

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

3
4 **Abstract**

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

17

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

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22 **1. Introduction**

23 Tourism promotion and destination marketing professionals have always been eager to
24 tell a unique story to attract international tourists. The ‘East meets West’ marketing cliché is
25 one of the dominant narratives deployed to fascinate tourists. The idea has been applied in the
26 promotional materials of multicultural cities like London, as well as regions located between
27 Europe and Asia (e.g., Turkey), and for many postcolonial destinations including India,
28 Singapore and Malaysia (Bandyopadhyay & Morais, 2005; Chang, 2005). In fact, the ‘East
29 meets West’ marketing cliché has been so widely used in so many different contexts that it
30 has ceased to have a precise meaning. It has been broadly applied to denote multiculturalism
31 or even ‘old meets new’. Thus, Sarajevo and Marrakech are examples of destinations that
32 employ the ‘East meets West’ marketing cliché because they offer a mixture of contemporary
33 heritage buildings and assets that attract tourists and create a sense of place (Bellingham,
34 2013; Kelly, 2015). However, for postcolonial destinations, the idea of ‘East meets West’
35 showcases their unique multicultural and transnational heritages embedded in colonial
36 discourses. Arguably, any tourism promotional efforts are based on a rationale that strongly
37 contrasts with that of decolonization projects, which primarily focus on rejecting the
38 influence of Western colonization and (re)crafting an independent ‘East’ identity (Loomba,
39 2005). While the binary division between East and West has long been an important topic in
40 tourism-related research (see for example Chang, 2005; du Cros, 2004; Henderson, 2004;
41 Chang & Yeoh, 1999; Teo, 2003; Wong, McKercher & Li, 2016; Okano & Wong, 2004),
42 there remains little understanding about the paradoxical connection between decolonization
43 and the ‘East meets West’ concept. Many questions remain unanswered, including: is ‘East
44 meets West’ tourism promotion the same for all postcolonial destinations; what are the
45 relationships between ‘East meets West’ and decolonization projects; and most importantly,
46 what has been (re)produced and maintained to support the ‘East meets West’ promotion, and
47 what has been silenced during the decolonization process?

48 By focusing on the idea of ‘East meets West’ as both popular tourism promotion and
49 one of history’s grandest narratives (Bryce & Čaušević, 2019), this study investigates the
50 extent to which the (re)production and maintenance of ‘East and West’ heritage discourses
51 during the decolonization process explain the discursive identity-making and rationale behind
52 the use of such tourism promotion. Heritage tourism has become the primary medium to
53 showcase unique stories of people and places, largely due to the strong connections between
54 heritage, identity and tourism (du Cros & McKercher, 2020; Frew & White, 2011; Palmer,
55 1999). In terms of postcolonial identity-making, one of the greatest challenges is selecting

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

59 Some critical postcolonial scholars (e.g., d’Hautesserre, 2011; Hall & Tucker, 2004)
60 have focused on how asymmetric power relations between colonizers and colonies
61 complicate cultural imagery and on how tourism reinforces such imagery. It is suggested that
62 even though decolonization and subsequent independence seem widely ‘successful’, tourism
63 has prohibited former colonies from defining a national identity of their own (Morgan &
64 Pritchard, 1998). Indeed, many destinations have combined their indigenous culture with an
65 imposed Western culture as unique selling points to attract affluent tourists, mostly from
66 former colonizers (e.g., McKercher & Decosta, 2007; Carrigan, 2011). Recent critical
67 postcolonial tourism scholars (e.g., Bryce & Čaušević, 2019; Chambers & Buzinde, 2015)
68 have argued that past studies primarily focused on understanding colonial heritage as a static
69 phenomenon consumed by tourists from Western colonizers; hence, they fail to decolonize
70 Western epistemologies in knowledge-making. Beyond the binary between the colonizer and
71 colonized, it is necessary to view cultural heritage as transnational and trans-spatial in nature
72 (Zhang *et al.*, 2018). In achieving the “production of difference” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett,
73 1998: 52), which is crucial for creating unique identification, meanings underlying the idea of
74 ‘East meets West’ are important. However, these meanings have been largely overlooked.

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

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

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

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

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

123 explores various ways of managing decolonization and ‘East meets West’ promotional
124 messages for postcolonial destinations.

