourists from Western colonizers; hence, they fail to decolonize Western epistemologies in knowledge-making. Beyond the binary between the colonizer and colonized, it is necessary to view cultural heritage as transnational and trans-spatial in nature (Zhang *et al*., 2018). In achieving the "production of difference" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998: 52), which is crucial for creating unique identification, meanings underlying the idea of 'East meets West' are important. However, these meanings have been largely overlooked.

This paper examines the above issues by tracing the different decolonization routes of two distinct postcolonial destinations in China, namely Hong Kong and Macau, to understand the discursive identity-making embedded in their postcolonial heritage discourse and the rationale behind their 'East meets West' tourism promotion strategies. While these cities have been transitioning from British and Portuguese colonies respectively to 'independent' postcolonial Chinese cities since the late 1990s, their decolonization routes and the meanings underlying their 'East meets West' strategies are distinct. Before the handover to China, Hong Kong was known as 'the Pearl of the Orient' and was positioned as 'safe Asia' for many Western tourists wishing to sample Eastern culture (Okano, & Wong, 2004). Unlike Hong Kong, colonial Macau was always a marginalized island city, largely reliant on Hong Kong tourists who enjoyed its small gambling industry (Hao, 2011).

To a certain extent, the 'East meets West' tourism promotion was pervasive during the colonial period for both Hong Kong and Macau. Since their return to China under the 'one country, two systems' policy, such tourism promotional strategies have continued alongside the Chinese government's initiatives to decolonize them. However, struggles with their

Chinese identity have generated turbulence in both cities' attempts to redefine their identities through Western and Eastern heritage discourses. Such turbulence is evident in the series of protests in Hong Kong since 2014. In contrast to Hong Kong, where opinion polls show a steady reduction in the number of people identifying themselves as Chinese, most Macau residents tend to have more positive opinions towards being Chinese (PORI, 2020). Their different decolonization routes make Hong Kong and Macau a unique context to appreciate the complexities of tourism marketing and management.

From the perspective of postcolonial studies, unlike most postcolonial territories in Africa, Caribbean and Asia, the circumstances of Hong Kong and Macau are exceptional (Bray & Koo, 2004). First, while most studies have focused on binary divisions between East and West and colonized and colonizer (e.g., Hoobler, 2006), Hong Kong and Macau's identity-making is transnational in nature as it involves negotiation amongst and between Chinese, British, Portuguese, Hong Kong and Macau's heritage spaces. Second, while former colonies either cut or maintain ties with their colonizer, in the case of Hong Kong and Macau, there are lingering doubts as to whether either city has been fully controlled by the People's Republic of China (PRC) and become a Chinese city (Chou, 2010). Thirdly, even though both Hong Kong and Macau reverted to the PRC, Hong Kong overshadowed the PRC in economic terms before the handover (Bray & Koo, 2004). This situation reversed after the handover with the dramatic increase in China's economic power. Consequently, Chinese tourists now dominate the tourist market in both Hong Kong and Macau, accounting for around 80% of their total arrivals compared with less than 5% before the handover (HKTB partnernet, 2019; DSEC, 2019).

Despite a growing body of literature on tourism as a transnational phenomenon (e.g., Zhang *et al*., 2018), there is handful of studies on its nature in postcolonial contexts (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffins, 2007; d'Hauteserre, 2004; Hall & Tucker, 2004). Here, the transnational nature of Hong Kong and Macau enables us to go beyond the assumed binaries between colonizer and colonized in understanding 'East meets West' promotional strategies and the discursive identity-making embedded in decolonization processes. By so doing, the present study contributes to the literature in two ways. First, it reveals the subtle (re)production and maintenance of the 'unique Chinese identity' underlying their 'East meets West' tourism promotion. The second contribution is that, unlike the previous empirical studies, the current one captures how socio-political and economic changes influenced tourism management and marketing before and after the handover. Practically, our research

explores various ways of managing decolonization and 'East meets West' promotional messages for postcolonial destinations.

2. Literature review

2.1 Postcoloniality and decolonization

Managing postcolonial identity-making is an important topic in postcolonial studies. Postcolonial theory often criticizes the material and discursive legacies of colonialism (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffins, 2007). Colonialism, which connotes territorial ownership of a place by an imperial power has been associated with imperialism, which denotes the underlying ideology for such occupation (Loomba, 2005). Postcolonial scholars often argue that the production of nations and capitalism worldwide has enabled Western countries to manage or even produce the imagination of 'others' since the Enlightenment (Said, 2003; Smith, 2009). Hence, postcolonial identity-making could be conceptualized as a process, which is about decolonizing Western knowing and being in the global context (Chambers & Buzinde, 2015).

Decolonization can be discussed as a process of rejecting the influence of colonization and (re)crafting an independent identity (Loomba, 2005). For Tuck and Yang (2012), decolonization should not be understood as a metaphor or easily be grafted onto pre-existing discourses. To them, decolonization is a lived and material process that entails handing over control of indigenous space to indigenous people. Such a process requires dismantling and rebuilding institutions, structures, systems, identities, and narratives of the settler colonists (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Here, decolonization is not simply about gaining sovereignty, but also about challenging the colonial discourses for identity-making because colonial settlers often make a place their home and destroy the indigenous way of thinking and being (Tuck & Yang, 2012). People and place become colonized objects with meanings attached to places primarily determined by the West rather than the 'self', the Orient or the East (Said, 2003). For Said, the unequal power relationships between the West and the East provides possibility for the former to define the latter as mysterious, exotic, sensual, backward, and in decay compared with the advanced and modernized West. Often the decolonization process must contend with this colonial discourse. More recent studies in tourism (see for e.g., Bryce & Čaušević, 2019) have moved Said's Orientalism beyond geographical limitations and placed its exploratory power in researching how Eurocentric power influences tourism practices and marginalizing the 'others'.

The subjective and imagined nature of political communities, like nations, often needs to rely on cultural resources to provide meaning (Smith, 2009). For example, media narratives and cultural heritage (re)production were essential to establish an imagined identity of 'United States' as an independent territory as opposed to just an assortment of former colonies (Anderson, 1991). But for many former colonies in developing countries, their colonial cultural heritage, which developed during the process of modernization is also important for attracting Western investment, including Western tourists. Postcolonial identity-making and decolonization projects are inevitably influenced by their colonial discourses, which frames a particular way of seeing 'self' and 'others' as well as constraining their way of interacting with each other (Said, 2003; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Hence, deciding among possible cultural elements in identity-making process often becomes contested in the East, as ethnic and cultural groups have vested interests in determining the pathways and degree of decolonization (Bhabha, 1990).

Loomba (2005) argues that identity-making in postcolonial societies seems completely opposite to identity construction during the colonial era, although the former absorbs much of the value system in the latter. Darwin (1999: 542-543) adds that decolonization itself is a neo-colonial strategy and there is "an extra twist in the tortuous saga of collaboration designed to install moderates and pre-empt extremists in the struggle to control the (ex-)colonial state". Lonsdale (2015) traces back colonialism in Africa and finds that, while colonial governments often collaborated with local elites in governing the locals, Western-educated elites later often became leaders of anti-colonial movements and led the decolonization process. As a result, the anti-colonial resistance becomes another form of colonization. Thus, postcolonial identity-making becomes a lived process negotiating between decolonization and colonization in transnational and global contexts. Its fundamental nature is hybrid, subjective and deeply contested (Bhabha, 1990).

