A RELATIONAL GEOGRAPHY OF HERITAGE IN POST-1997 HONG KONG

by

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Abstract

The central question of this dissertation is: what can Hong Kong teach us about the geography of heritage? The study considers the discursive transformation of cultural heritage as a feature of Hong Kong's transition since the 1997 retrocession to Chinese sovereignty. Specifically, it traces the contradictory growth of interest in heritage as an urban amenity on the part of the government, and its simultaneous framing as a socio-political critique of neoliberal governance on the part of actors in civil society. The study analyses these dynamics from a perspective attentive to the relationships – forged through various forms of mobility and comparison – between Hong Kong and other places including mainland China, Great Britain, and urban competitors.

The project relies on data gathered through English-language research conducted over a period of two and a half years. Sixty in-depth interviews were carried out with experts, activists, professionals and politicians in Hong Kong. Extensive surveys of government documents, the print and online media, and archival materials were undertaken. Other methods employed include site visits and participant observation. The methodology was oriented around the analysis of processes of heritage policy and contestation over a number of sites in Central, Hong Kong and surrounding districts where contradictory visions of the meaning of heritage have played out materially.

The dissertation connects with debates in critical heritage studies, urban geography, and Hong Kong studies. A distinctly geographical contribution to heritage studies is made with the application of relational theory, drawn from the emerging literature on urban policy mobilities and urban studies more generally, to the study of the politics of heritage. The consideration of heritage policy, an important feature of the cultural economy and collectively produced and

contested, adds to understandings of globalizing urban cultural policy. Finally, the study of these

processes – at this particular moment in Hong Kong – provides a new frame for understanding

post-handover politics in an era of increasing agitation about the future of the SAR's relationship

with the Mainland and ongoing struggles for democratization.

Preface

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfilment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of British Columbia. The research was designed and undertaken solely by the author, under the guidance of the research supervisor and supervisory committee. Prior to the commencement of the research, ethical approval for the aspects involving human participants was obtained through a formal review by the Behavioural Ethical Review Board of the University of British Columbia under certificate H09-02320.

Parts of Chapter 4 and 5 of this thesis have been published in *Urban Studies* as the sole-authored article entitled "(Re)Making heritage policy in Hong Kong: A relational politics of global knowledge and local innovation" (Barber, 2014).

Findings from Chapter 4 have been published as an online conference paper through the Institute of Asian Research at the University of British Columbia as "Locating postcolonial heritage in Hong Kong: The Star Ferry Pier as a site of politics, memory and encounter."

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List of Abbreviations

AAB – Antiquities Advisory Board
AMO – Antiquities and Monuments Office
CHC – Culture and Heritage Commission
COCAC – Central Oasis Community Advisory Committee
CWCG – Central and Western Concern Group
CE – Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
DEVB – Development Bureau
GHCG – Government Hill Concern Group
HAB – Home Affairs Bureau
HKHS – Hong Kong Heritage Society
HKSAR – Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
HKTB – Hong Kong Tourism Board
ICOMOS – International Council on Monuments and Sites
KCR – Kowloon Canton Railway Terminus
LegCo – Legislative Council
OVT – Old and Valuable Tree
PRC – People's Republic of China
PRD – Pearl River Delta
SAR – Special Administrative Region
SDEV – Secretary for Development
SPH – Society for the Protection of the Harbour
The Ordinance – The Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance
TPB – Town Planning Board

Acknowledgements

Chapter 1: Finding a Way into Hong Kong's Skyline Image

1.1   Hong Kong as Skyline Image

Arriving in Hong Kong on one of the many daily flights from major cities around the world, the urban landscape unfolds through haze-enveloped mountains to reveal hundreds of high-rises in clusters on either side of the harbour and in valleys and coves beyond. Before 1997, flights would navigate towards these structures, following a path of low-rises that led to the runway at Kai Tak in eastern Kowloon. The runway and the airport it served were built into the harbour on reclaimed land. This was a significant feat of construction and engineering, especially so for a densely populated urban location, but the facility lacked capacity for expansion and a new airport, indicative of infrastructure-led development projects favoured by the Hong Kong government, was planned. Thus, in 1997 planes changed their course to the Foster-designed Chek Lap Kok Airport, also built on reclaimed land, off the north-western shoreline of Lantau Island. Although this new location is far from the urban core, upon descent from the sky it is still possible to catch glimpses of the skyline for which Hong Kong is so famous.

Images seen half-awake through condensation-laden airline windows, postcards sent around the world, or in the glossy pages of travel or lifestyle magazines, may come to represent the cities of which they only portray a small part. While many places are summed up in the imagery of a single iconic building or monument – Toronto's CN Tower, Delhi's Taj Mahal, Beijing's Forbidden City, London's Big Ben – Hong Kong can't seem to escape being represented by its skyline, especially as viewed from Kowloon across Victoria Harbour, or from above, with the mountain and water framing it. It is difficult to pinpoint when the skyline image took on this synecdochic quality, but it is safe to say it predates the construction of some of the city's most well-known buildings – I. M. Pei's knife-like Bank of China tower, Norman Foster's

inside out HSBC building, and the more recent fortress-like International Financial Centre (IFC) and International Commerce Centre (ICC) complexes flanking Victoria Harbour. The skyline was probably already celebrated, or at least recognized, when it was dominated only by the earlier incarnation of the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation building, and perhaps even before then, when the verdant topography of Victoria Peak stood out in relief behind much smaller buildings.

The skyline of Hong Kong evokes the city's history as a colonial trading entrepôt, capitalist enclave adjacent to communist China, and beginning in 1978 its role as a centre of finance linked to booming Chinese markets under reform. As a hub, at different moments, of trade, manufacturing, commerce, and development, Hong Kong *is* its skyline: a fortuitous *and* intentional response to geographical constraints and historical conditions. High-rises became ubiquitous because they were the most efficient and profitable use of land in a city with a severe shortage of space (Cuthbert, 1984), a result of Hong Kong hilly topography and the colonial government's land administration policy. They were only later symbolically linked to capitalism in ways similar to their American counterparts (King, 2004).

Temporally, the meanings of the skyline-image are more likely to be oriented to the present and future than the past. Although all landscapes reflect historical processes, and Hong Kong's urban landscape may evoke memories and reflect past experiences, it also negates them. The view of the landscape from a distance or from "on high", abstracted to the point that sees only the outcome of a strategy of growth (de Certeau, 2010), belies the presence of any traces of the past. But on further inspection, close up, other elements come into view. The high-rises that at first appear almost uniformly new and similar in shape, colour, design, and texture are in fact varied in size, age and upkeep. Behind and among the towers are smaller buildings representing

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innumerable variations on a theme; on the streets, people, market stalls, taxi cabs, buses and

trams jostle for space; the traces of humanity overflow from windows, verandahs and roofs

above – dripping air conditioners, clothing, signs for above ground-level businesses. These

effects of habitation decrease in inverse proportion to the age of the building. The newest

structures are shiny and flat and appear sealed from the turbid fresh air. At this level, the fine-

grained, on-the-ground reality, there emerge other meanings and understandings of Hong Kong:

contradictions, histories, attachments, and conflicts that undermine the symbolic representations

and constructions of the city. What is in and under the skyline? What lies behind it?

1.2   Flowers in a Window

If one arrives in Hong Kong on a plane, one enters it on foot. The views of austere towers

from a distance are transformed by the complexity of the embodied experience of being in the

city. And such may be the experience of arrival of an international visitor: they arrive at the

Central Station on the high speed rail link from the airport[1]. After walking through long corridors

filled with fast-moving people and rising to the surface upon equally fast-moving escalators, they

find themselves under heavy, moist grey skies on a noisy street in view of a news vendor, idling

buses, an advertisement for European watches, several air exchange systems and buildings

containing luxury shops that do not appear to offer entrances from the street, thus purposely

distanced from this scene. There is an unspecified din in which the distinct sounds of car horns,

revving engines, construction equipment, and voices are occasionally audible. A walk around the

corner under the shade of a towering bank bedecked with restaurants on the first several floors,

past groups of suited office workers, sunglass-donning, camera-toting tourists, a red light at a

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[1] I begin with the experience of a visitor as I myself, as an outsider, entered the city for the first time. This is a
decidedly different outlook than that of most Hong Kong residents.

busy intersection forces a pause and a herd of red taxis stop short thirty meters away. For a

moment, nothing and no one – not cars or pedestrians – moves, and the pavement is bare. A few

brave souls wager that it is safe and the crowd begins to disperse across the narrow street before

the light turns green. Along this busy shopping artery the surroundings are not unlike those of a

"high street" in any other city. Turning onto one of the side streets leading up the hill, however,

things begin to change. The street is wide enough to allow one car to pass, but the bric-à-brac of

shop and market displays prevent all but pedestrians. It is so steep that only the surest of feet

manage the grade, while others resort to the outdoor escalator or buses. Rising and turning a few

corners, the environmental effect of the surrounding buildings becomes noticeable. There are

pockets of space that the circulating fresh air does not appear to have reached. The drip of air

conditioning units and heady hot air forced from restaurant kitchens mingles with garbage,

festering in spite of the fervent collection schedule. With less traffic, the din changes, different

sounds become apparent: conversations, the sounds of people working: operating machines,

calling out to potential customers, cleaning. Pedestrians are more confident, walking down the

middle of the street, but quickly moving aside or checking over their shoulder at the sound of a

horn or approaching engine.

At the next corner, a market stretching along the flat horizontal street comes into view. A

woman in a rubber apron and gloves scrapes the scales off a fish under the glow cast by red lamp

shades. A butcher awaits his next customer, presiding expectantly over an unrefrigerated display

of pork on a heavy butcher's block. The meat is so fresh that the flies have not noticed it. An old

woman sits on a stool assembling flower bouquets in plastic buckets. She works intently but

looks up whenever a potential customer comes close. Ten feet behind her lies the entrance to one

of the walk up buildings that forms the backdrop for this scene. Looking up, the first floor

windows are grimy, broken and barely contained by rusty frames; the apartment must be vacant. Above this, the second floor has similarly shaped traditional windows but they appear nearly-new, free of dust and encircled by a painted frame. A bouquet of flowers, perhaps from the vendor downstairs, is placed on a table or stand next to the window and visible to the outside. Next door, a clearly empty building of identical size and design is unceremoniously decorated with an announcement from the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) declaring it unfit for habitation and subject to renewal.