125

126 **2. Literature review**

127 ***2.1 Postcoloniality and decolonization***

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

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

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

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

181

182 ***2.2 ‘East meets West’ tourism promotion and decolonization***

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

190 their colonial past as cultural tourism products (du Cros & McKercher, 2020), while others
191 have examined how the construction of national identity and destination images intended to
192 appeal to tourists from colonial metropolises portray colonizers as explorers (Echtner &
193 Prasad, 2003; Frew & White, 2011). Chang (2005) referred to the growing perception of the
194 New Asia identity whereby former colonial territories in the region conjure images of
195 exoticism and modernity in their marketing campaigns. Henderson (2004), Chang and Yeoh
196 (1999) found in their studies that both Singapore and Malaysia market themselves as world
197 cities with a contrasting blend of their Asian and Western cultures to satisfy the needs of
198 regional and Western tourists. Teo (2003) looked at residents' dissatisfaction with the
199 imagineering of Penang (Malaysia) to reflect its British, Chinese, Indian and Malay cultural
200 heritages. In contrast, critical postcolonial researchers argue that the promotion of
201 postcolonial destinations is transnational in nature and should really move beyond a simple
202 dichotomy between tourists from former colonial powers and formerly colonized countries
203 (Bryce & Čaušević, 2019). One way to do this, especially in Asia, is by understanding the
204 complex and contradictory relations between popular 'East meets West' imagery and the
205 decolonization process.

206 In discussing the 'East meets West' marketing efforts of postcolonial destinations in
207 Asia one cannot avoid the idea of reindigenisation. Here, creating a static, timeless and
208 unchanging 'East' is crucial in fulfilling the exotic imagination of the Western tourists
209 (Carrigan, 2011). For example, Bandyopadhyay and Morais (2005) examined the differences
210 between how India is represented in US tourism media and how it is represented by the
211 Indian government. They found that while the US media represent India as primitive, the
212 government's projected image obscures the country's colonial past. Echtner and Prasad
213 (2003) analyzed the content of Chinese, Thai and India tourism marketing in North American
214 travel brochures and concluded that the marketing of postcolonial territories in Asia
215 intimatised the master-servant relationship during the colonial era. More specifically, they
216 found that firstly, oriental people wore stoic facial expressions in unpleasant rural settings
217 and secondly, gateway cities were meeting places for the ancient and modern, old and new
218 and staging points to enter the unchanged Orient beyond. Indeed, the discourse of 'East meets
219 West' fundamentally signifies the inferior position of the East. The phrase 'meeting the West'
220 and 'discover new land' in tourism promotion further confirms this underlying binary
221 position (Said, 2003). Because the Western form of consciousness and global asymmetric
222 developments are at the center of the international tourism industry, Hollinshead (2004: 31)
223 contends that "tourism and imperialism are unavoidably mutually reinforcing entities". [From](#)

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

226 The ineffective agency (or lack thereof) of postcolonial territories in decolonization and
227 identity-building is further complicated in the tourism marketing arena. Difficult questions
228 abound for destination marketing organisations regarding what aspects of history and culture
229 should be presented and what aspects to leave out as part of the decolonization process. Add
230 to this difficulty the desire of postcolonial destinations to be unique, selection of tourism
231 images and their accompanying text, and the discourses underlying their uniqueness motives
232 and imagery in advertised messages, and the task becomes even more complex (d’Hauteserre,
233 2004; Echtner & Prasad, 2003).

234 Notwithstanding, many postcolonial territories are eager to implement their
235 decolonization projects and showcase their independent identities, which includes claiming
236 their authority in repositioning their destination images. Clearly, image creation is not a
237 simple linear process for many postcolonial destinations given the unequal power balance
238 that characterizes the global system (Morgan & Pritchard, 1998). Any such initiative often
239 involves re-interpreting cultural heritage to craft a new sense of national solidarity and
240 creating an emotional connection to the nation in the decolonization process. In instances
241 where a pre-colonial ‘golden period’ existed, ethnicity and sacrifices during the anti-
242 colonization process become common themes (Anderson, 1991; Smith, 2009). However,
243 most postcolonial nations cannot only rely on their pre-colonial and anti-colonization
244 movements in identity-making; they also deploy colonial messages. Postcolonial identity-
245 making is fundamentally contradictory in this sense because the (re)production and
246 maintenance of heritage discourses are always in the process of negotiation since deciding
247 which story to tell has no simple answer (Zhang *et al.*, 2018). The trans-national/spatial
248 nature of international tourism further complicates the identity-making process (Zhang *et al.*,
249 2018). This ambivalence shows that the postcolonial mind appropriates whatever it deems fit
250 (Chadha, 2006). The fragmented and contradictory postcolonial identity-making process goes
251 beyond the assumed binaries between the colonizer and colonized and should, therefore, be
252 contextualized within the trans-national/spatial relations between decolonization and any
253 ‘East meets West’ tourism marketing.