2.2 'East meets West' tourism promotion and decolonization

Numerous studies (e.g., d' Hauteserre, 2011; Hall & Tucker, 2004; Henderson, 2002; Bryce & Čaušević, 2019; Zhang *et al*., 2019) have highlighted how the postcolonial character of destinations has become the focal point of their tourism promotional strategies. 'East meets West' tourism promotion is often used to promote both indigenous culture and Western traditions and becomes a unique selling proposition, which then appeals more to Western tourists (Carrigan, 2011; McKercher & Decosta, 2007). Some tourism researchers have investigated how postcolonial destinations offer a blend of their extant indigenous culture and

their colonial past as cultural tourism products (du Cros & McKercher, 2020), while others have examined how the construction of national identity and destination images intended to appeal to tourists from colonial metropoles portray colonizers as explorers (Echtner & Prasad, 2003; Frew & White, 2011). Chang (2005) referred to the growing perception of the New Asia identity whereby former colonial territories in the region conjure images of exoticism and modernity in their marketing campaigns. Henderson (2004), Chang and Yeoh (1999) found in their studies that both Singapore and Malaysia market themselves as world cities with a contrasting blend of their Asian and Western cultures to satisfy the needs of regional and Western tourists. Teo (2003) looked at residents' dissatisfaction with the imagineering of Penang (Malaysia) to reflect its British, Chinese, Indian and Malay cultural heritages. In contrast, critical postcolonial researchers argue that the promotion of postcolonial destinations is transnational in nature and should really move beyond a simple dichotomy between tourists from former colonial powers and formerly colonized countries (Bryce & Čaušević, 2019). One way to do this, especially in Asia, is by understanding the complex and contradictory relations between popular 'East meets West' imagery and the decolonization process.

In discussing the 'East meets West' marketing efforts of postcolonial destinations in Asia one cannot avoid the idea of reindigenisation. Here, creating a static, timeless and unchanging 'East' is crucial in fulfilling the exotic imagination of the Western tourists (Carrigan, 2011). For example, Bandyopadhyay and Morais (2005) examined the differences between how India is represented in US tourism media and how it is represented by the Indian government. They found that while the US media represent India as primitive, the government's projected image obscures the country's colonial past. Echtner and Prasad (2003) analyzed the content of Chinese, Thai and India tourism marketing in North American travel brochures and concluded that the marketing of postcolonial territories in Asia intimatised the master-servant relationship during the colonial era. More specifically, they found that firstly, oriental people wore stoic facial expressions in unpleasant rural settings and secondly, gateway cities were meeting places for the ancient and modern, old and new and staging points to enter the unchanged Orient beyond. Indeed, the discourse of 'East meets West' fundamentally signifies the inferior position of the East. The phrase 'meeting the West' and 'discover new land' in tourism promotion further confirms this underlying binary position (Said, 2003). Because the Western form of consciousness and global asymmetric developments are at the center of the international tourism industry, Hollinshead (2004: 31) contends that "tourism and imperialism are unavoidably mutually reinforcing entities". From

Hollinshead, one could infer the inherent difficulties encountered by postcolonial territories in decolonization and identity-building.

The ineffective agency (or lack thereof) of postcolonial territories in decolonization and identity-building is further complicated in the tourism marketing arena. Difficult questions abound for destination marketing organisations regarding what aspects of history and culture should be presented and what aspects to leave out as part of the decolonization process. Add to this difficulty the desire of postcolonial destinations to be unique, selection of tourism images and their accompanying text, and the discourses underlying their uniqueness motives and imagery in advertised messages, and the task becomes even more complex (d'Hauteserre, 2004; Echtner & Prasad, 2003).

Notwithstanding, many postcolonial territories are eager to implement their decolonization projects and showcase their independent identities, which includes claiming their authority in repositioning their destination images. Clearly, image creation is not a simple linear process for many postcolonial destinations given the unequal power balance that characterizes the global system (Morgan & Pritchard, 1998). Any such initiative often involves re-interpreting cultural heritage to craft a new sense of national solidarity and creating an emotional connection to the nation in the decolonization process. In instances where a pre-colonial 'golden period' existed, ethnicity and sacrifices during the anti-colonization process become common themes (Anderson, 1991; Smith, 2009). However, most postcolonial nations cannot only rely on their pre-colonial and anti-colonization movements in identity-making; they also deploy colonial messages. Postcolonial identity-making is fundamentally contradictory in this sense because the (re)production and maintenance of heritage discourses are always in the process of negotiation since deciding which story to tell has no simple answer (Zhang *et al*., 2018). The trans-national/spatial nature of international tourism further complicates the identity-making process (Zhang *et al*., 2018). This ambivalence shows that the postcolonial mind appropriates whatever it deems fit (Chadha, 2006). The fragmented and contradictory postcolonial identity-making process goes beyond the assumed binaries between the colonizer and colonized and should, therefore, be contextualized within the trans-national/spatial relations between decolonization and any 'East meets West' tourism marketing.

2.3 The context

The sovereignties of Hong Kong and Macau reverted to China in 1997 and 1999 respectively as Special Administrative Regions (SARs) under the unique ideology of 'one

country, two systems'. The idea of 'special' suggest Hong Kong and Macau's superiority of being advanced and international in contrast to other mainland Chinese cities. Under the 'one country, two systems', both territories belong to China but operate two different systems of governance until 2047. Decolonization in both places started long before the handovers and was influenced by the Cultural Revolution in the Chinese mainland in the 1960s. During the riots of 1967 in Hong Kong, violent protests against British rule helped create a sense of belonging and attachment to the place (Carroll, 2007; Choy, 2007; Hsiung, 2000). When Cantonese replaced Mandarin as the local dialect in Hong Kong and Macau after the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese mainland was no longer considered home but the 'old home'. The growing sense of Hong Kong as the new home and the identity of HongKongnese was heavily influenced by its perceived 'East meets West' cosmopolitan status in comparison to the undeveloped position of China (Choy, 2007). Further, many people in the SARs escaped the ravages of the Cultural Revolution and have since held strong anti-communist views, making it difficult to convince them about their Chinese identity (Hsiung, 2000). While Hong Kong's identity-making process did influence Macau, the December 3 ('12-3') 1966 anti-Portuguese protests led to different decolonization routes. While Hong Kong nurtured a stand-alone HongKongnese identity, the incident in Macau, which was inspired by the Cultural Revolution usurped the Portuguese control and offered the opportunity to create a Chinese identity even before the handover (Hao, 2011, Hook & Neves, 2002).

After the handovers, tourism provided an effective tool to expedite the decolonization process and re-integrate Hong Kong and Macau into China. Consequently, visitors from the Chinese mainland account for over 80% of the SARs' tourist arrivals since 2003 (HKTB partnernet, 2019; DSEC, 2019). However, the increasingly intense debates in both territories about their identities suggest that tourism encounters between the SAR locals and mainland Chinese tourists have not generated significant common understandings, especially in Hong Kong. Increasingly, mainland Chinese tourists have become the target of much of the anger in Hong Kong's protests, for they are visible reminders of China's influence on Hong Kong. Interestingly, the need to brand the city arose after the handover in 1997 to emphasize the city's unique identity and competitiveness (BrandHK, 2019). Prior to the BrandHK exercise, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) and its predecessor, the Hong Kong Tourist Association, launched several global tourism campaigns aimed at various markets (examples include: *We are Hong Kong, City of Life* (1996-2001*) 魅力香港，萬象之都 or 動感之都*; Live It, Love It (2001-2016) *愛在此，樂在此*; Best of all, it's in Hong Kong (2016- to date)

盡享·最香港). Their 1930s flyer (Figure 1) not only has the strapline '*The Riviera of the Orient*' but reflects Western imagination of the place. Apparently, after the handover, Hong Kong was no longer perceived as 'safe Asia' by Western tourists (Okan & Wong, 2004) so the city's authorities adopted a new approach to attract Chinese tourists by promoting its colonial heritage (Zhang *et al.*, 2015). Even though, the HKTB consistently adopts new marketing slogans, updates its advertising to feature new messages and revise promotional materials, the fundamental idea of Hong Kong as 'Asia's World City', where 'East meets West' remains prominent in its tourism and city branding (BrandHK, 2021).