1.3   The Scene

The market described in the foregoing section is centred around Graham Street, just up the hill from the bank towers that dominate the skyline. It is the site of an intense struggle over city space that is both unique to Hong Kong and characteristic of other well-documented urban processes of the contemporary period. The market is subject to both government-led urban renewal and piecemeal residential and commercial gentrification. The renewal scheme is proceeding at a moment of great skepticism of the government's intentions with respect to planning and development and profound interest in Hong Kong's past that has found expression, among other ways, in a fascination with and a desire to hold on to older buildings and neighbourhoods. The prologue was intended to highlight the paradox that lies at the heart of this research project and dissertation: imagining historical elements of the built environment in Hong Kong as heritage is incongruous with the way the city operates and its discursive construction, that finds material expression in the skyline image, as a centre of global and Asian capitalisms. I have been reminded of this paradox time and time again in conversations with friends and acquaintances at home in Canada, in Hong Kong and elsewhere. My explanations of my research project, which inevitably include mention of "heritage in Hong Kong," are often met with

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surprise, or even denial. Of course, the word "heritage", especially in the English-speaking "West", may conjure up images of buildings and things that do not exist in Hong Kong, such as wood frame Victorian houses or low-rise brownstone buildings. But, in various forms – monumental and everyday, modern and traditional, Chinese, European, international and hybrid – heritage does indeed exist in Hong Kong as built forms, landscapes and intangible elements that are invested with meanings and values that inspire reverence, desire, nostalgia for and interest in the past. But this very fact, given Hong Kong's reliance on land sales and redevelopment for government revenue, marks an improbability. That heritage has been an important topic of discussion among government agents and in the public discourse over the last decade is all the more striking. Thus, underneath and inside the future-oriented landscapes of capitalism, traces of the past are being reworked and reinvented in ways that deserve scrutiny.

1.4   The Contribution of the Thesis

The thesis contributes to three major areas of geographical scholarship that overlap both with each other and with related fields of research: i) the study of Hong Kong as, following the 1997 return to Chinese sovereignty, a city both part of and apart from the People's Republic of China (PRC) and embedded in regional and global networks; ii) human geographical scholarship that studies cities from a relational perspective, taking into account both mobility and flows, as well as the city as a territorial formation; and iii) a critical approach to heritage that recognizes the problematic of its Eurocentric origins in the context of an appeal to both universality and local specificity. The following provides a brief overview, to be fully developed in chapter 2, of the contribution of the thesis to each of these three areas.

1.4.1   A new story about heritage and urban policy in Hong Kong

Many stories have been told about Hong Kong. The most often repeated and reworked of these – Hong Kong's colonial economy relative to global trade, and more recently flourishing Chinese markets under reform; the upward mobilities of post-war Chinese immigrants and their children; and most recently the meanings of cultural identity relative to the Chinese nation – form the main themes upon which the variations of Hong Kong studies scholarship are played. The explosion of interest in heritage after 1997 has provided much fodder, especially insofar as it is a reflection of identity politics – not as one might think, a growing sense of belonging to China, but of being distinct. Even from the view of 1997, with its edited special issues exploring the meanings, especially the cultural dimensions, of this unprecedented transition[2], one might not have envisioned the arrival of such a trend. The present research contributes to Hong Kong scholarship by connecting the heritage phenomenon to political questions in relation to which it has not yet been fully considered. Rather than asking about the cultural and political motivations compelling desires to articulate and hold on to the past, as a number of others have done very thoughtfully (Cody, 2002; Henderson, 2008; Leung & Soyez, 2009; Ku, 2010; 2012), the present work brings into the picture the place of heritage in the dynamics of governance in the years following the handover. The motivations of civil society heritage activists are considered, but in relation to the political landscape in which internal affairs are inevitably conditioned by external relationships.

The interest in how Hong Kong's relationships with other places – notably China, but also countries and jurisdictions such as Australia, Singapore, Shanghai and Macau – are part of

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[2] See, for instance, Abbas (1997a), Hung (1997) and others in the same issue of *Public Culture*.

the local politics of heritage connects with a growing body of literature on relational urbanism (Olds, 2002; Kong, Gibson, Khoo & Semple, 2006; McFarlane, 2011; McCann & Ward, 2011; Jacobs, 2012). As a review of the literature in the following chapter reveals, this intellectual project is a long time in the making, drawing on decades old writings on "place" in the context of increasing interactions between places, and only now fully reckoning with the ways in which globalization affects multiple and cross-cutting scales of urban politics. As a simultaneously global, national and local phenomenon subject to policies and practices and shaped by expert and lay knowledge, heritage, as studied through a relational lens, enriches geographical perspectives on the making of policy. Heritage policy, reflecting government support for culture, driven by various agendas, has not been extensively studied in either the policy literature or the heritage literature. This thesis seeks to remedy this deficiency and contribute to the theorization of heritage as a feature of urban politics in an era of global mobility.

Finally, heritage, the key interest, has already been extensively studied and critiqued. The next chapter reviews the themes and gaps in this literature, to which contributing something worthwhile appears a formidable challenge. The contribution is deceptively simple. Most scholars study heritage in order to understand particular places. Heritage can tell us many interesting things about the cultural identities, social dynamics, historical geographies of violence and dispossession, and politics of places. This thesis does the reverse: it studies a place, Hong Kong, in order to better understand heritage. I take the view, of course, that the place in question is not a discrete territory, but rather embedded in historical and present-day, multiply scaled and power-laden relationships with other places, including China, East and South-East Asian neighbours, Britain, and a roster of global city competitors. Approaching the idea of heritage in this way I attempt to denaturalize and deneutralize it as a universal category that

everywhere operates with the same set of foundational meanings. Ultimately, the project is driven by an effort to destabilize the origins of this concept that is so much celebrated but also deeply problematic, and to articulate the ways, as shown in Hong Kong, that it may be used progressively.

1.5 Methodology

The question of how to place temporal, geographical and other kinds of boundaries around a research project and maintain an openness to understanding relationships with broader processes has been a long-standing concern of social scientists (Gupta & Ferguson, 1997; Crang & Cook, 2007). In the era of global ethnography (Burawoy, 2000), multi-sited projects and unparalleled connections between places around the world, situating research spatially has become more complicated than ever. It is often not enough to ask a question about a place and research the place in question; one must also be cognizant of connections that extend beyond (Massey, 2005). This is especially true of research on the city which, in its contemporary iterations, Jacobs (2012, p. 212) argues "exists in, and manifests, a *condition* of relationality that defies territorial depiction." Indeed, contemporary work on mobilities, a frame upon which the thesis draws, has recognized the importance of working with and across different scales, from the bodily to global registers (Cresswell, 2011). The ways of thinking relationally upon which the research methodology is based have not yet been applied in any sustained way to urban heritage.

The methodology for this research project involves multiple commitments and engagements that may be described as a mixed-methods approach to studying places and agents through which policy assessment, learning and innovation are (re)produced and contested. My approach to these agents and places is contextualized in the following sections. Preliminary research began well before my arrival in Hong Kong; substantial field work was completed

during a ten-month stay in 2010 and a follow-up visit in 2012. Research methods involving human participants consisted mainly of expert interviews and participant observation. Other research activities revolved around various texts including newspaper articles and records from government and civil society organizations and various online sources. A short discussion on language is explained in the context of the research questions. I begin by elaborating my engagements with the agents, places and texts of heritage in Hong Kong.

1.5.1 The agents of heritage in Hong Kong

The principal research activities involving human participants were in-depth interviews and participant observation. I interviewed 60 people (see Appendix A). The majority of the interviews took place in Hong Kong; four were in Sydney, Australia, two in Vancouver. The outliers in the latter cities were referred to me by contacts in Hong Kong and I pursued interviews with them because I was particularly interested in the role of international and mobile expert knowledge. The interviews ranged in length from 35 minutes to over three hours, with most lasting approximately one hour. The informants were mainly recruited through networks of people working either professionally or out of personal interest in fields related to the built environment, and who have a particular focus or interest in heritage. A quarter of the informants are members of civil society involved in various forms of activism, while another quarter work for the government as elected officials, bureaucrats or public servants. Of these, most have a direct link to heritage, being either employed in the Antiquities and Monuments Office (which administers Hong Kong's heritage resources), the Development Bureau (overseeing heritage, planning and related areas of policy), or representing the urban realm in functional constituencies. Approximately 30 per cent of the interview respondents are employed in the private sector as architects, designers and others in related cultural professions. It is important to

note the similarities and differences between individuals assigned to these broad categorizations. As expected, the state agents had a limited ability to critically assess the government decision-making and work; those working in civil society were generally unflinching critics of the government; the heritage professionals presented more ambiguous positionalities, at times allied with government, at other times supporting a more critical orientation. Although the boundaries between the categories are fuzzy in places, all of the individuals are all part of a dynamic that can be broadly categorized as a political landscape of heritage.

Except for one, all of the Hong Kong interview respondents are permanent residents of the territory, meaning they carry Hong Kong ID cards and are entitled to live and work in the HKSAR and travel with few restrictions in the Mainland. Most are Hong Kongers of Chinese origin, many having lived abroad in the 1990s or at different moments, and returned. Eight of the people I interviewed in Hong Kong are expats who have settled permanently in the territory. Although it may appear that my inability to speak Cantonese or Mandarin and my outsider status may have made expats more likely informants, I believe that anyone working on this topic would end up talking to these individuals. A small number of expatriates, in addition to returnees from overseas, have been highly visible and active critics of Hong Kong's urban planning and development practices, and heritage is just one of a number of areas of interest under this broader umbrella. The expatriates I spoke to have been in Hong Kong for between 6 and 30 years and are deeply committed to the city. They mostly came to Hong Kong to pursue business opportunities and ended up later becoming involved in urban activism, hence they are most certainly privileged, but politically active and allied with progressive groups. Loh and Lai (2007, p. 173) cite a report in a Mainland daily newspaper in 2006 in which a senior official worries about the influence of "foreign radicals" in Hong Kong. Blaming a small number of foreigners for the

rising tide of dissent since 1997 is, of course, quite off the mark, but we note here that this orientation that is quite different from the stereotype of the rootless mobile elite, lacking commitments to place and politics (Sklair, 2001).