254

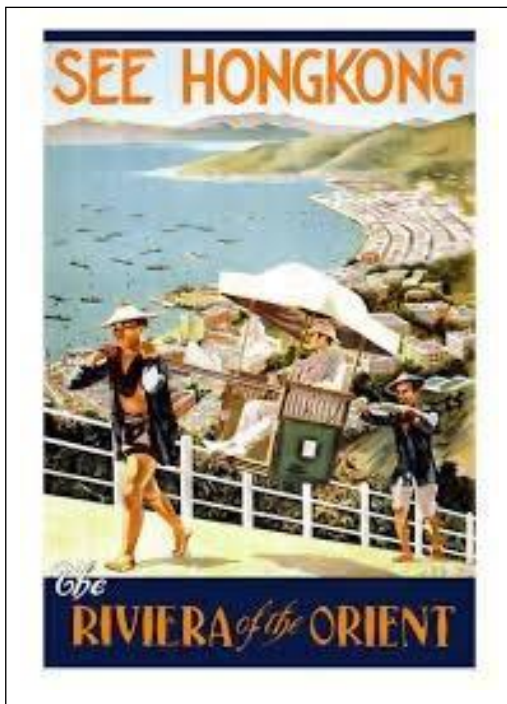
255 ***2.3 The context***

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

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

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

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



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

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

311 (MGTO, 2017). This is reflected in several marketing slogans used to promote Macau such as
312 ‘City of Culture’ (2005), ‘Experience Macau in Your Own Style’ (2010-2012) and ‘Touching
313 Moments, Experience Macau’ (2012- to date) (Kong, du Cros, & Ong, 2015; Liu *et al.*,
314 2021).

315 For both cities, colonial cultural heritage attractions are used to convey a sense of
316 nostalgia and are deemed essential to the SARs’ international tourism demand and for their
317 growing Chinese mainland market (Okan & Wong, 2004; Wong *et al.*, 2016). Indeed, the
318 idea of ‘East meets West’ gives competitive advantages to both SARs and creates a notion of
319 a global and multicultural city that is markedly different from other Chinese cities (du Cros,
320 2009; Henderson, 2002). Such fragmented and complex desires embedded within both SARs’
321 Western and Eastern heritage discourses during the decolonization process highlight a need to
322 understand the (re)production and maintenance of these discourses in both identity-making
323 and in tourism marketing strategies.

324

325 **3. Methodology**

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

345 the wider frame of historical and contemporary (re)production and maintenance of ‘East
346 meets West’ [identities in relation to the decolonization process to capture discursive identity-](#)
347 [making \(Foucault, 1972; Parker, 1992\) and the rationale behind tourism promotion.](#)

348 CDA assumes social realities are predominately made up of texts to be read and
349 understood. Therefore, an in-depth qualitative data collection aims to capture “discourse of
350 possibility” and involves multi-sourced textual data to understand discursive texts informing
351 Hong Kong’s and Macau’s ‘East meets West’ tourism promotion (see for e.g., Caton &
352 Santos, 2009). Textual data were collected in the form of on-site brochures, visitor
353 interpretation boards and web-based promotional materials created by the HKTB and MGTO,
354 which are the tourism agencies charged with marketing their product offerings. Also included
355 in the analysis are materials produced by tour operators, attraction management teams and
356 culture-related government departments (e.g., Antiques and Monuments Office, and Cultural
357 Affairs Bureau). These tourism-related texts were further supported with SARs’ government
358 documents (e.g., tourism planning policies, Chief Executive public speeches), as well as
359 [historical images and texts, to capture the socio-political changes during the decolonization](#)
360 [process \(Morgan & Pritchard, 1998\).](#) All the materials were collected between 2015 and
361 2019. As discourse refers to language as a form of practice (Parker, 1992), both simplified
362 Chinese and English-language texts were collected to reveal the transnational nature of
363 postcolonial identity-making.

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

379 existing linguistic resources within their everyday life in SARs (Talja, 1999). For CDA, the
 380 objective of analyzing transcripts is not to explore the authentic meanings of respondents’
 381 narratives but to understand social-culturally constructed statements in the respondents’
 382 accounts to examine the data on a macro-level (Talja, 1999).

383
 384 **Table 1. Profile of interview participants**
 385

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

386
 387
 388 Textual analysis followed the CDA approach. After data familiarization, the analysis
 389 concentrated on statements of the past and units of discourse, which gave meaning to define
 390 the objects (people and place) in contemporary SARs (Parker, 1992). Next, the focus shifted
 391 to understanding the relations between statements and groups of statements. This process was
 392 particularly useful as it helped to understand pre-existing themes underlying the contested
 393 identity of either SAR (Foucault, 1972). Subsequently, CDA concentrated on how the
 394 examined texts and their statements work to persuade or to produce “effects of truth” and
 395 how identity-making has been normalized to become ‘realities’ beyond tourism marketing
 396 texts. Foucault (1972) suggested that the notion of absence is particularly useful to
 397 understand power struggles as ‘significant silence’ across various statements. Following on
 398 from this, evaluation was made of the content of images that show power struggles behind
 399 (re)production and maintenance of the ‘East meets West’ tourism positioning during the

400 decolonization process. Comparing empirical data from both Hong Kong and Macau is useful
401 to draw out themes that capture the transnational nature of identity-making in tourism.