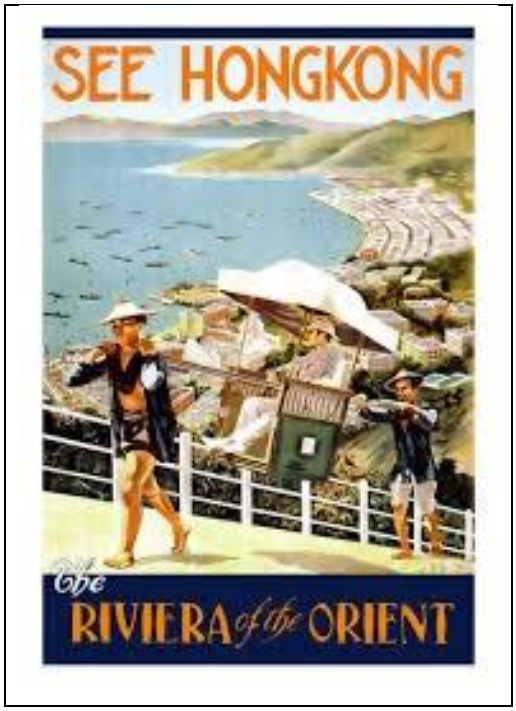

Figure 1: 'The Riviera of the Orient' tourism poster (around 1930s – Lead author's personal collection).

On the other hand, the liberalization of its gambling industry since 2002 has transformed Macau from an isolated island into the 'Las Vegas of Asia' and Chinese tourists have played an important role in creating this marketing positioning (Hao, 2011; Kong, du Cros, & Ong, 2015). Macau gained UNESCO World Heritage status in 2005. Its successful application was strongly supported by the central government, which stressed Macau's 'East meets West' culture (Hao, 2011). Unlike Hong Kong, the Macau Government Tourist Office (MGTO) is a government department under the Cultural Bureau of Macau. Due to its organizational structure, the MGTO has focused on promoting Macau's culture rather than its renowned gaming industry. Yet, like Hong Kong, the overarching tourism marketing communications strategy of the MGTO since 2005 has been its 'East meets West' heritage (MGTO, 2017). This is reflected in several marketing slogans used to promote Macau such as

'*City of Culture*' (2005), '*Experience Macau in Your Own Style*' (2010-2012) and '*Touching Moments, Experience Macau*' (2012- to date) (Kong, du Cros, & Ong, 2015; Liu *et al*., 2021).

For both cities, colonial cultural heritage attractions are used to convey a sense of nostalgia and are deemed essential to the SARs' international tourism demand and for their growing Chinese mainland market (Okan & Wong, 2004; Wong *et al*., 2016). Indeed, the idea of 'East meets West' gives competitive advantages to both SARs and creates a notion of a global and multicultural city that is markedly different from other Chinese cities (du Cros, 2009; Henderson, 2002). Such fragmented and complex desires embedded within both SARs' Western and Eastern heritage discourses during the decolonization process highlight a need to understand the (re)production and maintenance of these discourses in both identity-making and in tourism marketing strategies.

3. Methodology

This study operates within a methodological framework of critical discourse analysis (CDA) of discursive cultural heritage texts associated with Hong Kong and Macau's 'East meets West' tourism marketing strategies. Here, decolonization is not a metaphor but a process to challenge the colonial discourses (Tuck & Yang, 2012) and its relationship with 'East meets West' tourism promotion in postcolonial destinations is an important question for the current study. Within tourism research, CDA has been usefully employed to explore the (re)production and maintenance of colonial discourses (Bryce & Čaušević, 2019), as well as to provide a critical analytical approach to understand the silenced voices of the 'other' in transnational tourism contexts (e.g., Santos *et al*., 2008; Zhang *et al.,* 2018). The term discourse was originally developed by Foucault (1972:54), who defined it as "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak." Traditional qualitative approaches address the meaning of social reality and fail to explore the production and maintenance of social realities. Thus, CDA allows the researcher to take an explicit social-political stance on interpreting latent meanings, to understand how socially constructed realities interact with moments of change, and to examine how identity processes and practices are constructed across time and how discourse processes count as knowing, doing, and being across events (Fairclough, 2003; Parker, 1992). In addition, CDA attempts to bridge the gap between the macro-and micro-levels of society. It does not stop at describing what cultural stories are used to inform tourism management and marketing; it places the tourism promotional texts within the wider frame of historical and contemporary (re)production and maintenance of 'East

meets West' identities in relation to the decolonization process to capture discursive identity-making (Foucault, 1972; Parker, 1992) and the rationale behind tourism promotion.

CDA assumes social realities are predominately made up of texts to be read and understood. Therefore, an in-depth qualitative data collection aims to capture "discourse of possibility" and involves multi-sourced textual data to understand discursive texts informing Hong Kong's and Macau's 'East meets West' tourism promotion (see for e.g., Caton & Santos, 2009). Textual data were collected in the form of on-site brochures, visitor interpretation boards and web-based promotional materials created by the HKTB and MGTO, which are the tourism agencies charged with marketing their product offerings. Also included in the analysis are materials produced by tour operators, attraction management teams and culture-related government departments (e.g., Antiques and Monuments Office, and Cultural Affairs Bureau). These tourism-related texts were further supported with SARs' government documents (e.g., tourism planning policies, Chief Executive public speeches), as well as historical images and texts, to capture the socio-political changes during the decolonization process (Morgan & Pritchard, 1998). All the materials were collected between 2015 and 2019. As discourse refers to language as a form of practice (Parker, 1992), both simplified Chinese and English-language texts were collected to reveal the transnational nature of postcolonial identity-making.

In addition, 16 semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with tourism and cultural experts to gain insights into the rationale behind the (re)production and maintenance of Eastern and Western heritage discourses and to link this rationale with the broader identity crisis in the SARs. The participants in this study were seen to be appropriate and knowledgeable given their seniority and professional experiences dating to the late pre-handover period (see Table 1). Their lived experiences open possibilities to link texts with social life and understand the radical changes redefining postcolonial Hong Kong and Macau (Parker, 1992). These individuals were selected based on the lead author's long research engagement with the region. As shown in Table 1, participants were from varied backgrounds. To ensure confidentiality, only the participant's expertise is included in Table 1, and each is assigned a participant number. The interview questions were designed around the following four themes: destination uniqueness; understanding of 'East meets West' marketing and cultural heritage; decolonization process and tourism development; and identity conflicts and tourism. Each interview lasted 60-120 minutes. All interviews were audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed. Transcriptions become social texts, which were influenced by pre-existing linguistic resources within their everyday life in SARs (Talja, 1999). For CDA, the

objective of analyzing transcripts is not to explore the authentic meanings of respondents' narratives but to understand social-culturally constructed statements in the respondents' accounts to examine the data on a macro-level (Talja, 1999).