The purpose of the interviews was principally to gain an understanding of how individuals who work in the fields related to heritage engage in mobile and relational practices and imaginaries in and beyond their work, and how these practices and imaginaries inform discourses of heritage and the governance of heritage in Hong Kong. The "practices" I was interested in are the day-to-day activities, sometimes seemingly mundane and insignificant, in which the boundaries of the territory are exceeded, including travel and communication. I was also interested in the ways in which mobility was sometimes not practiced but rather longed for, or in which past experiences remain present. I asked people questions about their work, including international networks, policy learning, the application of international knowledge and best practices with respect to particular places in Hong Kong, but also about personal experiences that have inspired their interest in heritage. Although initially I had planned to focus mainly on policy, the interviews offered a rich forum for insights about politics, and especially about contested sites subject to intensive media coverage. I did not follow an interview schedule, however I did prepare questions for every interview, and I touched upon the same themes quite frequently. In a number of cases the questions I had prepared were discarded in the process of the interview, either because my informant appeared to want to share only a prepared set of points, or because the conversation took an unanticipated direction for which questions were not appropriate. Although insights from the interviews appear throughout the thesis, much of what I gleaned from them sits in the background, as a set of socio-political dynamics about Hong Kong's landscapes and history, its relationship with China, and its place in the world.

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1.5.2 The places of heritage in Hong Kong

In addition to the interviews, I engaged in observation in a number of different places. I liken this to the tradition of participant observation in ethnographic research, but note that my observation was not focused solely on people, but rather the type of "place ballet" (Jacobs, 1961) described in the opening narrative. In terms of more traditional exercises in participant observation I attended meetings and presentations organized by Designing Hong Kong[3] and government-organized public consultations[4] related to public realm heritage projects, including the Lung Tsun Stone Bridge and the Central Market. My attendance of these events allowed me to observe discussion and to see, on a superficial level, who attended such events. They especially informed my ability to understand the places in question, and the ways in which planning and governance, in particular processes designed to engage or consult with members of the public, affect them. In addition to these official events, I frequently visited heritage places, especially those subject to debate in the civic realm. I spent a significant amount of time in Central and Wan Chai, visiting publicly-owned heritage buildings and areas with concentrations of *tong lau*[5] in the former, and the street market and area surrounding a building called the "Blue House" in the latter. During these visits it became evident that these places are both exceptional

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[3] Designing Hong Kong is an NGO that works on a range of issues related to planning, urban environmental issues and the civic realm.

[4] Community-scale events organized by government are conducted in Cantonese, but are required to accommodate non-Chinese speakers in English.

[5] No exact translation of *tong lau* is possible but an English approximation is "Chinese house". The term has referred mainly to shophouses in Southern China and of the overseas Chinese in South-East Asia. These structures feature commercial space at street level and residential uses, often subdivided, above. According to Chu (2012, p. 257), *tong lau* "became an umbrella term associated with buildings with many different kinds of functions" but it also had "stereotypical associations" and "'types' of inhabitants." Other points of reference include "tenement-style" housing due to the use of the term in early building and housing ordinances, and an opposition with "European" architecture. Although this dissertation does not engage with an in depth assessment of *tong lau* it is important to point out the ways the complexity of the historical production of this form and the language used to describe it is oversimplified in much of the contemporary discourse, especially in the absence of a nuanced interpretation of the challenges of translation (C. Cartier, personal communication, 2014).

and mundane; they may be visited by crowds of amateur photographers seeking to capture an image of the rapidly disappearing "authentic Hong Kong" one day, and passed unnoticed by crowds of shoppers and commuters the next. More structured visits occurred during walking excursions, either affairs organized by community groups, or walks with research informants.

1.5.3   The texts of heritage in Hong Kong

I began to consider this research project in 2007 after reading reports of the Star Ferry protests in the *Globe and Mail* (York, 2007). By the time I began the research in earnest in 2010 I found extensive changes in the administrative structure related to heritage had occurred in the intervening years. With a simple google search I found the website of the Commissioner for Heritage Office, under the umbrella of a newly created Development Bureau. Further searching revealed a multitude of reports, studies, meetings and memos documenting the government's treatment of heritage over the course of a few short years. These texts are almost all available in English. The same was true of most of the documentation, including research papers, letters and representations presented to the Town Planning Board, produced by civil society groups. These texts, along with extensive reporting in the *South China Morning Post* and the occasional item in other media, including English radio programming on RTHK (Radio Television Hong Kong, a public broadcaster), both reflect and are constitutive of the transformation that sits at the core of the thesis. Within these texts I was particularly interested in identifying comparisons with other places, the evocation of examples, models or exemplars from elsewhere, that are considered in relation to the Hong Kong experience. While newspaper reporting may be considered an objective source of facts, this should not be taken for granted in Hong Kong where press freedom is facing threats. In addition to contemporary documentation, I made use of a limited amount of archival materials from the 1970s and 80s, drawn upon in Chapter 3, on the development of the

Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (the Ordinance), newspaper reports of heritage debates, and the activities of the Hong Kong Heritage Society (HKHS).

1.5.4   About language

As explained earlier, I did not gain a mastery of the local language in order to carry out the research. I decided early on that I would not pursue intensive training in Cantonese (beyond a beginner level) or Mandarin, and felt uneasy about this decision at times. I justified this limitation in the structure of the research plan. By studying mainly expert knowledge on heritage and policy, rather than the relationships between identity and place, I set myself up to converse with people who had been educated in English[6]. By studying the ways in which policy processes and governance through a geographical lens, rather than pursuing the more typical geographical question of how place reflects cultural processes, I was also able to rely extensively on documentation. Nevertheless, I did occasionally encounter situations where my lack of language proficiency was called into question. For the most part, however, I missed out on access to extensive written sources, including independent online media, and casual conversations and "gossip" about the city which, I learned, is very important. I did employ an assistant to help with some translation tasks, including a review of reporting on heritage controversies in Chinese newspapers (mainly *Apple Daily*, which is critical and banned in the Mainland, and *Ming Pao*, which has a reputation for objectivity) and conversations with shopkeepers and market stall holders during visits to Central and Wan Chai. For the most part, I did not experience limitations due to language in the aspects of my research involving human participants. However, I was aware that mis-matches in translation meant that the very categories that I was working with, and

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[6] It is normal for middle class Hong Kong people to pursue tertiary education in English. The public service still continues to operate bilingually.

that had been adopted as the *lingua franca* of heritage in the city, originate in the English-speaking world. The Chinese characters for the word "heritage," when translated to English, mean something closer to "cultural relic." The contemporary examples of heritage in Hong Kong, however, belie this meaning.

1.6 Chapter Outline

One of the central focal points of this thesis is a place-based study of heritage as a discourse (Smith, 2006) that has material repercussions. This is different from most studies of heritage that begin with objects, thus neglecting the epistemological structures that are required to "know" heritage. Thus, while case studies of particular buildings and sites do appear in later chapters, the main focus is the transformation of ways of thinking about heritage, and the ways in which geography is important to these processes. The body of the thesis has four parts. Following the theoretical discussion in the next chapter (Chapter 2), Part I (Chapters 3 and 4), situates the topic of heritage in Hong Kong in the historical and contemporary context, justifying the interest in relationality and mobility. Part II (Chapters 5 and 6) treats heritage policy and the work of actors centrally involved in making and remaking it. Part III (Chapters 7 and 8) presents case studies of contestation over heritage buildings. Part IV (Chapter 9) moves beyond built heritage to consider the growing interest in the relationship between walking and heritage in the streets of Hong Kong. The following outline provides additional detail, revealing the arc of the thesis.

Attempts to theorize heritage appear as variations on a theme. Critiques abound over several decades and well-established set of geographical concerns have been enshrined as relevant to the study of heritage. Chapter 2 discusses the main currents of heritage scholarship in geography, focusing the Western origins of modern conceptions of heritage, the social, economic

and cultural processes reflected in the recognition of urban heritage, and the specificities of a critical engagement with heritage in postcolonial Asian contexts. It goes on to argue that, although there has been a long-standing engagement with heritage in urban and cultural geography, key ideas about spatiality that are fundamental to contemporary geography have not yet been meaningfully considered in relation to heritage. The chapter thus attempts to establish the case for a reworked geography of heritage that takes into account the spatial conditions of relationality that define cities in the contemporary age. It also explains why Hong Kong is the setting for such an enterprise.

Recognizing that heritage is seldom properly historically contextualized (Harvey, 2001), Chapter 3 examines the creation of Hong Kong's heritage policy in the 1970s. Drawing on Foucault's metaphor of "archaeology" as a historiographical methodology, it demonstrates that the relational character of heritage in Hong Kong has a long history, and that the development of the policy and early heritage debates were very much influenced by linkages that extended beyond Hong Kong. It also reveals that the policy was designed to privilege only forms of built heritage that would not be subject to profitable redevelopment. While many studies identify the Star Ferry and Queen's Pier protests as a pivotal moment for heritage consciousness in Hong Kong, and evidence presented in this thesis confirms this, Chapter 4 casts a longer view, considering the uncertainty of the 1990s and especially politics since 1997. The chapter shows that heritage activism is a feature of time and place-specific urban social movements centrally interested in opposing entrenched neoliberal policy. The interest in heritage on the part of the government is also revealed to be part of a longer trajectory in which the importance of heritage as a feature of Hong Kong's global image and brand development was articulated beginning in the late 90s.

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Chapters 5 and 6 examine the challenges to and reassessment of the inherited heritage

policy in the contemporary period, focusing on the role of agents within and outside of

government. Chapter 5 specifically examines the processes of policy learning, an

underdeveloped approach highlighted by McFarlane (2011), engaged by agents within and allied

to the state. Following the cues developed by scholars of policy mobility, the chapter presents as

a case study the activities of a post-secondary node for educating heritage professionals and

policy makers, developing the idea that the state relies on sources exterior to it in exercises of

filling policy knowledge gaps, and that these exercises are shaped by government ideologies.

Although extensive policy learning activities were pursued, the government didn't substantially

alter the policy but rather chose to pursue initiatives and changes to the administrative structure.

Following McCann (2011, p. 143), the absence of clear policy transformation can be understood

as a form of presence that reveals the character of Hong Kong "within wider global

constellations of people, places, and power." Chapter 6 examines the involvement of non-state

policy actors in the reassessment of heritage. The chapter asks how their perspectives on heritage

have been informed by experiences of travel, living abroad, and return and, in doing so,

highlights the emergence of a "new kind of politics" in the post-handover period, both among

those who stayed and those who returned.