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

414

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

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

427

428

429 ***4.1 Dominant storylines behind 'East meets West' promotion***

430 Hong Kong and Macau share similarities, including their Chinese ethnicity, Cantonese
431 background, Western colonization and coastal locations marginalized in ancient Chinese
432 history (Carroll, 2007; Hao, 2011). For the Chinese government, the key aim is to decolonize
433 the region and to (re)connect the SARs with the Chinese identity politically and socio-

434 culturally (People's Education Press, 2003). However, postcolonial Hong Kong and Macau
435 have different desires: the contradictory desires for *continuity* and *change* behind their 'East
436 meets West' market positions potentially signify different routes to assimilation.

437 In Hong Kong, the central question for its postcolonial destiny has always been whether
438 the 'one country, two systems' principle adopted after the handover could effectively enable
439 communist China to sustain the city's developed capitalist system (Choy, 2007; Hsiung,
440 2000). A strong desire to retain the level of capitalist prosperity makes the discourse of
441 continuity pervasive. It also shows the city's desire to safeguard its cosmopolitan identity in
442 the global capitalist system (Darwin, 1999). Hence, its 'East meets West' marketing must
443 support such initiatives. Here, the brand identity since the handover, "*Hong Kong- Asia's*
444 *World City*", defines its 'East meets West' uniqueness as "*a pluralistic cosmopolitan city*"
445 (BrandHong Kong, 2021; HKTb, 2019a). Even though Hong Kong reverted to China in
446 1997, visiting an 'unchanged Hong Kong' has always been a surprising and important
447 component. As P1 said in the interviews, "*my foreign clients always asked me about Hong*
448 *Kong's post-handover changes. I told them Hong Kong has not changed much. Our way of*
449 *life is the same before and after the handover. Hong Kong is still a metropolis*". P12
450 reiterated that even for the Chinese tourists, "*the colonial attractions are always important*
451 *for them*". In terms of destination marketing, many participants saw the handover period as a
452 "*hush period*". Both P1 and P12 alluded to that fact that not much has changed in Hong Kong
453 since the handover. P6 captures the feeling of 'unchanged Hong Kong' within the tourist
454 trade, "*all our early promotional messages were to show Hong Kong has never changed even*
455 *it is now back to China*". Furthermore, the 'East meets West' project which portrays
456 HongKongnese as sophisticated and educated, in contrast with the undeveloped Chinese
457 mainland remains important for many participants (Choy, 2007; Hsiung, 2000). The
458 narrowing gap between Hong Kong and mega Chinese cities since the handover suggests that
459 positioning Hong Kong as an unchanged, superior, international world city is important not
460 only for its economic competitive advantage (Tung, 1999) but also for its identity-making.

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

468 mega cities on the mainland but is aware that “*the Motherland can bring great opportunities*
469 *for development in Macau*” (Gov.Mo, 2000). Nearly all our Macau participants showed the
470 same understanding of Macau’s destination marketing strategy. P13 summarized this
471 position: “*we really do not want to make Macau a colony especially for us Chinese, it makes*
472 *us start to be proud of our identity. This guided all cultural activities long before the*
473 *handover.*”

474 Our analysis show that the decolonization project has engendered a strong discourse of
475 harmony, which interprets Macau’s past as a peaceful Chinese international port. [This](#)
476 [discourse of harmony underlies Macau’s ‘East meets West’ marketing strategy.](#) It reinforces
477 Macau’s identity and explicitly formulated to fit to “*a harmonious mix of Chinese and*
478 *Portuguese cultures*” (MGTO, 2019a). This identity not only explains Macau’s obvious
479 multicultural diversity, but also creates the conditions for the city to act as an intermediary for
480 business collaboration between China and Portuguese-speaking countries (MacaoSAR,
481 2019). To entrench its post-handover identity of being a Chinese international entrepôt,
482 decolonization has focused on (re)interpreting Macau as a Chinese city rather than an isolated
483 and rustic Portuguese colony. Not surprisingly, analysis of Macau’s tourism promotional
484 materials in both Chinese and English found no actual use of the word “colony”. This
485 suggests that Macau’s pre-colonial and colonial histories have been (re)produced to
486 accommodate its emerging Chinese identity.

487

488 *4.2 Transforming the colonial period and redefining ‘East meets West’ tourism positioning*

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

497 In Hong Kong, the ‘East meets West’ identity roots the city in both British and Chinese
498 cultures. However, as Hong Kong’s cosmopolitan identity developed from the decolonization
499 of the 1960s (Choy, 2007), the increasingly strong sense of HongKonese identity made the
500 city neither Chinese nor British. All participants reflexively linked the sense of being
501 HongKonese to the discourse of the Lion Rock, ‘*the spirit of Hong Kong*’, which symbolizes

502 how both legal and illegal immigrants who left the mainland during the civil war and after the
503 establishment of the PRC, came together to build a better life in Hong Kong (Carroll, 2007).
504 A tourism promotional material describes in detail the Lion Rock as the core of the very
505 notion of HongKonese:

506
507 *Lion Rock (495 m) is one of the most recognizable natural landmarks in Hong Kong and*
508 *has become a symbol of the hardworking spirit of Hongkongers...as a witness to Hong*
509 *Kong's remarkable transformation from a rustic outpost of China to a dynamic world city.*
510 *Beneath Lion Rock has been the name of a song and a TV series about the lives of*
511 *ordinary Hong Kong people* (Lion Rock, HKTb, 2019a).