Table 1. Profile of interview participants

Participant number	Profession/expertise	Gender	Self-acclaimed identity	Age
P1	Tour guide	Female	Hong Kong	50s
P2	Cultural related government department	Male	Hong Kong	50s
P3	Sociology, history, culture expert	Male	Macau Chinese	40s
P4	Tour and event operator	Male	Portuguese	50s
P5	Tourism marketing	Female	Macau	50s
P6	Tourism marketing	Male	Hong Kong	50s
P7	Tourism and hotel	Male	Hong Kong Chinese	60s
P8	Tourism marketing	Female	Hong Kong	60s
P9	Cultural related government department	Male	Macau Chinese	50s
P10	Tourism	Female	Macanese Chinese	50s
P11	Tourism and cultural heritage	Male	Hong Kong/Macau Chinese	50s
P12	Tourism	Male	Chinese	50s
P13	Tourism marketing	Female	Macau Chinese	60s
P14	Tourism	Female	Hong Kong	60s
P15	Tourism and hotel	Female	Macau	50s
P16	Cultural and history expert	Male	Hong Kong Chinese	60s

Textual analysis followed the CDA approach. After data familiarization, the analysis concentrated on statements of the past and units of discourse, which gave meaning to define the objects (people and place) in contemporary SARs (Parker, 1992). Next, the focus shifted to understanding the relations between statements and groups of statements. This process was particularly useful as it helped to understand pre-existing themes underlying the contested identity of either SAR (Foucault, 1972). Subsequently, CDA concentrated on how the examined texts and their statements work to persuade or to produce "effects of truth" and how identity-making has been normalized to become 'realities' beyond tourism marketing texts. Foucault (1972) suggested that the notion of absence is particularly useful to understand power struggles as 'significant silence' across various statements. Following on from this, evaluation was made of the content of images that show power struggles behind (re)production and maintenance of the 'East meets West' tourism positioning during the decolonization process. Comparing empirical data from both Hong Kong and Macau is useful to draw out themes that capture the transnational nature of identity-making in tourism.

As with many qualitative approaches, it is important to acknowledge the researchers' perspectives underlying the interpretations (Decrop, 2004). The first author perceives herself as Chinese and currently resides in the UK, having lived, studied and worked in Hong Kong and Macau for many years and she maintains connection with the region as her 'second home'. She occupies both an 'outsider' and an 'insider' identity position in this context. The coauthors are non-native (African) and native (White British) English speakers who also reside in the UK. Both co-authors are familiar with the region with one having studied and worked in both SARs for 6.5 years but are considered as 'outsiders' in this context. The various and varying levels of epistemological and ontological sensitivities of the authors to the topic from both emic and etic perspectives are acknowledged throughout the process of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Thus, our interpretations of the themes are the product of our negotiations and discussions.

4. (Re)producing and maintaining 'East meets West' discourses

The 'East meets West' tourism positioning strategy has been used to market both Hong Kong and Macau in their colonial and postcolonial periods. The idea of 'East meets West' is both a popular tourism promotion strategy and an historical grand narrative. This section aims to present the (re)production and maintenance of 'East and West' heritage discourses during the decolonization process and the rationale behind tourism promotion. The first section discusses the dominant discourses in tourism marketing to draw attention to the differences between Hong Kong's and Macau's 'East meets West' market positioning. The second section is divided into two discursive themes along a timeline, which either contribute to, or contradict the dominant story line in marketing communications. These themes are: (1) transforming the colonial period and redefining 'East meets West' tourism positioning; and (2) SARs' power dynamics behind the 'East meets West' positioning strategies.

4.1 Dominant storylines behind 'East meets West' promotion

Hong Kong and Macau share similarities, including their Chinese ethnicity, Cantonese background, Western colonization and coastal locations marginalized in ancient Chinese history (Carroll, 2007; Hao, 2011). For the Chinese government, the key aim is to decolonize the region and to (re)connect the SARs with the Chinese identity politically and socio-culturally (People's Education Press, 2003). However, postcolonial Hong Kong and Macau

have different desires: the contradictory desires for *continuity* and *change* behind their 'East meets West' market positions potentially signify different routes to assimilation.

In Hong Kong, the central question for its postcolonial destiny has always been whether the 'one country, two systems' principle adopted after the handover could effectively enable communist China to sustain the city's developed capitalist system (Choy, 2007; Hsiung, 2000). A strong desire to retain the level of capitalist prosperity makes the discourse of continuity pervasive. It also shows the city's desire to safeguard its cosmopolitan identity in the global capitalist system (Darwin, 1999). Hence, its 'East meets West' marketing must support such initiatives. Here, the brand identity since the handover, "*Hong Kong- Asia's World City*", defines its 'East meets West' uniqueness as "*a pluralistic cosmopolitan city*" (BrandHong Kong, 2021; HKTB, 2019a). Even though Hong Kong reverted to China in 1997, visiting an 'unchanged Hong Kong' has always been a surprising and important component. As P1 said in the interviews, "*my foreign clients always asked me about Hong Kong's post-handover changes. I told them Hong Kong has not changed much. Our way of life is the same before and after the handover. Hong Kong is still a metropolis".* P12 reiterated that even for the Chinese tourists, "*the colonial attractions are always important for them*". In terms of destination marketing, many participants saw the handover period as a "*hush period*". Both P1 and P12 alluded to that fact that not much has changed in Hong Kong since the handover. P6 captures the feeling of 'unchanged Hong Kong' within the tourist trade, "*all our early promotional messages were to show Hong Kong has never changed even it is now back to China*". Furthermore, the 'East meets West' project which portrays HongKongnese as sophisticated and educated, in contrast with the undeveloped Chinese mainland remains important for many participants (Choy, 2007; Hsiung, 2000). The narrowing gap between Hong Kong and mega Chinese cities since the handover suggests that positioning Hong Kong as an unchanged, superior, international world city is important not only for its economic competitive advantage (Tung, 1999) but also for its identity-making.

While Hong Kong is eager to ensure that China can govern an 'unchanged Hong Kong', Macau is hoping that being a Chinese SAR will *change* its historical isolation, slow economy and political instability. Even though, the Chinese army presence in both territories is viewed negatively in Hong Kong as it signifies the emerging communist power, Macau welcomes the idea as the army's presence reflected the central government's commitment to transform the city into a peaceful society. Hitherto, the city was controlled by local gangsters (Chou, 2010; Hao, 2011). Unlike Hong Kong, Macau was never positioned to compete with mega cities on the mainland but is aware that "*the Motherland can bring great opportunities*

for development in Macau" (Gov.Mo, 2000). Nearly all our Macau participants showed the same understanding of Macau's destination marketing strategy. P13 summarized this position: "*we really do not want to make Macau a colony especially for us Chinese, it makes us start to be proud of our identity. This guided all cultural activities long before the handover*."

Our analysis show that the decolonization project has engendered a strong discourse of harmony, which interprets Macau's past as a peaceful Chinese international port. This discourse of harmony underlies Macau's 'East meets West' marketing strategy. It reinforces Macau's identity and explicitly formulated to fit to "*a harmonious mix of Chinese and Portuguese cultures"* (MGTO, 2019a). This identity not only explains Macau's obvious multicultural diversity, but also creates the conditions for the city to act as an intermediary for business collaboration between China and Portuguese-speaking countries (MacaoSAR, 2019). To entrench its post-handover identity of being a Chinese international entrepôt, decolonization has focused on (re)interpreting Macau as a Chinese city rather than an isolated and rustic Portuguese colony. Not surprisingly, analysis of Macau's tourism promotional materials in both Chinese and English found no actual use of the word "colony". This suggests that Macau's pre-colonial and colonial histories have been (re)produced to accommodate its emerging Chinese identity.