Chapters 7 and 8 present case studies of contested publicly owned heritage sites in

Central: Government Hill and the Central Market. Both of these places were included in the

Conserving Central scheme, a government initiative unveiled as part of the government's new

commitment to heritage conservation. Central is the oldest urban district of Hong Kong and

contains many of its most iconic buildings and streets. As the Central Business District, one of

several tourist districts, and the most expensive and gentrified area in the city, it is not a typical

Hong Kong place. In fact, many Hong Kong residents who live in outlying areas of Kowloon and the New Territories rarely visit Central. However, my research revealed a strong identification among built environment experts with certain features of Central's landscape, such as *tong lau*, markets, and steep slopes, perhaps heightened by their perceived or actual ephemerality. Furthermore, the contrasts (highlighted through the eyes of an outsider at the beginning of this chapter), the redevelopment pressure, and the visibility of this quarter make it a highly symbolic place for the government to engage in flagship conservation projects. These chapters explore contestation around two of these projects in order to underscore the motivations driving these plans, the different visions presented by activists and community members, and the broader significance of these oppositional currents. Chapter 7 examines how the government's plan to pursue the conservation of Government Hill, while allowing the redevelopment of part of it for Grade A office space, was successfully challenged. Chapter 8 reads the plans for the Central Market in parallel with the objectives of urban environmental studies related to air quality, and suggests that in such cases heritage is a convenient vehicle to meet other objectives. Likewise, for activists following the plans, heritage stands in for a more generalized desire to democratize planning processes and interrupt the habitual development process.

Chapter 9 moves from the relative monumentality of publicly-owned heritage buildings to more everyday forms and reflects on the relationship between the micro-scale mobilities of walking and heritage. Walking tours have emerged as a popular form of community engagement in Hong Kong and, far from a simple leisure experience, this chapter argues that they represent an important direction for an oppositional politics of living heritage in the city. The conclusion continues to draw on the theme of relationality running through the thesis by showing how Hong Kong's experience of failing at recognizing and protecting heritage in the past has created the

conditions for it to be a leader in this area today, and that this prospect has important political implications. The conclusion also returns to the core contributions of the thesis and suggests hopeful directions for further work and thinking on this topic in Hong Kong and elsewhere.

Chapter 2: A Geography of Heritage in a World in Motion

On June 15, 2009 the Chief Executive of the HKSAR, Donald Tsang, was an invited
speaker at the 60th anniversary of the Foreign Correspondents Club (FCC). The FCC has been a
hub for foreign journalists working in Asia for decades and its membership now represents a
broad range of professions. It is housed in a 120 year-old building in Central, one of a small
handful of structures of this age in the urban core of Hong Kong. Tsang's speech wove an
unlikely narrative. He began by evoking the trope of Hong Kong as a "space of flows"[7] in which
news and information move freely, enabled by the international media presence of the FCC.
Such flows, remarked Tsang, contribute to Hong Kong's "global competitiveness" and make the
city a better place to live and do business (HKSAR, 2009a). He then moved from global spaces
to local places: "Hong Kong is also a better place because of all the preservation work, the
adaptive re-use, that has allowed lovely old buildings such as this to remain in excellent
condition". The remainder of the speech elaborated on this topic – built heritage – that at first
glance appears antithetical to flows. Transnational entrepreneurial investors and flows of capital,
after all, have shaped the construction of Hong Kong's futuristic skyline and have been
responsible for the demolition of many older neighbourhoods. But here the Chief Executive told
a new story about the city's landscape; how heritage conservation entered Hong Kong's public
and political discourse, introducing a novel vocabulary. This vocabulary, although focused on
local buildings and places, is also informed by flows of people, information, and knowledge,

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[7] For Castells (1989) spaces of flows characterise the new informational mode of production in which technological
innovation is the foundation of capitalist expansion through networks of globalization. Geographers (e.g. Cartier
2002, p. 257) have pointed out that the idea is one example of an interest in spatial processes across a number of
disciplines in which such concepts foreground the importance of geographical processes but fail to engage with their
material realities.

among other things. How to make sense of this relationship between flows, that are mobile, and heritage, that is rooted in place, is our question.

This chapter provides the conceptual and theoretical framework for the dissertation. A more detailed explanation of the context for the research will unfold over several chapters. For the time being, the main point about Hong Kong to be considered is that it is a paradoxical place in which to conduct a geographical study of urban heritage. As such, it is an exceptional case which, I argue, may generate new ways of understanding the topic in question[8]. The chapter will present the theoretical premises that have guided the development of research questions and methodology, and will develop a conceptual argument to be borne out in empirical detail in later chapters. This argument is that the geography of heritage in cities should be reworked in order to account for the relational character of urbanism and that this can be done by loosening the long-standing association of heritage with bounded territories. As a place of networked, hybrid urbanisms, Hong Kong is the ideal city for this study. But far from being a case unique to Hong Kong, the dissertation will suggest that processes that are perhaps most visible in this setting are evident in other cities. Furthermore, the challenges faced by Hong Kong in the area of heritage and planning inspire innovative responses that may be useful elsewhere.

The chapter is divided into five parts. The first part (2.1) discusses the concept of heritage and explains how it has been approached as a topic of scholarly inquiry. This section highlights the marginal position of heritage scholarship, partly a result of the elitist and Eurocentric connotations of the origins of the concept, and argues for its continued importance. The second section (2.2) discusses the unique challenges posed by urban heritage, which is drawn into the

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[8] Following Burawoy's (1998) extended case method, research is a reflexive process through which theory is reconstructed. Theories need not be generated from generalizable facts but may proceed from exceptional cases.

fray of land use planning, ownership rights, and disparate interpretations of value and use. This is highlighted as an area that has not received due attention in the literature. As the research considers an ostensibly "global", postcolonial, Asian and Chinese metropolis, the next section (2.3) references a growing literature on the various entanglements with heritage that have emerged in cities such as Singapore, Taipei and elsewhere in East and South East Asia. The final part of the chapter (2.4) explores how heritage has been studied by geographers, in particular those working in the subdisciplinary realms of cultural and tourism geography. It argues that the focus of heritage research on cases of place contestation has had the effect of anchoring heritage to what Tim Cresswell (2006) has called a "sedentarist" understanding of place. I suggest that bringing recent (and not so recent) reconceptualizations of place as dynamic, relational, assembled and multiply implicated in flows, mobilities and inter-scalar relationships, to bear on heritage contributes to a re-theorization of its geography. This possibility is foregrounded with an introduction of some of the recent discussions of scale and mobility, especially as they relate to urban policy, and a consideration of how these ideas might be usefully applied to heritage studies.

2.1   What is Heritage?

Heritage has at once been overworked and overlooked as an object of scholarly inquiry. On the one hand, the literature appears to be saturated to the point at which the same arguments and debates are rehearsed with remarkable frequency; on the other hand it has remained isolated. Heritage research is not new; an article published in the *Town Planning Review* in 1975 began with the following words: "Almost everything which could possibly be said about conservation must surely, by now, have been said," (Chapman, 1975) and yet the author went on to note that these same words had appeared several decades earlier! The interest in heritage among scholars

is due to its ubiquity in everyday life and complexity that belies its apparent common sense meanings. Despite the large and still growing literature, there are depths of this complexity that remain to be explored. Moreover, the fact that heritage is sometimes still portrayed as trivial or maligned as a conservative social phenomenon signals the continuing salience of work that explains it in relation to other contemporary processes, especially place-specific cultural economies and politics in new contexts.

Academic writing on heritage began to emerge in the 1970s and 80s in parallel with an explosion of popular interest in the past. The English language literature began with critiques of the UK "heritage industry" (Hewison, 1987) and explanations of American fascinations with the past (Lowenthal, 1985; 1996) and the subjective understandings they encourage. Government intervention in the form of policies and programmes had been introduced almost a century earlier in parts of Europe and decades earlier in the United States (Boyer, 1996), but academics took notice only in the context of the cultural turn of the 1980s in the social sciences[9]. An interest in the conservation of nature that finds expression in parks and preserves has a longer history with roots going back to the 19th century worldview, first in Europe and later in the United States, of the Romantics who eschewed the industrial city in favour of a truer and healthier life experience in less populated settings (Nash, 1982). For the present purposes, the meanings of the term "heritage" were developed in Europe in a post-WWII moment of anxiety about the urban clear-cutting of modernist planning accompanied by nostalgia for idealized national pasts. It is this view of heritage, the power relations implicated in its production, its politics and exclusions, that scholars had in mind as they began to document and critique processes related to heritage

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[9] The emergence of interest in the idea of "heritage" and its material manifestations may be distinguished from the origins of conservation science as a practice, which extend to ancient times (Jokilehto, 1999).

identification, promotion and management. It is also this heritage that has been institutionalized, promulgated and adopted in corners and contexts quite distant from whence it originated.

In the early stages, discussions in each discipline that had something to say about heritage were separated by a silo effect. Anthropologists, historians, geographers, archaeologists and cultural theorists wrote about heritage from within and for audiences in their respective disciplines. Only recently has a space of interdisciplinary dialogue with a critical bent begun to open. Indeed, the inaugural meetings of the International Critical Heritage Studies Association were held in 2012. The theme of the conference was "Re-Theorizing Heritage" and the organizers were clear on the intent of the conference; heritage as an object of inquiry had not kept apace with theoretical advances in the core disciplines in which its researchers operate, including feminist, post-structuralist, political-economic, and post-humanist critiques (International Association of Critical Heritage Studies, 2012). The lack of interdisciplinary dialogue had left some heritage researchers in the margins of their own disciplines, yet not always in the company of a like-minded scholarly community. At international geography conferences, for instance, papers discussing topics related to heritage are often spread across a number of different sessions and researchers do not necessary share common epistemological or methodological orientations. To further complicate matters, research that could contribute to theorizations of heritage often hones in on other closely-related ideas, such as social memory (Legg, 2005) or nostalgia (Blunt & Bonnerjee, 2012). Such critical engagements are often aligned with cultural studies or postcolonial approaches, leaving heritage, especially in North America, the purview of a subsection of cultural geographers interested in tourism, place marketing and historical landscapes.

The word "heritage" appears in everyday language in ways that undermine its complexity. Related concepts, such as inheritance and patrimony, point to its most simple meaning – something from the past that is given a useful expression in the present. When the sides of a delivery truck announce its contents – *Custom Heritage Furniture* – or when a sign indicating *heritage varietals* is displayed at the farmer's market, the meaning of "the contemporary use of the past" (Graham, Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000, p. 4) is immediately evoked. But why is a tomato or rocking chair that evokes the past interesting or desirable? Why is an object from the past that is given new meanings in the present interesting? In the modern era novelty is valorized and old objects are considered degraded or decaying. What kinds of objects from the past gain value as "heritage" when viewed or used in the present? Such questions lie at the beginning of the spectrum of scholarly inquiry on heritage. This work is varied, but much of it is characterized by a shared preoccupation with revealing and querying the implications of the lack of consensus on the value and meaning of objects of heritage, and the power relations exercised in processes of establishing the meaning of sites and buildings, negotiating them, marginalizing those meanings, and even erasing them (Graham et al., 2000; Smith, 2006). If there is consensus among scholars, it is that heritage does not have intrinsic properties; it is socially produced. David Lowenthal argued early on for this social constructivist understanding which now appears common sense. He wrote: "a heritage wholly saved or authentically reproduced is no less transformed than one deliberately manipulated" (Lowenthal, 1985, p. XVIII). Although this perspective may be shared among academics, this is far from the case among practitioners and lay people. Divergent understandings of the ontology of heritage have proved challenging for obvious reasons: "today the same place or building can be variously

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viewed as a homely landmark, a relic of imperial oppression or a tempting commercial opportunity" (Shaw & Jones, 1997, p. 3).