512
513 In linking identity-making with ordinary local people, this description shows how Lion Rock
514 has become an important cultural resource, evidencing Hong Kong's identity as a place
515 transformed from "a rustic outpost" to "a world city".

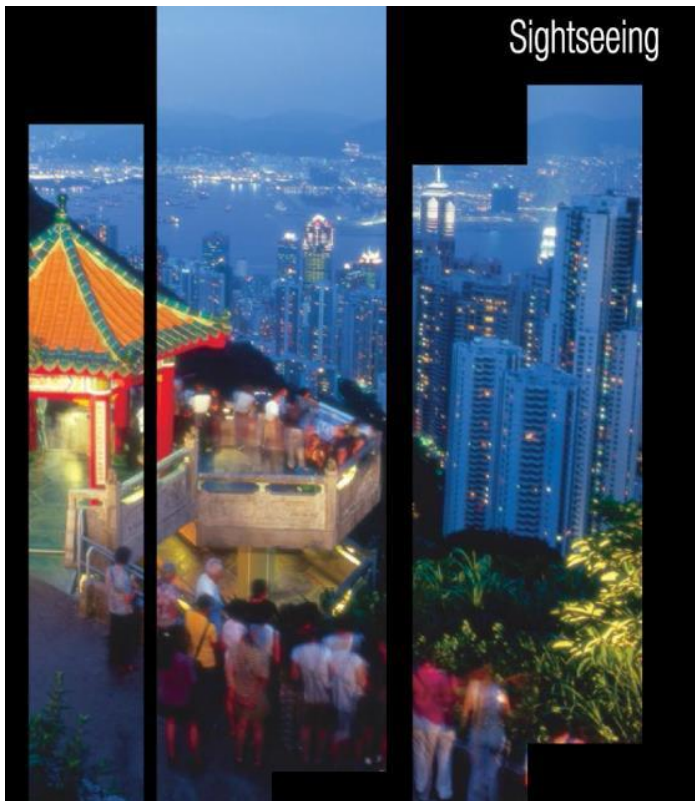
516 Indeed, many tourism promotional materials follow the same discourse of Hong Kong's
517 transformation from "barren island" to cosmopolitan city. Thus, it sets up the role for its pre-
518 colonial Chineseness of being a "barren rock to thriving Far Eastern outpost" (HKTb,
519 2019b). In addition to silencing its pre-colonial Chineseness, this idea of a transformed Hong
520 Kong also restricts its history to the 150-year colonial period time frame (Said, 2003). The
521 narrative from all interview participants that "Hong Kong has around 150 years of history"
522 strongly endorses the discourse that the city's success is solely attributable to the British and
523 that Hong Kong is defined by this colonial discourse (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Visiting the city's
524 historical sites is described as a journey "from a far-flung outpost of imperial China to the
525 culturally diverse crossroads of a shrinking world." (HKTb, 2019a). As a result, Hong
526 Kong's Chinese heritage has been conceptualized as simply a backdrop to its cosmopolitan
527 success under its 'East meets West' positioning (see Figure 2). This colonial modernization
528 view seems to suggest that Hong Kong's pre-colonial Chineseness is remote and undeveloped
529 and has been decolonized in contrast to its contemporary life.

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

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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).

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

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564
565 **Figure 3: The Peak** (The Peak 2012)

566
567 Figure 3 is an on-site promotional material that portrays the exotic and romantic image
568 of the Peak, Hong Kong's most visited attraction and one of the most important colonial
569 heritage sites, from which local Chinese were prohibited entering during the colonial period
570 (Carroll, 2007). The brochure recounts that "[f]rom 1904, The Peak was designated an
571 exclusive residential area reserved only for expatriates although this practice ended in 1947"
572 (The Peak, 2012). Surprisingly, the conflicting colonial stories between the Chinese and the
573 British were omitted. Indeed, the notable absence of the Western passenger in the sedan
574 chair (it is shown empty) also shows how conflicts have been silenced (in contrast to the
575 image projected in Figure 1). Moreover, the fact that the term 'expatriates' is used instead of
576 colonizers shows the strong desire to (re)produce a peaceful colonial period and support
577 Hong Kong's projected image as an unchanged international city. Here, 'East meets West' is
578 not just a blend or hybrid identity, but it also conveys to the individual a rebirth of Hong
579 Kong's unchanged global city identity.