4.2 *Transforming the colonial period and redefining 'East meets West' tourism positioning*

During the colonial period, colonies were imagined as exotic 'new' lands (Said, 2003; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Sustaining this discourse to attract contemporary Western tourists has been important for many postcolonial destinations (Echtner & Prasad, 2003). However, at the same time, the end of colonization meant that colonies have been transformed into 'independent' territories. In Hong Kong and Macau, such contradictory transformations are embedded in their discursive heritage narratives, presenting Hong Kong as a global city transformed from a barren Chinese land and Macau as an isolated Chinese island transformed into an international Chinese port.

In Hong Kong, the 'East meets West' identity roots the city in both British and Chinese cultures. However, as Hong Kong's cosmopolitan identity developed from the decolonization of the 1960s (Choy, 2007), the increasingly strong sense of HongKonese identity made the city neither Chinese nor British. All participants reflexively linked the sense of being HongKonese to the discourse of the Lion Rock, '*the spirit of Hong Kong*', which symbolizes how both legal and illegal immigrants who left the mainland during the civil war and after the

establishment of the PRC, came together to build a better life in Hong Kong (Carroll, 2007). A tourism promotional material describes in detail the Lion Rock as the core of the very notion of HongKonese:

> *Lion Rock (495 m) is one of the most recognizable natural landmarks in Hong Kong and has become a symbol of the hardworking spirit of Hongkongers…as a witness to Hong Kong's remarkable transformation from a rustic outpost of China to a dynamic world city. Beneath Lion Rock has been the name of a song and a TV series about the lives of ordinary Hong Kong people* (Lion Rock, HKTB, 2019a).

In linking identity-making with ordinary local people, this description shows how Lion Rock has become an important cultural resource, evidencing Hong Kong's identity as a place transformed from "*a rustic outpost*" to "*a world city*".

Indeed, many tourism promotional materials follow the same discourse of Hong Kong's transformation from "*barren island*" to cosmopolitan city. Thus, it sets up the role for its pre-colonial Chineseness of being a "*barren rock to thriving Far Eastern outpost*" (HKTB, 2019b). In addition to silencing its pre-colonial Chineseness, this idea of a transformed Hong Kong also restricts its history to the 150-year colonial period time frame (Said, 2003). The narrative from all interview participants that "*Hong Kong has around 150 years of history*" strongly endorses the discourse that the city's success is solely attributable to the British and that Hong Kong is defined by this colonial discourse (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Visiting the city's historical sites is described as a journey "*from a far-flung outpost of imperial China to the culturally diverse crossroads of a shrinking world*." (HKTB, 2019a). As a result, Hong Kong's Chinese heritage has been conceptualized as simply a backdrop to its cosmopolitan success under its 'East meets West' positioning (see Figure 2). This colonial modernization view seems to suggest that Hong Kong's pre-colonial Chineseness is remote and undeveloped and has been decolonized in contrast to its contemporary life.

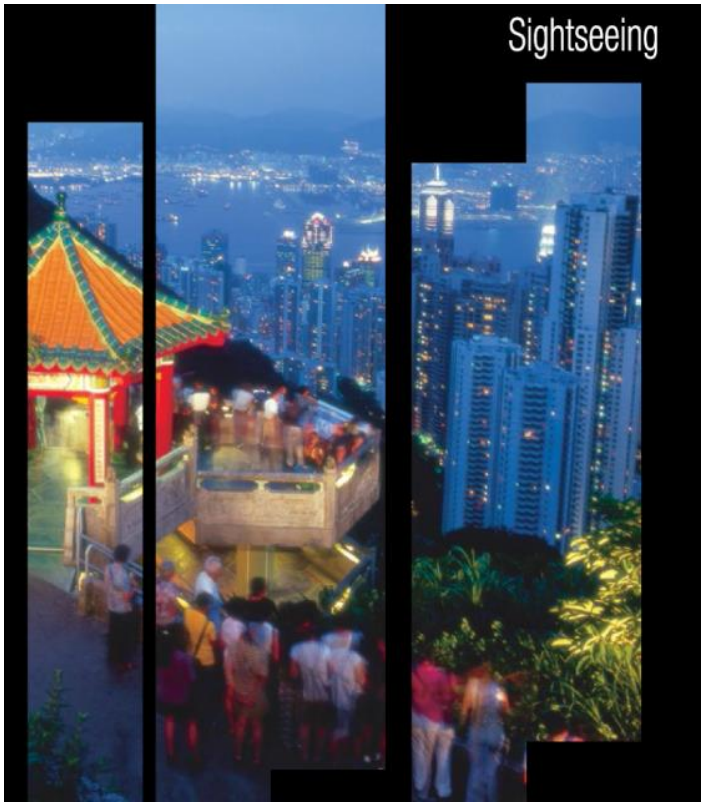

Figure 2: Sightseeing in Hong Kong Traveler's Guide (HKTB, 2019b)

While the discourse of transformation is important; the handover and its associated decolonization project aims to (re)connect Hong Kong with its Chinese identity. The central government started to portray the handover as a "*happy ending*" in line with the "*end of suffering*" (People's Education Press 2003) - a discourse seen in all official cultural and history museums. Here, the discourse of 'return' is associated with China and signifies the 'departure' of the British. As P2 pointed out, "*before the handover, local people's daily life was mainly in a Chinese style. Ethnicity and culture became key for reunification*". Thus, decolonization refers to the recollection, reinvention and rediscovery of historical, ethnic and cultural ties between Hong Kong and China (Smith, 2009). However, the discourse of transformation has been added to represent the pre-colonial Chineseness under the 'East meets West' strategy. For example, the uniqueness of Hong Kong's Chinese New Year is shown in its Chinese version "*更有独特的港味。环球花车巡游, 维港烟花, 为传统节庆添上一笔国际的色彩...*"(HKTB, 2019a) [More importantly with Hong Kong styles. World night parade and fireworks around the Victoria Harbor add an international feeling to this event - *translated by the lead author*]. By adding Western elements and projecting its Eastern festivals as 'international', Hong Kong effectively turns its pre-colonial Chineseness to an exotic commodity purely for its Chinese tourism market (Echtner & Prasad, 2003).

As previously mentioned, what is portrayed as Hong Kong's origins under the 'East meets West' market positioning, recounts its colonial past rather than its pre-colonial imagery as a barren Chinese island. This discourse does not help to generate positive emotions towards their Chinese identity (Smith, 2009). Yet this is precisely what the transformation process does in presenting the idea that the colonial period was always devoid of conflict. Hong Kong is projected to be a unique place where harmony, economic advancement and peaceful life were (re)produced.

Figure 3: The Peak (The Peak 2012)

Figure 3 is an on-site promotional material that portrays the exotic and romantic image of the Peak, Hong Kong's most visited attraction and one of the most important colonial heritage sites, from which local Chinese were prohibited entering during the colonial period (Carroll, 2007). The brochure recounts that *"[f]rom 1904, The Peak was designated an exclusive residential area reserved only for expatriates although this practice ended in 1947*" (The Peak, 2012). Surprisingly, the conflicting colonial stories between the Chinese and the British were omitted. Indeed, the notable absence of the Western passenger in the sedan chair (it is shown empty) also shows how conflicts have been silenced (in contrast to the image projected in Figure 1). Moreover, the fact that the term 'expatriates' is used instead of colonizers shows the strong desire to (re)produce a peaceful colonial period and support Hong Kong's projected image as an unchanged international city. Here, 'East meets West' is not just a blend or hybrid identity, but it also conveys to the individual a rebirth of Hong Kong's unchanged global city identity.