Beginning at the furniture store or farmer's market, of course, implies the kind of elite consumption practices for which interest in heritage is often criticized. If one can afford to buy antique character furniture, and express choice in matters of style, one would find oneself on the middle to upper end of the class spectrum. Furthermore, if the interests expressed in the selection of said furniture tend towards the antique, mid-century modern, or French Second Empire, then it is quite likely that the aesthetic created in the home is reflective of cultural capital that is also expressive of class position (Bourdieu, 1984), and that the home environment is an effort, conscious or not, at reinforcing this position (Jager, 1984; Ley, 1996). The same could be said of heritage tomatoes; they serve as an amenity rather than a necessity and attention to them comes only when pursuits related to securing the necessities of life have been satisfied, or as a first priority for a small minority of aesthetes. The association of heritage with the upper echelons of the class spectrum is well established: "The will to conserve was the obsession of a passionate, educated and generally influential minority and the social, educational and political characteristics of heritage producers have changed little since the nineteenth century" (Graham et al., 2000, p. 15). Another less than glowing association is the Eurocentrism of dominant understandings of heritage. The conservation of monumental buildings was envisaged as a way of fostering nationalisms in European countries (Boyer, 1996) and it may be argued that heritage, as a concept and practice, still bears the weight of its European origins. These are, of course, hefty charges that might be levied not only at consumers of heritage, but also at researchers. Graduate students are advised to pursue research of great personal, even passionate interest. If this interest is heritage then it is incumbent upon the researcher/writer not to fall into the trap of

reinforcing less than positive associations. David Harvey (1997, p. 10) writes: "Meaningful political action (and, for that matter, even meaningful analysis) cannot proceed without some embedded notion of value, if only a determination as to what is or is not important to analyze intellectually let alone to struggle for politically." There are many instances of heritage being used for particularist, exclusionary purposes – defending community, nation or class-based or racialized landscapes or life-worlds. It could be politically meaningful to explore and expose these dynamics in a study of identity politics. Writing on heritage in geography is not always oriented to such ends, nor need it be. One of the underlying themes of the present work, however, is to acknowledge the associations of heritage with elitism and Western cultural imperialism while continually writing against them. The starting point is a politics of heritage that lies within the spectrum of an urban social movement in Hong Kong. However progressive it may appear to be, heritage is by its nature subject to different interpretations and may be commodified, aestheticized and indeed politicized. I am thus continually vigilant in my interpretation of the meaning, value and use of heritage.

For the present purposes we operate with the assumption that the materiality of heritage is important. This idea has been critiqued in a few different ways. Commentators have proposed going beyond materialism by conceiving of heritage as a process (Smith, 2006), understanding all heritage as intangible (Graham et al., 2010), questioning the ontology of heritage architecture (Tait & While, 2009), and thinking of heritage places as not only "seen" but also practised (Cresswell & Hoskins, 2006). While not denying that the overemphasis on visible heritage is problematic, I choose to not to abandon this heuristic. It is, after all, one of the primary facets of social fascinations with heritage. However, the discussion will not be limited to purely architectural forms and landscapes in the public realm, but also the policies and discourses that

shape the way material heritage is interpreted. I do not disregard other forms of heritage that have recently come into view. Scholars and practitioners have argued for the renewed importance of attending to "natural" heritage, especially in contexts where it is difficult to separate human settlements from pre-existing environments (Langfield, 2010). Likewise, interest in intangible heritage has grown rapidly, especially in parts of the world where material heritage is not valued to the same extent as in European traditions. Both natural and intangible heritage are important in Hong Kong where they cannot ever be entirely divorced from the built realm. For instance, recent efforts to illegally develop remote areas of the city's country parks (its "natural" heritage) have revealed deficiencies in planning regulations (Harris, 2012, p. 223). In centrally located neighbourhoods such as the Graham Street market described in the introduction, redevelopment poses threats to long-established social networks, meaning that conservation through adaptive reuse will not be successful if it involves relocating residents, shops and services. Intangible and natural heritage will receive attention insofar as they intersect with the urban built environment.

Geographers have written extensively on heritage as an expression of the materiality of place and the unequal power relationships in reading and reproducing heritage landscapes (Duncan & Duncan, 2004). The discipline has a significant opportunity to further contribute to the field by paying greater attention to the spatial processes of the politics of heritage. As we shall see, the geography of heritage has always been about place and space (Lowenthal, 1985; Graham et al., 2000), but it is still a project in the making. The next sections will situate the present contribution within a series of encounters between geography and heritage: in the city, in Asia and in the discipline as a whole. I will argue that geographical understandings have relied on naturalized assumptions about places and territories as bounded, self-contained entities. I will

go on to propose that geographers have not yet meaningfully explored the idea of "urban heritage" because the relational, global and interactive qualities of cities unsettle the sedentarist foundations upon which the dominant ways of thinking about heritage rely.

2.2 Heritage in the City

Although much of the writing on heritage is about places in cities, the implications of what is at stake for heritage in the urban setting have not always been clear. Here, at a fundamental level, the cultural values of material heritage do not always accommodate the kinds of economic values that the capitalist landscape creates. An expression or celebration of the shared value of a landscape or object may not be enough to convince its owner, whether a private citizen or a state agency, to recognize it as heritage. Defenders of heritage landscapes in cities have at times been branded as "anti-modern", their impulses disregarded as efforts to create "defensible space", to retreat from the world of increasing difference and rapid change into something solid and secure (Barber, 2013). Heritage has also been cast as a feature of processes of urban capitalism and consumer practices. In cities these processes take on unique characteristics that require further exploration.

Richard Sennett (1990, p. 123) wrote that in cities we are "in the presence of otherness." There has been a tendency to celebrate this feature of city life both on the part of scholars and city residents. The city forms a hearth for creative subcultures, the political avant-garde and provides freedom for non-conformists; it is also a space of innovation and experimentation. It attracts dwellers that value these characteristics, or are indifferent to them. But for some, manifestations of "otherness" in the city can result in an insistence upon idealized and homogenous visions of place and home. This is sometimes the case in gentrifying neighbourhoods. My street in inner city Halifax, for instance, has experienced a slow but steady

turnover of properties from long-time working class and lower income families to young

professionals and middle class families, from rented properties to owner-occupied houses. By

2011 only one occupied by the "old guard" house remained surrounded by newer arrivals. It so

happened that the residents of this house included a teenager who was involved in the drug trade.

After a series of incidents a neighbour circulated a letter outlining details of criminal activity at

the property, encouraging reports of any unlawful activity to the police. Within a year the

residents were forced out and the house was sold to new owners and renovated. Similar

exclusionary efforts are more common in well-established elite neighbourhoods. In Vancouver,

changes in the landscape of upper-middle class residential neighbourhoods brought on by a rapid

influx of wealthy Chinese migrants in the 1990s resulted in the mobilization of exclusionary

interpretations of the historic character of the place (Ley, 1995; 2011). Though heritage is not the

primary focus, both cases involved the presence of a transgressive form of "otherness" that is

incompatible with the sense of place that residents have constructed (Cresswell, 1996).

One of the primary axes of contestation surrounding heritage is caused by confusion and

conflicting interpretations of its economic value. This is especially the case for urban built

heritage. Old objects may have intrinsic market values, but this is rarely the case for property,

for which value is usually tied to market forces related to location, the market, maintenance and

potential revenue. David Harvey (2012) has suggested that objects that are unique, but not so

unusual as to be unrecognizable, are subject to a special form of valuation. In the market, cultural

heritage products are subject to "monopoly rent", the possibility of generating more capital than

regular objects, because they viewed as authentic. An old building may have cultural,

architectural and historical value that could translate into increased economic value as a heritage

property when it is recognized as unique. The irony of this, Harvey explains, is that once

something becomes valuable because it is authentic and desirable, it may very quickly lose the qualities that made it interesting in the first place as it is replicated, fixed up, traded, and ultimately, commodified. It may be costly to renovate and maintain heritage structures, and require foregoing redevelopment opportunities, but surplus value and profit is a likely outcome. Further complications result when the potential redevelopment value of a building or site is brought into the equation.

Harvey's (1989) work on post-industrial restructuring and inter-urban competition in the context of globalizing economies provides a framework for understanding the emergence of heritage as a focal point for urban regeneration. In the neo-Marxian interpretation new forms of place promotion are efforts to create the conditions for the continued accumulation of capital under its increasingly mobile and globalized post-industrial phases. Flagship projects in former industrial zones on the waterfronts of many cities across North America and Europe are one of the strategies of the "entrepreneurial city", which has in view the attraction of new commercial enterprises and investment. This is in contrast to earlier "managerial" modes of city governance characterized by service-provision (Harvey, 1989). State-led tourism and leisure oriented projects in revitalized city centres clearly indicate the potential for heritage to generate revenue directly through investment and also contribute to the city-image which has important but less tangible, longer term linkages to capital generation. Are such entrepreneurial city strategies evident in Hong Kong? Jessop and Sum's (2000) study of Hong Kong as an "entrepreneurial city in action" highlights the city's efforts to reposition its economy in relation to the shift in the manufacturing base across the border after the introduction of economic reforms by the PRC. In this context, entrepreneurialism is strongly equated with innovation, in particular the creation of new or the reorganization of existing regional economies. But they go on to write, "cities can be

entrepreneurial not only in regard to commodities and fictitious commodities, but also in regard to economically relevant factors that are not monetized and/or do not enter directly into exchange relations" (Jessop & Sum, 2000, p. 2290). Although it was not yet fully on Hong Kong's agenda at the time they were writing, heritage has emerged, as it did earlier elsewhere, as one of those features that adds value to the entrepreneurial city and may or may not be bought and sold.