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

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

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

598
599 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
600 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
601 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
602 situation between China and foreign trade, the Ming government set aside a southwest part
603 of the Macau Peninsula to the Portuguese and other foreign merchants to live and trade.
604 Macau had become a Chinese leading trading port before the 19th century and had also
605 become an important international port in Asia. - *translated by the lead author*) (Macao
606 World Heritage, MGTO 2019b).

607
608 Although Macau's historical center with its Portuguese colonial architecture is now listed as a
609 World Heritage Site, the above Chinese description of its origins implies the vision
610 underlying this 'East meet West' identity is more closely associated with Macau's
611 Chineseness. In other words, Macau was not a colony but an international trading port
612 because it was the Chinese government that gave away the southwestern part of Macau
613 Peninsula to the Portuguese and this decision later transformed the city into an international
614 port. It should be noted in this respect that while majority of Macau's World Heritage sites
615 relate to the colonial period, its Chineseness is often emphasized (see Figure 4). Indeed, in
616 our analysis process, there were literally hundreds of collected materials such as Figure 4 that
617 projected Macau as a place where two civilizations encounter each other rather than a colony.
618 And our participants endorsed the decolonization efforts; as P2 believes, "*it is important to*
619 *decolonize Macau as a Chinese city at least for the Chinese*". Similarly, P13 commented that

620 “our role [tourism marketing] is to promote Macau as a Chinese city...we need to support
621 these initiatives as well as to inform our locals about this”. Taking a slightly different focus
622 P4 noted: “Macau now often plays a role to show the openness of China, this is good for
623 contemporary commercial activities”.
624



MGTO website home page



Walking tour: Crossroads of China and Portugal

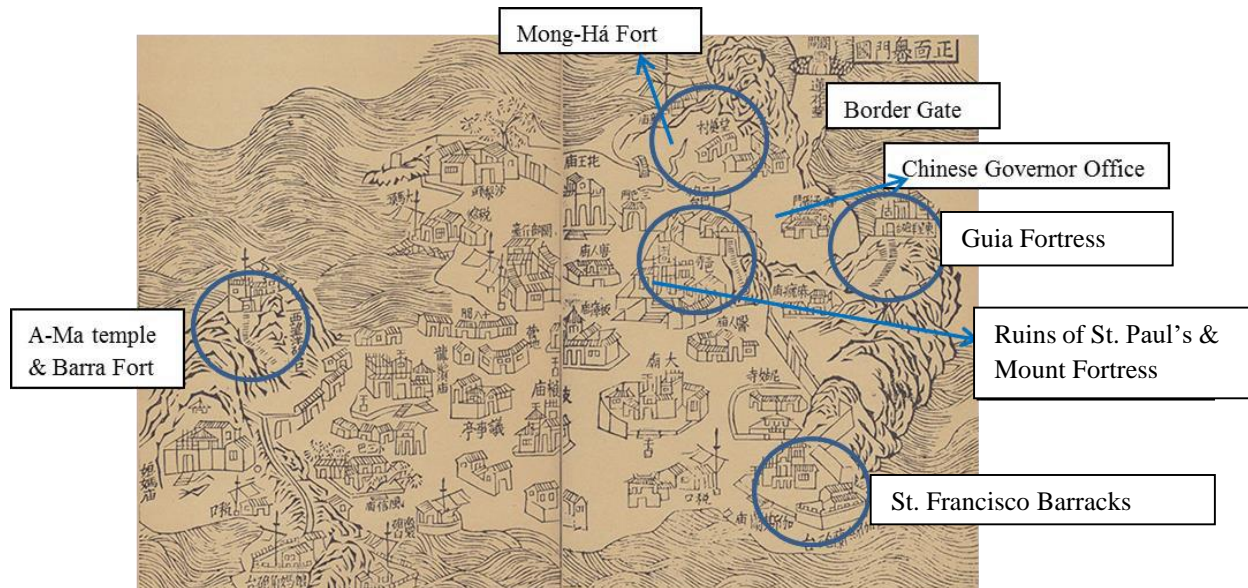
Illustrations: *Take a stroll down the historic path in which two civilisations encounter, you'll discover the life-long memory and emotions of Portuguese who once call Macao home.*

625
626 Figure 4: Discursive visual and textual representations of Macao's 'East meets West'
627 (MGTO, 2019a)

628
629 Like other postcolonial territories, Macau has given prominent attention to its colonial
630 military installations to generate anti-colonial emotions (Anderson, 1991; Loomba, 2005).

631 However, the analysis of [all collected materials](#) revealed that Macau’s colonial period was
632 seen as almost devoid of conflict. Figure 5, a historical map describing Macau’s landscape in
633 the 18th century, is used here to facilitate this discussion.

634



635

636

637 **Figure 5: Macau Map in 18th Century** (Yin & Zhang, 1751)

638 Note: The authors added blue circles to denote key colonial military installations promoted as
639 [major sites for tourism](#) including the Chinese governor’s office.