By contrast, the reinterpretation of Macau as an international port for ancient China rather than as a historically marginalized Portuguese rustic port was found to be prominent in the city's tourism marketing materials (Hao, 2011). Unlike Hong Kong, the discourse of transformation here implies the openness of the Chinese government as well as their exercise

of political power over Macau's affairs. For example, the permanent exhibition of Macau Museum presents the fascinating history that identifies Macau as the first 'East meets West' place in China since Macau was the site for China's early contact with the rest of the world before the 19th century. What is striking is that unlike other postcolonial destinations, where colonial discourse continues to address the superiority of the former colonizer embedded in their heritage representation (e.g., Echtner & Prasad, 2003), discourses surrounding Macau's 'East meets West' ethos have been revised to reflect it decolonization as a Chinese city throughout history.

To support such revision, numerous decolonization narratives concentrate on explaining the Portuguese settlements in the 16th Century as commercial collaboration rather than imperialism. The story has been consistently revised to suggest that the arrival of the Portuguese in Macau was accidental and was not a well-thought-out strategy to expand its presence in Southeast Asia (Hao, 2011; People's Education Press, 2003) - as shown in the following translated text:

> *16 世纪中叶，因为中外贸易的新形势，明朝政府划出澳门半岛西南部一片地段，供以葡萄牙人为主的外国商人居住及进行贸易，澳门由此发展成为19 世纪前中国主要的对外港口，也是亚洲地区重要的国际港口.* (In the mid-16th century, due to the new situation between China and foreign trade, the Ming government set aside a southwest part of the Macau Peninsula to the Portuguese and other foreign merchants to live and trade. Macau had become a Chinese leading trading port before the 19th century and had also become an important international port in Asia. - *translated by the lead author*) (Macao World Heritage, MGTO 2019b).

Although Macau's historical center with its Portuguese colonial architecture is now listed as a World Heritage Site, the above Chinese description of its origins implies the vision underlying this 'East meet West' identity is more closely associated with Macau's Chineseness. In other words, Macau was not a colony but an international trading port because it was the Chinese government that gave away the southwestern part of Macau Peninsula to the Portuguese and this decision later transformed the city into an international port. It should be noted in this respect that while majority of Macau's World Heritage sites relate to the colonial period, its Chineseness is often emphasized (see Figure 4). Indeed, in our analysis process, there were literally hundreds of collected materials such as Figure 4 that projected Macau as a place where two civilizations encounter each other rather than a colony. And our participants endorsed the decolonization efforts; as P2 believes, "*it is important to decolonize Macau as a Chinese city at least for the Chinese*". Similarly, P13 commented that "*our role [tourism marketing] is to promote Macau as a Chinese city…we need to support*

these initiatives as well as to inform our locals about this". Taking a slightly different focus P4 noted: "*Macau now often plays a role to show the openness of China, this is good for contemporary commercial activities*".

MGTO website home page

Walking tour: Crossroads of China and Portugal

Illustrations: *Take a stroll down the historic path in which two civilisations encounter, you'll discover the life-long memory and emotions of Portuguese who once call Macao home*.

Figure 4: Discursive visual and textual representations of Macao's 'East meets West' (MGTO, 2019a)

Like other postcolonial territories, Macau has given prominent attention to its colonial military installations to generate anti-colonial emotions (Anderson, 1991; Loomba, 2005). However, the analysis of all collected materials revealed that Macau's colonial period was

seen as almost devoid of conflict. Figure 5, a historical map describing Macau's landscape in the 18th century, is used here to facilitate this discussion.

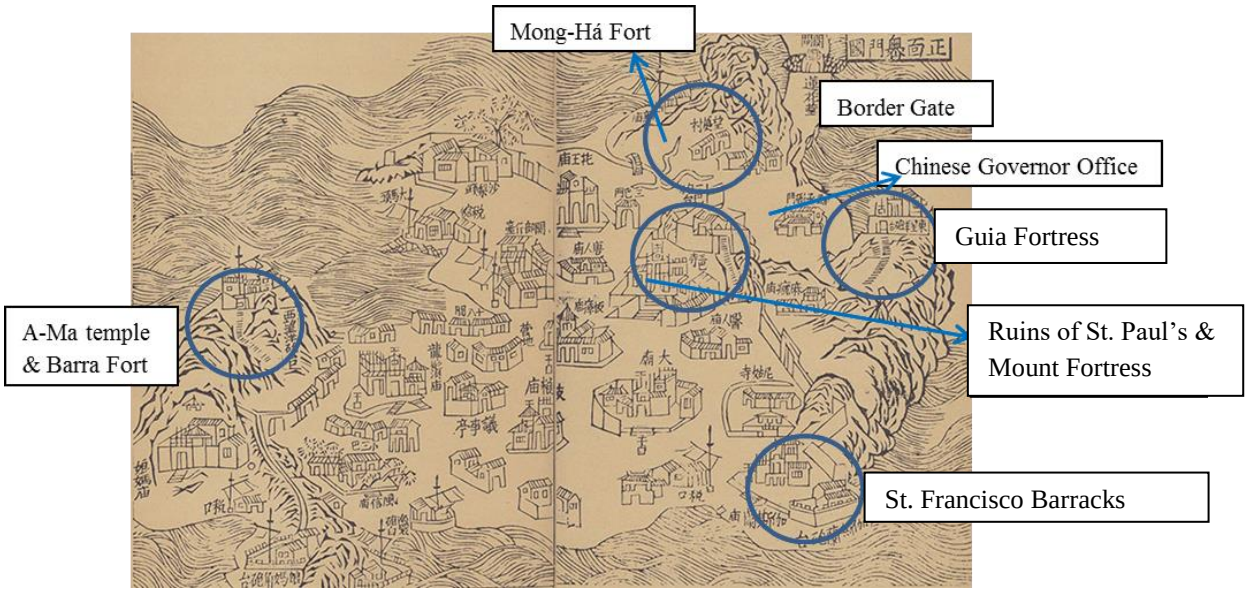

Figure 5: Macau Map in 18th Century (Yin & Zhang, 1751)
Note: The authors added blue circles to denote key colonial military installations promoted as major sites for tourism including the Chinese governor's office.

The historical figure displayed in Figure 5 shows that the Portuguese fortified walls and fortresses divide Macau into two cities, that is, from Mount Fortress to the A-Ma temple, now known as the 'Historic Centre of Macau'. The Chinese governor's office is located near the Chinese Border Gate. The remoteness of the Portuguese government from the Chinese population and the residential pattern of segregation created by the fortifications from the 16th to the 19th century suggest that Macau really belonged to China (Chou, 2010; Hao, 2011). Today, what remains of the border fortification is described in a more nuanced way:

> "*This surviving segment of the city's defence structures, built as early as 1569, is a remnant of an early Portuguese tradition of constructing defensive walls around their port settlements, done also in Africa and India…*" (The Section of the Old City Walls, MGTO 2019a).

There are two noteworthy observations from the above description. First, it does not mention the two communities were segregated. Secondly, and more importantly, while the wall was strategically built to protect and socially exclude the Portuguese community from the Chinese, the allusion to "*the city's defence structure*" contributes to decolonizing the colonial identity of Macau. P5 explained the significance of this history in the following way: "*for us Chinese living in Macau, we know of and understand this Macau culture, but we don't live in*

that culture. So, we do not really feel we are, or we were part of the Portuguese culture". As we have pointed out above, this respondent underlines the sense that the Portuguese had lost their power to define Macau long before the handover. This finding reinforces Morgan and Pritchard (1998) argument that produced images reveals the social motives and positions of those who promote them and by extension those who consume such images.