The cultural economy of heritage in cities has been developed through a long-standing, but often unacknowledged (Smith, 1998), association with gentrification. Gentrification is the process whereby formerly disinvested and degraded areas experience reinvestment and rising property values. The concept is most commonly linked with the renovation of housing stock in older, inner city residential areas but has also been used to describe wholesale redevelopment and new-build construction. The usage first described by Ruth Glass (1964) in London, and subsequently in Canadian cities (Ley, 1996), American cities (Smith, 1996), and elsewhere (Atkinson & Bridge, 2005; Lees, Slater, & Wyly, 2008), may involve assigning heritage values to places that might otherwise be thought of simply as old. Gentrification as social upgrading, especially in the American context, has led to widespread displacement of populations marginalized along intersecting lines of class and race (Newman & Wyly, 2006). It is a ubiquitous, seductive and deeply aestheticized form of neoliberal urbanism and, as such, implications for housing affordability are often ignored in favour of celebrations of conviviality and consumption. Ley's (1996) wide-ranging study of gentrification as a consumer-led process makes a strong and nuanced case for understanding heritage as a positional good used by new middle classes to display tastes inspired by higher levels of cultural capital. Built heritage is valorized for its aesthetic properties and becomes a marker of distinction for middle classes recolonizing city spaces that had previously been all but abandoned. He shows, however, that the

vision of the past presented in heritage homes, is produced by an eye keen to see only its

aesthetic dimensions:

> It is the aesthetic eye that transforms ugliness into a source of admiration, that reshapes common, scorned, and used objects into icons of desire. Aesthetic distancing, a quality well-developed among social and cultural professionals, contains the creative power of transformation. (Ley, 1996, p. 310)

The heritage home in a neighbourhood of streetscapes lined with intact, colourfully painted

homes within walking distance of all manner of cultural, bodily and culinary amenities is part of

the landscape of consumption that emerged in cities from the 1960s onwards. The people

dwelling within its restored plaster walls and walking its refinished wood floors have none of the

admiration of modern, futuristic visions that the generations who walked the same halls in the

past might have had (Jager, 1986). For them, heritage is the décor for a preferred style of life.

With evidence of similar alliances between heritage and gentrification documented on several

continents, this is perhaps the realm of a global cultural elite. There are, however, place-specific

differences that still remain to be developed. Ley and Teo (2013), for instance, query the non-

adoption of gentrification as a descriptor for the effects of widespread renewal and

redevelopment processes in Hong Kong. They suggest that the recent and growing critique of

property governance in the territory may result in a shift in the discourse.

     If heritage became an object of consumptive desires, its early iterations had a more

socially progressive appearance. In cities across the West, a defense of place against destructive

modernist urban renewal and planning was an important orientation for urban activism in the

post-war decades. Early commentators on the effects of top-down planning, including Jane

Jacobs and Herbert Gans, articulated the experiences and sentiments of neighbourhoods

experiencing rapid change caused by external forces. They inspired individuals – mainly liberal,

middle class, educated – to demand participation in the decision-making processes through which cities are planned, and in particular, in decisions that affect the way people live and interact in neighbourhoods. Jacobs began to write about planning while living in the New York of the 50s, facing the effects of deindustrialization and restructuring under the planning direction of Robert Moses who was intent on slum clearance and building high capacity road infrastructure. She developed now common-sense ideas about what makes public places and the urban structure appealing to people and, in turn, safe and welcoming. She proposed that older neighbourhoods, built before widespread automobile ownership, with low-rise buildings, walkable streets, mixed uses, and diverse populations are ideal for fostering community-based social connections (Jacobs, 1961). Herbert Gans (1962), writing about the Italian American North End of Boston (an area that Jacobs also wrote about), made similar arguments, and clearly demonstrated the detrimental effects of highway construction on the "urban village" he was studying.

Canadian examples raise interesting questions regarding the successful mobilization of community-based movements that Jacobs had championed. Vancouver's oldest neighbourhood, Gastown, faced the prospect of large scale renewal and freeway construction in the 1960s. Project 200, led by a coalition of politicians and corporate interests, would have replaced several blocks of 19th century commercial and industrial buildings and single room occupancy hotels – a decaying marginal space in the central city – with service sector office towers and supporting amenities. Ley's (1996) treatment of this episode reveals that although Gastown was marginal, its storefronts were already turning over to small business owners who were part of the counter cultural scene. They and their supporters successfully fought Project 200, and so did the adjacent Chinatown community which would have been similarly affected. Within the next decade the

area evolved rapidly with the arrival of creative classes, tourists, and later condo conversions and new spaces of consumption. As Ley (1996, p. 239) writes, what began as a grass-roots movement reflecting "a desire for human space, resounding with the *difference* of history, spontaneity, and independent self-creation" ended by creating the conditions for the less jarring, more gradual reinvention of the district through piecemeal gentrification. Similar stories played out in other Canadian cities, such as Halifax (Barber, 2013), where middle class residents' associations challenged modernist city designs by revalorizing devalued inner city precincts as heritage districts.

Australia provides an interesting comparison. In the early 1970s residents of Sydney worked with construction industry trade unions to organize strike actions to withhold labour from projects deemed harmful to the urban environment. These actions, the "green bans", mark an important moment in the development of environmental politics and the broadening of heritage discourses in Australia. It is particularly important to note alliances between unions and community-based interests, which, as Anderson and Jacobs (1999) point out, were led by women navigating slippery boundaries between private and public spheres. Furthermore, the areas affected were not only middle-class, but also working class districts such as The Rocks, where the maintenance of affordable and accessible housing was a foremost concern. The solidarities and purposes of this movement resonate with the dynamics of heritage activism in Hong Kong in a complexity that is not reducible to an intellectual fascination with the past. The broader transformation across the West, from top-down modernist urban reinvention, to participatory planning is marked by an interest in what geographers have long articulated as "sense of place", which is also central to the Hong Kong situation (Relph, 1976). The trajectories of heritage

movements in these debates, however, as demonstrated by the case of Gastown, and, as we will see, of Singapore, is more ambiguous.

2.3   Urban Heritage with Asian Characteristics?

It would be foolhardy to attempt to write a geography of heritage in Asia using the same conceptual cues and analytical framework as have been applied in North America or Europe. The fact that the discourse of heritage originated in the West, as we have seen, has important, often unacknowledged, implications in other parts of the world (Smith, 2006). A critical reading reveals that the literature on heritage in East and South-East Asia has begun to grapple with regional specificities, including culturally divergent interpretations of heritage, histories of colonization and occupation, forms of governance premised upon rapid integration into global markets and, in some countries, strong civil society movements. However, this is an ongoing process and in many instances Eurocentric perspectives persist in disregard of, or in combination with, national and local needs and desires. The present project draws on English-language literature, mainly by geographers or researchers in closely related disciplines such as sociology and urban planning to query both contextual specificities and the relationship between this context and heritage as a global phenomenon. In particular, it asks what the experiences of Hong Kong can teach us about the processes through which heritage is commodified as a feature of a globalizing urban landscape, but also the ways its constitution as such is continually destabilized and contested by alternative positions in which heritage is a form of "popular culture… produced through the common relationships of daily life" (Harvey, 2012, p. 112) and resistant to marketization in spite of being continually pressured by its forces (Zhang, 2006).

It is no accident that much of the writing on heritage in Asia is about colonial heritage. Monumental buildings and landscapes displaying European architectural idioms adapted for

tropical climates were marked with ambiguity upon decolonization (Kusno, 2010). For some,

they were innocuous reflections of history, not always architecturally stunning but more

interesting given their hybrid features and juxtapositions with local forms. An unspoken but

underlying assumption is that external forces are required for the stewardship of these buildings.

The subtitle of an edited volume on heritage in South-East Asia and Western Australia – *Voices

from the periphery* (Shaw & Jones, 1997) – inadvertently reinforces the centrality of Europe in

the reckoning of heritage in post-colonies. On the edge of the world, the book suggests, in

rapidly developing economies with shaky political regimes, the treatment of heritage is far less

magnanimous than in the heartland. Furthermore, those who might advocate for heritage may not

be present. Tunbridge, Ashworth and Graham (2010, p. 5) write, "The receding tide of empire

has left large swathes of heritage 'high and dry', leaving those who created and might associate

with it far distant or indifferent while those who now live with and 'own' it are potentially hostile

or neglectful." This statement suggests a denial of the dynamics of colonial memory in

postcolonial settings. Furthermore, the appearance of the word "own" in scare quotes indicates a

note of skepticism. A possibility other than neglect or hostility is that owners and broader publics

might invest new meanings in historic landscapes and that such landscapes might not be as

neatly indexed into the opposed grammars of European or indigenous points of reference as

conventional views suggest they ought to be. Much work remains to be done on heritage in

postcolonial settings, both colonial and "local" forms, and especially the interesting mélange that

has resulted from their meeting. Brenda Yeoh (2001, p. 46) reminds us that "postcolonial

memory is a fraught terrain, contested and multistranded, and woven around the politics of

inclusion and exclusion, of remembering and forgetting." This is important to remember in Hong

Kong where at times in the past, and still in the present, the valorization of heritage may appear to be, or may in fact be, inspired by a form of colonial nostalgia.

If the literature on heritage in Asia has not always dealt explicitly with postcolonialism, it has begun to address the realities of Asian urbanism and politics, especially in Singapore. As a centre of English-language education in Asia, and a multi-ethnic city-state that developed policies and programmes for protecting built heritage relatively early, in the 1970s and 1980s, Singapore is the subject of numerous books and articles treating the topic of heritage (Yeoh & Huang, 1996; Chang & Yeoh, 1999; Yuen, 2005; Kong, 2011). The themes explored in these works range from the designation of ethnically-distinct conservation districts as a nation-building tool, the creation of heritage landscapes for tourist consumption (Teo & Yeoh, 1997), the gentrification of vernacular districts (Chang 1997, Chang & Teo, 2009), and the inclusion of heritage in place-branding efforts aimed at bolstering Singapore's status as a global city (Chang et al., 2004). Singapore's heritage policies were developed during a period of rapid economic expansion and in the context of a land shortage following the implementation of large-scale social housing schemes in the 1960s. This is a particularly interesting case for considering the relationship between heritage and government strategic planning, especially with respect to tourism promotion and economic development. In Singapore, like in Hong Kong, the state plays a central role in land planning, housing and property development, all of which affect the treatment of built heritage. Singapore's Urban Renewal Authority is charged with these responsibilities and intervened early by creating a number of conservation districts in areas with distinct architecture, some of them in line for redevelopment, including Chinatown, Little India and Kampong Glam. Cities and regions in Singapore's closest neighbor, Malaysia, have also pursued heritage as an economic development strategy by adding historic landscapes to the

spaces of leisure offered to tourists, at times leading to conflicts with communities that hold different visions for their use (Cartier, 1998; 1997).

