

# MULTICULTURAL HERITAGES IN A CITY AS PRODUCTIVE TOURISM PLACES

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## Abstract

*A city can be a place for productive tourism places. Bandung, for example, has become a tourists' city and especially benefited from weekend visitors from Jakarta. Visitors in the city are offered attractions for leisure and consumption. The city's attractions are dominated by heritages: from pattern of street layout to the existence of a distinctive architecture, to the variety of activities to create the city itself as a visitors' experience. These conditions need a deliberate attempt to create the city as multicultural places of consumption for both retail and tourism as part of urban cultural management. This paper examines the creation of the city as a tourism destination. It is argued that changes to the process of capital accumulation in many cities have led to the commodification of place at a local level. Part of this process has been the creation of heritage as a tangible asset and this is linked to changing patterns of consumer retail activity. This paper argued that tourism should not be conceptualized as a distinct activity but rather as a form of consumption in the context of both local and global changes.*

*Keywords: heritage, consumption, tourism driven place design.*

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## Introduction: Commodifying heritage and creating tourism places

The arguments developed in this paper is an effort to show that the use of heritage for the production of consumers and tourism activities, through spatial designs within global capitalizing societies, is not a source of decay or destruction if adequately planned, designed, regulated and managed. On the contrary, it can generate many cultural, economic and financial benefits, with a limited rise in operational costs. Moreover, a correct commercialization of built heritage as input for tourism activities can produce an interesting shift from a static and passive consumption of culture to a more complex and active enjoyment of heterogeneous expression of built heritages.

As part of the tourism industry, heritage is a cultural commodity. As the past and its meanings are ultimately intangible, the definition of heritage is debatable as it is constantly being molded, shaped, interpreted, bought and sold by groups with varying interests. What remains constant, however, is the historical sense of place embedded in the concept of heritage. Places have meanings that are created for consumption by individuals in communities. It is in consuming the meaning of a place that the individual is linked historically and immediately to the material and social worlds in which they are embedded. People thus consume heritage to create a sense of belonging, as the invention of heritage can empower people and their communities by shaping a sense of identity (Rowlands 2002). This process of creating identity relies on the interpretation of specific heritage sites or material culture, interpretations that are manipulated for specific ends. Cities with heritage sites and trends in the interpretation of history do not merely exist for nostalgia's sake, but have a distinct relationship to the creation of present social realities. As Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998) states, 'heritage produces something new in the present that has recourse to the past'; in other words—heritage is a way of producing 'hereness'. The 'hereness' produced at a site is a creation process that starts with a specific idea, site, or an invention of a site. For heritage tourism destinations the 'hereness' is interpreted and developed by agents or agencies from professional tourism operators for consumption by tourists and other visitors, without whom the site perhaps has no meaning. It is through the tourist's experience that a sense of place and 'hereness' is formed for tourists and visitors (MacCannell 1989).