To further decolonize Macau, the many military conflicts that ensued between the Portuguese and the Chinese have been largely silenced. Rather, our analysis reveals a deliberate use of metaphors in discourse to portray a harmonious relationship in Sino-Portuguese trading activities. Indeed, while many of the historical Portuguese fortresses have become popular tourist attractions (see Figure 5), they are described as necessary precautions against foreign invaders. This is evident at the Barra Fort, where a sign reads, "*[c]ompleted in 1629 on the site of an older cannon battery, Barra fort successfully protected the bay at the entrance to the Inner Harbour against the Dutch in 1622*" (Barra Fort, MGTO, 2019a). Victory against the Dutch invaders suggest friendship rather than conflict between China and Portugal. In addition, some the forts have been repurposed, and their interpretation sanitized around the time of the handover to remove any sense of conflict. For example, Barra Fort was converted to Pousada de Sao Tiago, a luxury hotel adjacent to A-Ma Temple. Many military installations are also not included in the city's heritage tourism offerings (Hao, 2011). Silencing such conflicts from Macau's colonial past suggest that the Portuguese influence there has been restricted to only the tangible aspects of Macau's heritage both in its designation as a World Heritage Site and its status as an 'East meets West' destination.

Our analysis further supports previous studies (e.g., Smith, 2009) that suggest ethnicity plays an important role in identity-making. To further decolonize Macau and create its image as an enduring international port in China, the Macanese people (the Portuguese creole) are largely absent from the city's marketing materials, as well as in its depictions of the city's population subgroups. As part of the decolonization project, the word 'Macanese' is only used to describe Macau's fusion food. Indeed, P10 (who considers herself Macanese-Chinese) explained:

> "*it is now more than 20 years since the handover, the government is good for us. I can see more Macanese cultural activities are allowed, but I and even my daughter already decided to be Chinese. [Many of] those who viewed themselves as Portuguese have now left.*"

4.3 SARs' power dynamics behind 'East meets West'

The different transformations (re)produced and maintained in the SARs, project Hong Kong as a global city rooted in Western capitalism and Macau as a Chinese international port. This section discusses the SARs' newly acquired PRC identities to understand the power dynamics behind the decolonization process (Foucault, 1982). The fact that European tourists have never been the dominant source market for the SARs, the growing dependence of the SARs on Chinese tourists and the increasing global status of the PRC make their postcolonial tourism promotion highly ambivalent and fragmented (Bhabha, 1990).

The PRC's political identity since the 1990s and the SARs' increasing dependence on Chinese mainland tourists suggests although Hong Kong's stand-alone identity is stronger compared to that of Macau, both places cannot completely deny their SAR status. Hence, it is a common practice for Hong Kong to show 'respect' to the PRC, while retaining its 'East meets West' positioning for tourism promotion, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Government House (HKTB, 2019a).

English version	Chinese version
Located in Mid-Levels on Upper Albert Road, this colonial gem was the former official residence of 25 British governors of Hong Kong prior to the handover in 1997.	*香港礼宾府即前总督府，直至1997年香港回归祖国前，曾经是25位香港总督的官邸.* (Government house was a home for 25 Hong Kong governors prior to the reunification to the motherland in 1997 - *translated by the author*).

Table 2 presents the English and Chinese text descriptions of the tourist plaque on the Hong Kong Government House. While a strong sense of patriotism is promoted in the Chinese version with the use of '*Hong Kong governors*' rather than '*British governors*', the word '*colonial gem*' in the English version creates possible connections between Hong Kong and its colonial past for international audiences. Here, tourism promotion reflects power dynamics (Morgan & Pritchard, 1998) and not a market segmentation approach as P6 and P8 claimed in the interviews.

Although Hong Kong does make some effort to show 'respect' to China, the 'PRC' is largely silenced within Hong Kong's tourism promotional materials. Within all the collected materials, there are few explicit annotated text directly related to Hong Kong's pre-colonial history. Only the historical accounts of the handover draw attention to Hong Kong's current political status as a city in the PRC. The extant literature suggests national symbols are essential to foster a sense of togetherness and are important in creating 'independent identity'

in postcolonial regions (Loomba, 2005; Smith, 2009). The present study came to a different conclusion, as there was a 'significant absence' of national Chinese symbols being projected to promote tourism to Hong Kong. There is reason to believe this seemingly nonchalant attitude towards national symbols is closely associated with Hong Kong's recent identity struggles and anti-communist attitudes (Foucault, 1972). When asked about the reason for not including PRC cultural resources in promoting Hong Kong, all the Hong Kong participants were surprised by the question and retorted "*why [do] we need to include PRC symbol? We have our own*". This narrative signifies the taken-for-granted resistance towards the national identity. P6 explained that: "*international feeling is always essential. We are a World City, not a Chinese city in terms of [tourism] promotion. We are unique and PRC symbols do not add any value to our uniqueness in tourism*." This desire to be distinct from the mainland starkly contrasts with prevailing destination images of mainland Chinese tourists to Hong Kong reported by Hsu and Song (2013). P14 handled this dilemma in the following way, "*we have a different system to China. That makes us unique, I really cannot see us promoting HK as communist. We are not*." This anti-communist attitude and the perception of China as alien to the global capitalist order shows Hong Kong's desire not to be projected as the 'Orient' but as HongKonese (Hsiung, 2000; Said, 2003).

Macau does not share much of Hong Kong's desire to project a distinctive identity. Before the handover, Macau relied on Hong Kong to construct its identity and now it relies on China (Hao, 2011). P7 explained why this is the case: "*Hong Kong does not need China as much as Macau does. Macau is more obviously Chinese.*" Since the handover, Macau's image has improved largely due to the efforts of the Chinese government. The city's troubled image as an isolated 'gangster' society has been proactively transformed and repositioned as 'Asia's Las Vegas'. Given that Macau's economy largely depends on tourism, there is a general view that the PRC can always control its economic development through border entry. For example, P15 said "*we depend on the central government's policy in terms of visas as well as whether the government could sustain the economic boom on the mainland*." Macau's economic dependence upon China easily ensures decolonization. Although social-cultural issues have increased due to the city's dependence on the casino gaming industry, the avowed intention of the central government is to ensure economic diversification as an effective measure to make Macau a "*World Tourism and Leisure Centre*" (MGTO, 2019a). By bringing to the fore Macau's economic diversification rather than the identity conflicts in Hong Kong, Macau has been depoliticized and the area developed further as an entertainment city for Chinese tourists. Liu *et al*.'s (2021) study suggest the MGTO's approach is having an

impact as Macau's destination image among Chinese mainland tourist shifts from 'culture, history and art' to 'leisure and recreation'.

Hence, the most significant difference between Hong Kong and Macau's decolonization is the latter's growing efforts to promote its Chinese identity to enhance its tourism appeal. As heritage often reflects wider power struggles (Zhang *et al*., 2018), numerous projected PRC cultural images for tourism indicate that its Chinese identity has been enmeshed in Macau's social and cultural fabric (Smith, 2009). The classic example is General Ye Ting's Former Residence, which was (re)produced as a new attraction in 2014. A plaque on the building reads: "*The late General Ye Ting, a prominent military leader and one of the pioneers of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, had spent seven years living in Macao"* (MGTO 2019a). Macau's less hostile attitude towards communist China and its desire to become less isolated also discursively contribute to its identity-making. Moreover, while both Hong Kong and Macau received numerous gifts from several Chinese mainland provinces to commemorative their handovers, the Handover Gift Museum was only constructed in Macau. The words of China's ex-president, Zeming Jiang "*create [a] new arena for Macau*", are boldly inscribed on the museum's entrance to underline Macau's bright future under the PRC.