The shophouse is a South-East Asian architectural genre (with numerous variations) that offers insight into the disjunctures and continuities between state-led heritage tourism and the desires of local residents in Singapore and Malaysia and, to a lesser extent, Hong Kong. Shophouses featuring ground floor commercial space and residences on the upper floors began to appear in the 1820s in Singapore and other trading ports (Lee, 2003). As housing for the working class, subdivided into multiple units as real estate became scarce through the 20th century, shophouses were not recognized to have heritage value until recently. Very few remain in Hong Kong but Singapore retained entire districts through early intervention. Chang (1997) and Chang and Teo (2009) explore the reinvention of Singapore's Chinatown shophouses as boutique hotels as an example of entrepreneur-led heritage conservation. Products of a local creative economy, they suggest, the hotels project different meanings than their grand colonial counterparts, but also mark the problematic commodification of a building form traditionally part of the vernacular city landscape. Nonetheless, Chang (1997) finds that these businesses were not exclusively for the use of tourists and that they provided opportunities for locals to enjoy their city, albeit as middle-class consumers. The possibility of renovating older properties for boutique hotels and up-market restaurants and shops made the heritage conservation district's strict covenants palatable for investors and private owners. Although profits were likely a primary motive, the entrepreneurs contributed to the construction of a global city image that includes cultural infrastructure such as built heritage (Kong, 2007). Whether or not heritage as "amenity" is for locals or tourists is, in the final instance, secondary to its role in attracting capital. This is not unique to Singapore; it is "reminiscent of place marketing strategies employed in the

European as well as North American continents. These strategies are the outcome of the interplay between global economic forces on the one hand and local level planning on the other" (Yeoh & Teo, 1996, p. 193). What is unique to Singapore is that the city-state governance structure, and its guiding developmental ideology, allows the articulation of national visions at the level of the urban fabric, something not easily achieved in larger state systems.

It would be possible to conclude that built heritage in cities such as Hong Kong, Shanghai, Hanoi and Singapore is destined for one of two fates: commodification for tourist and local consumption, like the selective preservation of *shikumen* houses in Shanghai's Xintiandi district (Ren, 2011), or preservation and interpretation for educational purposes. However, there are examples that challenge such assumptions. In particular, civil society groups are encouraging state agencies and private owners to forego profit-driven plans for schemes that emphasize use-value and collective interests. They are also unsettling the dominant historical narratives inscribed in national monuments and museums. In Singapore, for example, a government plan to build an eight-lane highway through Bukit Brown, the country's oldest burial ground, was challenged by environmental organizations and heritage groups (SCMP, 2012). Many of the grave sites are unmarked and recent investigations by amateur historians have found clan leaders and Chinese merchants among the buried. However, the government has ignored calls for a UNESCO World Heritage designation for the site and works recently began. The controversy is a rare occurrence in Singapore, where the authoritarian state works hard to maintain high levels of public support and preclude criticism. The government's reluctance to deviate from its plans is partially due to the incongruence of this site with state-sanctioned heritage (Henderson, 2011), and the severe land shortage. In a similar case in Taipei, a rapid transit expansion required the relocation of the Lo-sheng Sanatorium, a care facility for sufferers of Hansen's disease (leprosy).

The retention of the facility became a cause of the student movement, which framed the significance of the site in terms of cultural heritage.

The specificity of Asian heritage is especially evident in ideas about value and resulting approaches to conservation. In Singapore, government action on heritage in the 1980s was partially inspired by the need to reassert "Asian values" in the face of rapid westernization. "Urban conservation in Singapore can thus be seen primarily as an attempt on the part of the state to create and provide a sense of historical continuity and local cultural identity as a foil to alien values in a rapidly changing society" (Yeoh & Huang, 1996). This argument proposes heritage conservation as a neutral discourse that may be easily transposed from one context to the next. In contrast, elsewhere in Asia, culturally specific approaches have been developed both through local and national efforts, and also in correspondence with international agencies and institutions. The meetings at Nara, Japan, for instance, and the resulting *Document on Authenticity* (UNESCO, 1994) initiated a discussion on the diversity of interpretations of authenticity and heritage conservation in Asia. This was followed by the development of the *Hoi An Protocols* (UNESCO, 2009) that further articulated "Asian" perspectives. These efforts problematized the application of "global" practices, Western in origin, under widely varying circumstances. For instance, in Japan, the rebuilding of religious monuments, such as the Ise shrine, is an adaptation to climate and local custom and requires particular materials and building techniques. Though never allowed to age beyond a few decades, the structure is nevertheless "authentic" (Qian, 2007). Whether these perspectives may accommodate the wholesale reproduction of heritage sites that have become popular with tourists in China remains to be seen. Locally- or nationally-specific, these perspectives are nonetheless the product of far-reaching networks and global expertise. Ironically, notes Qian (2007, p. 263), "the drawing up

and the implementation of national charters and regional protocols are more or less dependent on expertise from abroad."

The discussions at Hoi An and Nara and the experience of Singapore and a handful of other cities situate heritage as a global phenomenon with place-specificities related to the cultures, politics and economics of Asia. Hong Kong leadership welcomes the application of some ideas developed in the Asian context, but the further refinement of others. As we will see in later chapters, the recognition of heritage as an important area for tourism in the 1990s, for instance, did not translate into policy amendments as readily in Hong Kong as it had in Singapore. Museums were developed, especially in the New Territories, but the land market in urban neighbourhoods proved too lucrative to disrupt. But the transition to Chinese sovereignty and accompanying identity politics inspired not only an interest in Hong Kong heritage, which Abbas (1997b) suggests is the visibility of a Hong Kong culture at the moment of its disappearance, but also a challenge to the operation of the land market – both within a framework of continuing concern about how Hong Kong is changing under Chinese sovereignty. Hence heritage, from one perspective, does not appear to be the easy ally of capitalism it has been in so many other places, and it is also intensely politicized. A civil society, driven by radical student groups and with links to the anti-globalization movement, sees heritage not as an amenity, a feature of the city's brand, or a commodity, but rather a way of building community, articulating city life and finding use value and continuity amidst the ever-changing high-rise landscapes. A number of commentators have explored these dynamics, particularly focusing on heritage as an expression of Hong Kong culture that is related to but separate from "China's Chinese", and as an indication of a shift in values and the democratization of urban planning (Cody, 2002; Kenworthy-Tether & Chow, 2003; Chu, 2007; Henderson, 2008; Leung & Soyez,

2009; Cheng & Ma, 2009; Lu, 2009; Ku, 2010; Chung, 2011). The crux of much of this work has been to understand why heritage emerged as important when it did, and to consider how celebrated heritage places reflect various Hong Kong stories. This thesis seeks to contribute to this growing literature by considering how Hong Kong's distinct historical and present-day geography, conditioned by relationships with other places including the Mainland, Britain and elsewhere, may influence the politics of heritage in ways not previously considered in this context or others.

2.4   Geographies of Heritage

Geographical writings on heritage have appeared in subdisciplinary niches as well as in the interdisciplinary space of heritage studies. Among cultural geographers, heritage is an expression of place through which identities are produced, reinforced or denied (Ley 1996, Shaw 2006). As explained above, in the urban setting, politics, economics and property, confounded by social inequality, consumption, migration, planning and various other factors complicate the picture. Heritage can say many things about many different kinds of places at different scales, from the nation and cosmopolitan diasporic communities right down to the level of the neighbourhood or home. Of particular interest to geographers are the spatial representations around and within which heritage is constructed. These may including museum displays (Crang and Tolia-Kelly 2010), iconic architecture and monuments (Kong 2007), residential landscapes (Duncan & Duncan 2004), and various other tangible and intangible forms. The prospect that a unified vision of heritage can be created at any scale is a fiction with potentially devastating repercussions: "The creation of any heritage actively or potentially disinherits or excludes those who do not subscribe to, or are embraced within, the terms of meaning defining that heritage" (Graham et al., 2000). This reality, stemming from the social construction of the meanings of

heritage in heterogeneous spaces is of potentially endless interest. There will always be heritage, it will always be contested and potentially exclusionary and there will always be critics to draw attention to and explain these exclusions. The challenge for geographers is to deepen the analysis; to not only explain contestation of spatial representation but to show also how the processes by which heritage, both in its material and discursive dimensions, is produced, managed and circulated are profoundly spatial as well.

A book entitled *The Geography of Heritage: Power, Culture, Economy* (Graham et al., 2000) is the most sustained effort to theorize an agenda for the geographical engagement with heritage, making the case that heritage is a thoroughly geographical phenomenon. Though it was intended as a corrective to the isolation of heritage within geography, detached from economic and cultural streams and forming a "self-sustaining if micro-scale theme", its influence was strongest in heritage studies. It appeared at a moment when this interdisciplinary area was beginning to blossom.[10]

The authors make the case that heritage and geography intersect in three principal ways (Graham et al., 2000, p. 255). First, they suggest that heritage phenomena have spatial characteristics, meaning that they can be located, they are distributed through space and that they are associated with different scales. Second, they argue that the inherently unstable and contingent significance of heritage, frequently expressed in the meanings attached to places, are best understood through the lens developed by cultural geographers that is attentive to power and representation (Duncan & Ley, 1993). Third, they propose that heritage can be an important component of economic development and place marketing strategies. Each of these areas of

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[10] Ten years on, the authors published a decennial reflection on the book's arguments and its impact (Tunbridge et al., 2010). This, tellingly, was published in the International Journal of Heritage Studies, not in a geography journal.

congruence is elaborated at length with nuanced discussion and many examples. Although the book does succeed in showing how heritage may be a feature of geographical processes, for the most part it offers a generalist approach, emphasizing the contestation resulting from the myriad ways heritage is produced and consumed. In their post-hoc decennial reflections the authors themselves note that much of the book is devoted to case studies of conflicts that emerge from a lack of clarity on the economics of heritage and "the consequences of the simple reality that heritage costs money but also may earn it" (Tunbridge et al., 2010, p. 3). I would add that there are two areas that should be further developed. The first is the spatiality of heritage, especially in relation to scale and mobility. The second is the distinct challenge posed by land use planning, property and political economy in cities. The latter, is, of course, related to the first when we recognize cities as relational entities, made and re-made through their human, political and economic connections.