640

641 [The historical figure displayed in Figure 5 shows that the Portuguese fortified walls and](#)
642 [fortresses divide Macau into two cities](#), that is, from Mount Fortress to the A-Ma temple, now
643 known as the ‘Historic Centre of Macau’. The Chinese governor’s office is located near the
644 Chinese Border Gate. The remoteness of the Portuguese government from the Chinese
645 population and the residential pattern of segregation created by the fortifications from the 16th
646 to the 19th century suggest that Macau really belonged to China (Chou, 2010; Hao, 2011).

647 [Today, what remains of the border fortification is described in a more nuanced way:](#)

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

652

653 [There are two noteworthy observations from the above description. First, it does not mention](#)
654 [the two communities were segregated. Secondly, and more importantly, while the wall was](#)
655 [strategically built to protect and socially exclude the Portuguese community from the](#)
656 [Chinese, the allusion to “the city’s defence structure” contributes to decolonizing the colonial](#)
657 [identity of Macau. P5 explained the significance of this history in the following way: “for us](#)

658 *Chinese living in Macau, we know of and understand this Macau culture, but we don't live in*
659 *that culture. So, we do not really feel we are, or we were part of the Portuguese culture".* As
660 we have pointed out above, this respondent underlines the sense that the Portuguese had lost
661 their power to define Macau long before the handover. [This finding reinforces Morgan and](#)
662 [Pritchard \(1998\) argument that produced images reveals the social motives and positions of](#)
663 [those who promote them and by extension those who consume such images.](#)

664 To further decolonize Macau, the many military conflicts that ensued between the
665 Portuguese and the Chinese have been largely silenced. Rather, our analysis reveals a
666 deliberate use of metaphors in discourse to portray a harmonious relationship in Sino-
667 Portuguese trading activities. Indeed, while many of the historical Portuguese fortresses have
668 become popular tourist attractions (see Figure 5), they are described as necessary precautions
669 against foreign invaders. This is evident at the Barra Fort, where a sign reads, “[c]ompleted in
670 1629 on the site of an older cannon battery, Barra fort successfully protected the bay at the
671 entrance to the Inner Harbour against the Dutch in 1622” (Barra Fort, MGTO, 2019a).
672 Victory against the Dutch invaders suggest friendship rather than conflict between China and
673 Portugal. In addition, some the forts have been repurposed, and their interpretation sanitized
674 around the time of the handover to remove any sense of conflict. For example, Barra Fort was
675 converted to Pousada de Sao Tiago, a luxury hotel adjacent to A-Ma Temple. Many military
676 installations are also not included in the city’s heritage tourism offerings (Hao, 2011).
677 Silencing such conflicts from Macau’s colonial past suggest that the Portuguese influence
678 there has been restricted to only the tangible aspects of Macau’s heritage both in its
679 designation as a World Heritage Site and its status as an ‘East meets West’ destination.

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

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

691

692

693

694 **4.3 SARs’ power dynamics behind ‘East meets West’**

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

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

707

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

English version	Chinese version
<i>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.</i>	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).

709

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

717 Although Hong Kong does make some effort to show ‘respect’ to China, the ‘PRC’ is
718 largely silenced within Hong Kong’s tourism promotional materials. Within all the collected
719 materials, there are few explicit annotated text directly related to Hong Kong’s pre-colonial
720 history. Only the historical accounts of the handover draw attention to Hong Kong’s current
721 political status as a city in the PRC. The extant literature suggests national symbols are

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

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

756 city for Chinese tourists. Liu *et al.*'s (2021) study suggest the MGTO's approach is having an
757 impact as Macau's destination image among Chinese mainland tourist shifts from 'culture,
758 history and art' to 'leisure and recreation'.

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

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

789 a feature of Macau's decolonization process, which is fundamentally different from Hong
790 Kong's stand-alone identity.

791 **5. Conclusion**

792 Adopting an 'East meets West' tourism promotional strategy and/or positioning has 793
long been recognized as a unique way to showcase many postcolonial destinations in Asia.
794 However, such promotional efforts are based on a rationale that strongly contradicts with the
795 decolonization projects, which primarily focus on rejecting the influence of Western
796 colonization and on (re)crafting an independent 'East' identity (Loomba, 2005). Situated in
797 the paradoxical relation between 'East meets West' and decolonization projects, this study
798 focused on the (re)production and maintenance of the postcolonial heritage discourses during
799 the decolonization process in Hong Kong and Macau to uncover the rationale and power
800 dynamics behind 'East meets West' tourism promotion. Theoretically, the paper contributes
801 to understandings of the subject in two ways.