Suffice it to say at this point that Macau not only relies on China but also on Hong Kong. Macau's position in the world was largely constructed by Hong Kong before the handover and the city has always been considered as the 'little brother' of the superior Hong Kong (Hao, 2011). Macau was historically the holiday destination for 'busy' HongKongners to gamble and relax (Chou, 2010). Even though this dependence has declined since the handover, Macau's limited tourist offerings means that the city still needs Hong Kong to accommodate tourists. P10 explained that "*[w]e always work closely with Hong Kong. A typical tour package is always around 4 or 5 days. Macau tour is always on the last day for Chinese tourists*". However, their SAR status, booming economy and rapid urbanization since the handover makes Macau increasingly more like Hong Kong in maintaining its multicultural diversity rather than becoming 'just' another Chinese city (du Cros, 2009). As such, Macau's 'East meets West' discourse is an integral part of its Chinese identity as "*the growing openness of China to our multicultural identity is important*" (P9). Here, P16 expressed, "*the central government seems to use Macau as a successful example of 'one country, two system' to Hong Kong*". This dilemma of 'in-between' Hong Kong and China is a feature of Macau's decolonization process, which is fundamentally different from Hong Kong's stand-alone identity.

5. Conclusion

Adopting an 'East meets West' tourism promotional strategy and/or positioning has long been recognized as a unique way to showcase many postcolonial destinations in Asia. However, such promotional efforts are based on a rationale that strongly contradicts with the decolonization projects, which primarily focus on rejecting the influence of Western colonization and on (re)crafting an independent 'East' identity (Loomba, 2005). Situated in the paradoxical relation between 'East meets West' and decolonization projects, this study focused on the (re)production and maintenance of the postcolonial heritage discourses during the decolonization process in Hong Kong and Macau to uncover the rationale and power dynamics behind 'East meets West' tourism promotion. Theoretically, the paper contributes to understandings of the subject in two ways.

First, it contextually enriches the theorisation of decolonization, postcolonial heritage discourses and identity-making in tourism (e.g., Bryce & Čaušević, 2019; Chambers & Buzinde, 2015; Echtner & Prasad, 2003; Hoobler, 2006). Here, decolonization is not a metaphor but a lived process that entails (re)production and maintenance of both 'East' and 'West' heritage discourses in the changing postcolonial environment (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Heritage is not a static phenomenon consumed by tourists from Western colonizers (e.g., Echtner & Prasad, 2003), but malleable cultural resources for changing socio-political needs, including identity-making (Smith, 2009). The results of the study suggest that the origins of 'East meets West' tourism promotion differentiation and standardization between Hong Kong and Macau vary according to the PRC's interpretation of the 'one country two systems' arrangement. It is also the result of the power relations between the PRC, UK, Portugal, and Hong Kong and Macau and the increasing rise of the PRC as a global economic and political powerhouse since the handovers. By exploring the power struggles and changes in socio-political conditions throughout the SARs' decolonization histories, the paper has investigated the complexities of restaging colonial heritage in postcolonial tourism contexts. Here, the paper does not assume a simple binary between the colonizer and colonized in the examination of tourists from the Western colonial powers traveling to former colonized exotic regions. Rather, the paper challenges the prevalent approach in postcolonial tourism research and provides perspectives that shows the rationale behind (re)producing 'East' and 'West' heritage discourses in the transnational postcolonial Chinese context.

Second, the study offers fresh historical and geopolitical insights into postcolonial heritage and tourism management and marketing in critical cross-cultural studies (Bryce & Čaušević, 2019; d'Hauteserre, 2011; Hall & Tucker, 2004; Said, 2003; Zhang *et al*., 2018).

By viewing heritage as an integral part of tourism marketing and identity-making, the paper finds that identity is affected by negotiating the Self, the Orient and their relative positions to the West in the global capitalist order and is influenced by the regions' changing economic and political power (Darwin,1999). This reflects differences between Hong Kong's stand-alone identity and Macau's 'in-between' identity, and their varied struggles with their emerging Chinese identity during the decolonization process.

From a managerial point of view, the findings of this study pose an interesting dilemma for destination managers wishing to use standardized images projected by multifaceted places. On one hand, while postcolonial destinations are complex multifaceted places, there is a requirement in the competitive marketplace that at times abridges this complexity and reduces it to a simple overall marketing message. If postcolonial cities highlight hybrid cultures in their overall images, the message is clear and readily understood (Wong *et. al*., 2016; Zhang *et al*., 2019). On the other hand, however, our findings suggest this cultural hybridity may well fail to capture the distinctiveness of the place, resulting in a similar brand image and a lack of differentiation. To overcome competition in the tourism marketplace, postcolonial destinations, especially in Asia, can give prominence to their unique local or national identity. Such an approach accounts for the structural changes occurring in contemporary postcolonial societies because of globalization. Based on our findings, destination managers should also be cautious when incorporating the place character in their overall marketing strategies. Place marketing in tourism assumes that images can be targeted at specific markets that have been identified. This same assumption does not hold true for Hong Kong and Macau where there is a trend towards developing marketing strategies and promotional imagery not aimed at the dominant source markets. This puts destination managers in both cities in a strategically difficult situation. To overcome this challenge, target markets need to be constantly assessed using efficient, high-yield marketing research.

The problem, which destination managers in Hong Kong and Macau face in both the Asian and global tourism marketplace is applying the principles of strategic marketing planning amid intense local power relations. The findings of this study indicate that the tourism promotion strategies of both cities, particularly that of Hong Kong, are affected by power struggles between interest groups, pressure groups and the central government. For tourists, the result can be a confusing mix of promotion programmes and a blurred positioning. There is, therefore, the need for consultation with all stakeholders to encourage useful collaboration and success in the strategic marketing planning process. This will encourage the creation of an agreed positioning and unique selling point, so that marketers

establish from the very start what exactly differentiate the destination from rivals offering similar or alternative attractions.

Finally, the study reveals the socio-political context of tourism marketing management as it uncovers the complexity of managing and marketing postcolonial destinations. On one hand, destination marketers must craft and communicate unique, appealing stories embedded in multicultural heritage attractions and on the other hand, these marketing professionals must also produce tourism promotion, which must serve national decolonization initiatives. By comparing the subtle differences in the marketing communication mix employed Macau and Hong Kong and discussing their associated implications, the study has shown just how inseparable tourism promotion is from its social-political contexts. Clearly, destination marketers must balance the marketing and business imperatives of their communication messages with wider social and political considerations within the destination and adjust their marketing messages accordingly.

Whilst our paper reports important managerial implications for marketing action, it has some limitations. The study largely offers a supply-side evaluation of tourism imagery projected by Hong Kong and Macau. This is because previous research on heritage identity-making has tended to focus on the role played by consumers. Our study specifically focused on the (re)production and maintenance of heritage discourses, examining imageries projected by official tourism agencies, tour operators, attraction management teams and cultural-related government departments. The opinions of local cultural and tourism stakeholders also supplement the empirical data as they are not only local practitioners but also consumers for identity-making in the region. It will be important for future studies to add to this work and explore in detail tourism stakeholders' identities and their everyday work lives.

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