802 First, it contextually enriches the theorisation of decolonization, postcolonial heritage
803 discourses and identity-making in tourism (e.g., Bryce & Čaušević, 2019; Chambers &
804 Buzinde, 2015; Echtner & Prasad, 2003; Hoobler, 2006). Here, decolonization is not a
805 metaphor but a lived process that entails (re)production and maintenance of both 'East' and
806 'West' heritage discourses in the changing postcolonial environment (Tuck & Yang, 2012).807
Heritage is not a static phenomenon consumed by tourists from Western colonizers (e.g.,
808 Echtner & Prasad, 2003), but malleable cultural resources for changing socio-political needs,
809 including identity-making (Smith, 2009). The results of the study suggest that the origins of
810 'East meets West' tourism promotion differentiation and standardization between Hong Kong
811 and Macau vary according to the PRC's interpretation of the 'one country two systems'
812 arrangement. It is also the result of the power relations between the PRC, UK, Portugal, and
813 Hong Kong and Macau and the increasing rise of the PRC as a global economic and political
814 powerhouse since the handovers. By exploring the power struggles and changes in socio-
815 political conditions throughout the SARs' decolonization histories, the paper has investigated
816 the complexities of restaging colonial heritage in postcolonial tourism contexts. Here, the
817 paper does not assume a simple binary between the colonizer and colonized in the
818 examination of tourists from the Western colonial powers traveling to former colonized
819 exotic regions. Rather, the paper challenges the prevalent approach in postcolonial tourism
820 research and provides perspectives that shows the rationale behind (re)producing 'East' and
821 'West' heritage discourses in the transnational postcolonial Chinese context.

822 Second, the study offers fresh historical and geopolitical insights into postcolonial
823 heritage and tourism management and marketing in critical cross-cultural studies (Bryce &
824 Čaušević, 2019; d’Hautesserre, 2011; Hall & Tucker, 2004; Said, 2003; Zhang *et al.*, 2018).
825 By viewing heritage as an integral part of tourism marketing and identity-making, the paper
826 finds that identity is affected by negotiating the Self, the Orient and their relative positions to
827 the West in the global capitalist order and is influenced by the regions’ changing economic
828 and political power (Darwin, 1999). This reflects differences between Hong Kong’s stand-
829 alone identity and Macau’s ‘in-between’ identity, and their varied struggles with their
830 emerging Chinese identity during the decolonization process.

831 From a managerial point of view, the findings of this study pose an interesting dilemma
832 for destination managers wishing to use standardized images projected by multifaceted
833 places. On one hand, while postcolonial destinations are complex multifaceted places, there is
834 a requirement in the competitive marketplace that at times abridges this complexity and
835 reduces it to a simple overall marketing message. If postcolonial cities highlight hybrid
836 cultures in their overall images, the message is clear and readily understood (Wong *et al.*,
837 2016; Zhang *et al.*, 2019). On the other hand, however, our findings suggest this cultural
838 hybridity may well fail to capture the distinctiveness of the place, resulting in a similar brand
839 image and a lack of differentiation. To overcome competition in the tourism marketplace,
840 postcolonial destinations, especially in Asia, can give prominence to their unique local or
841 national identity. Such an approach accounts for the structural changes occurring in
842 contemporary postcolonial societies because of globalization. Based on our findings,
843 destination managers should also be cautious when incorporating the place character in their
844 overall marketing strategies. Place marketing in tourism assumes that images can be targeted
845 at specific markets that have been identified. This same assumption does not hold true for
846 Hong Kong and Macau where there is a trend towards developing marketing strategies and
847 promotional imagery not aimed at the dominant source markets. This puts destination
848 managers in both cities in a strategically difficult situation. To overcome this challenge,
849 target markets need to be constantly assessed using efficient, high-yield marketing research.

850 The problem, which destination managers in Hong Kong and Macau face in both the
851 Asian and global tourism marketplace is applying the principles of strategic marketing
852 planning amid intense local power relations. The findings of this study indicate that the
853 tourism promotion strategies of both cities, particularly that of Hong Kong, are affected by
854 power struggles between interest groups, pressure groups and the central government. For
855 tourists, the result can be a confusing mix of promotion programmes and a blurred

856 positioning. There is, therefore, the need for consultation with all stakeholders to encourage
857 useful collaboration and success in the strategic marketing planning process. This will
858 encourage the creation of an agreed positioning and unique selling point, so that marketers
859 establish from the very start what exactly differentiate the destination from rivals offering
860 similar or alternative attractions.

861 Finally, the study reveals the socio-political context of tourism marketing management
862 as it uncovers the complexity of managing and marketing postcolonial destinations. On one
863 hand, destination marketers must craft and communicate unique, appealing stories embedded
864 in multicultural heritage attractions and on the other hand, these marketing professionals must
865 also produce tourism promotion, which must serve national decolonization initiatives. By
866 comparing the subtle differences in the marketing communication mix employed Macau and
867 Hong Kong and discussing their associated implications, the study has shown just how 868
inseparable tourism promotion is from its social-political contexts. Clearly, destination 869
marketers must balance the marketing and business imperatives of their communication
870 messages with wider social and political considerations within the destination and adjust their
871 marketing messages accordingly.

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

882

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