2.4.1   A relational geography of heritage: Rethinking scale and mobility

Most of the ways in which heritage is discussed, used, critiqued and reproduced rely on naturalized assumptions about what scale is and how it operates. This dissertation encourages a reassessment of these assumptions. As scale is "one of the few boats crafted and launched by geographers", (Hoefle, 2006, p. 238) geography bears some responsibility for ensuring productive engagements with it. Understood and critiqued (in one of many possible definitions) as "a nested hierarchy of differentially sized and bounded spaces" (Marston et al., 2005, p. 417), scale is at the heart of geographical enquiry. These spaces, of course, refer to global, national, regional, local and bodily registers. Though commonly used by scholars as a methodological and analytical tool, and in practice as a political frame, the significance of scalar thinking is often taken for granted and has only recently come under scrutiny. Scholars have highlighted the

socially constructed nature of scales, their co-production, and the dimensions of power inherent in their creation and use (Marston, 2000). Much of this work, in crude terms, has been carried out by economic geographers keen to theorize the relationship between national and global economies in the context of postindustrial urban restructuring (for example, Brenner & Theodore, 2002). However, the insights produced in these discussions are important for the use of scale in the broadest terms. A particular challenge comes when we try to think about how horizontal activities and relationships (exemplified by networks, flows and mobility) exist within, across and between scales (whether or not they are socially produced or actually existing). Marston *et al* (2005, p. 422) wrote that "most empirical work is lashed to a relatively small number of levels. Once these layers are presupposed, it is difficult not to think in terms of social relations and institutional arrangements that fit their contours." While they go so far as to propose abandoning scale altogether, others have emphasized the need to think critically about how to conceptualize scale when writing about processes that don't fit neatly into the levels it prescribes.

If most academic writing on heritage presupposes scale in some way, one of the most explicit engagements with it appears in *The Geography of Heritage*, which includes four chapters with "scale" in the title (Graham et al., 2000). The authors recognize that different scales of heritage interact and overlap, frequently as a matter of contestation. However, though they start out by noting the messiness of scale, they go on to reinforce the separateness of scalar registers by comparing them and studying their dissonances or agreements. Thus, the four chapters correspond to different scales: local, national, continental and global. Here I build upon their contribution by asking how scalar designations affect conceptualizations of heritage. One way to do this is to think of scale relationally. Different scales of heritage are not only in conflict or

harmony, but rather come into being and are continually reworked in relation to one another; the reason for this is that the social relations that produce meaning are not limited to one scale. They exist in scalar frames but always simultaneously through interactions and relationships between them. The authors also make reference to "the standardization of professional practice" (Graham et al., 2000, p. 218) and the potential homogenization of heritage forms. It is such horizontal processes that need more attention because they unsettle the idea that scales exist as separate, vertical levels. It is by way of considering mobility that I propose to develop this attention.

Given the recent and still rising tides of mobility research, it is surprising that the intersections of this concept with heritage have not been considered. Indeed, scholars have gone so far as to herald the arrival of a "new mobilities paradigm" (Hannam et al., 2006) or a "mobilities turn" (Cresswell, 2011). While the usefulness of such declarations is questionable (Cresswell, 2010), attention to all manner of mobilities is no doubt vital to understanding our contemporary conditions. The "mobility turn" has come about partly as a result of attempts to fill in amorphous descriptors that have been used to make sweeping generalizations about globalization. "Flows", "connections", "networks" and similar terms were, until recently, accepted with little material evidence of their existence. The deepening theoretical sophistication of these discourses (Ong, 1999) has not detracted from the need for greater explanation and this is one of the reasons for the emergence of this approach which places mobility, and attendant concepts of immobility and moorings, at the centre of human experience. Here, to recognize that the world is interconnected by things and people on the move is not to give in to a narrative of deterritorialization, but to understand that territories (some more than others) are already in part constituted through their relationships with other places (Sheller & Urry, 2006).

Two relatively new ways of thinking about mobility are of interest to the present project, one focused primarily on socio-cultural dynamics of human mobility, the other on the political economic implications of interactions between cities. Within the former an agenda has developed around interrupting the "sedentarist" world view upon which much earlier social science research was based, in which mobility was exceptional, outside of the norm, disruptive to territorial stability and the enduring allure of home and place as containers for social relations and politics (Cresswell, 2011). The latter attempts to use mobility as a methodological and analytical tool to better understand processes of globalization and neoliberal urbanism. A primary interest of this work has been to study policy mobilities (McCann, 2011b). There has been little correspondence between these areas of research, likely due to the different theoretical and analytical traditions in which they developed, the first humanistic and sociological and the second poststructural and neo-Marxian. Here I propose that a relational analysis of heritage attentive to policy may contribute to both areas.

Mobilities research is interested in understanding the increasing pervasiveness and diversity of forms of movement in the contemporary world. Its authors attempt to distinguish their agenda from earlier research in related areas of transport studies and migration research, while simultaneously recognizing these areas as antecedents. For instance, unlike earlier work in transport geography, it is concerned with the power relations that undergird mobilities, as well as the construction of the meanings of mobility; it is hence both political and critical in orientation, but has at its core an effort to document and explain practices of mobility, the spaces and contexts within which they occur, and the representations and discourses that accompany them. Cresswell (2011, p. 552) has written that mobility "is as much about meaning as it is about mappable, calculable movement." As such, one of the primary interests has been in fleshing out

what happens between "A and B". Although there are "things", "information" and "ideas" on the move, the emphasis is overwhelmingly on human mobilities. The first of several progress reports on the topic of mobilities (Cresswell, 2011) includes mention of research on human travel by automobile, foot, airplane, canoe, train and bicycle. Virtual online mobilities have also been of particular interest. The increasing ease of travel and communication is tempered by a recognition that access to mobility as a resource may differ across visible and invisible markers of identity, including class, gender, ability, sexuality and ethnicity. The related attention to moorings and immobilities has also been a frequent motif (Hannam et al., 2006). Although there have been efforts to develop the relationship between mobility and place (Baerenholdt & Granas, 2010), the critique of sedentarism from which much of this research departs renders this problematic. It is not necessary to prioritize ideas of bounded, rooted places but it must be useful to consider how they are *bound up* with mobilities. Since heritage is often used to reinforce the uniqueness of places and to deepen the rootedness of whole, exclusionary senses of identity, mobility would appear a deeply disruptive force. Throughout the course of this dissertation we will see many examples that problematize this assumption.

Urban scholars, while not with heritage in view, have begun to consider how cities, as territorial entities, are increasingly in dynamic correspondence with one another, albeit in unequal and differentiated ways (McCann & Ward, 2011). The task here is to consider how interurban connections, such as those forged in the realms of policy, reflect and contribute to processes of globalization. In the context of neoliberal urban entrepreneurialism and competitiveness, where cities vie to attract certain kinds of business, immigrants and investment, some cities become leaders in urban policy. In China, cities look to Hong Kong and Shanghai, and more recently Shenzhen (Zhang, 2012); in North America, Vancouver and Portland's urban

planning strategies are watched carefully. "Policy agents", both official representatives of the state and a cast of others, are involved in circulating and finding policy models and ideas and adapting them to local conditions. The motivations animating this work are related to power: policy makers are not purely rational actors picking and choosing from an international smorgasbord of options (Peck, 2011): their activities are shaped by ideology, institutional arrangements, and path dependencies (McCann, 2011a, p. 209). Policy mobilities research draws on a number of theoretical referents, including the Neo-Marxian dialectics of fixity and flow (Harvey, 1989), and Massey's writings on the relationality of place (1994; 2005). Increasingly, urban policies are the products of the dynamic exchanges between the cities where they are elaborated. In the context of interurban competitions to be the most global, livable, hip, green, or historic – and ultimately to attract capital investment policy agents seek and share best practices. The domains of policy highlighted by scholars range from drug policy (McCann, 2008) to urban regeneration (González, 2011) to business improvement districts (Ward, 2006) to sustainability plans (Temenos & McCann, 2012). In Asia, policies referencing culture, either the "software" of the creative economy (Kong et al., 2006), the "hardware" of flagship cultural infrastructure (Kong, 2007), or symbolic architecture (Cartier, 2002), have begun to receive attention through perspectives attentive to inter-city connections. Heritage has rapidly been adopted as a feature of the cultural policy repertoire (in some places, such as Hong Kong, more recently than others, such as Singapore), yet it has not received much attention beyond place-based studies.

The study of mobile policies adds new social and political dimensions to our understanding of city-making in a globalizing world by honing in on the specific practices and representations through which urban spaces are connected. While it has long been recognized

that cities are the recipients of various economic, social and cultural "flows," the city itself has

sometimes been viewed as only ever on the receiving end. Doreen Massey (1994) has been

critical of this framing of "place" as the victim of a faceless "global". Taking her position on

board, the study of urban policy mobilities recognizes the dialectical relationship between the

city as a territorial entity and the city formed through global-relational networks. In other words,

"the jarring of a territorial politics with another geography of flows and interconnections"

(Massey, 2005, p. 14). Furthermore, since it undermines the hegemonic, all pervasive appearance

of globalization, it opens possibilities for progressive change. Although recent work has

identified the importance of attending to the "apparently mundane" practices of policy agents

(McCann, 2008; McCann 2011b), there is a need for much more research on the human

mobilities that put policy in motion. Policies are not inherently mobile, but rather are bundled,

packaged, (mis)represented, projected, shared, communicated by people through complex

power-laden social and political processes. Even where policies are not transferred or changed,

this is still a productive process. Here, the interest Cresswell (2010) has expressed in the

meaning of "what happens between A and B" is just as important as the end result.

     Anthony King's work (1984; 2004) on architecture as a "global culture" has investigated

the mobilities of city forms that one might think of as very solid and "sunken", embedded in the

material infrastructure of cities. He discusses the globalization of architectural forms, such as the

south Asian "bungalow" and the American skyscraper and their expansion from geographically

specifiable origins into ubiquitous and popular forms. This is a very material geography that

resonates with some of the same interests as the current work on policy mobilities. But by using

a different grammar, one not wedded to one idea like policy, the matter of King's research is

broader, running the gamut: "ideas, techniques, standards, design ideologies and the worldwide

diffusion of information, images, professional cultures and subcultures (of architecture, city planning, urban design, conservation)" (King, 2004, p. 32). Others working on urban policy mobilities have expressed skepticism at the ways their object of study has been framed. John Friedmann, for example, has asked for clarification "about what exactly is moving when policy travels." (quoted in Jacobs, 2012, p. 414). Certainly, people are traveling; they may be responsible for developing policy or simply for learning about it and translating it. McCann and others have also drawn attention to the material supports of policy on the move, which include powerpoint presentations, brochures, reports and other objects used to convey policy knowledge. It is important not to limit the scope of analysis to a specific idea of policy because there are so many people and things that contribute to its production. In particular, in Hong Kong, there is constant action (and mobility) surrounding heritage policy, including learning, capacity building, and research, but little in the way of substantive policy changes.

Although there has not yet been an in-depth attempt to develop an understanding of the conceptual relationship between heritage and mobility, there has been work that points in this direction. In the 1990s scholars established the connection between tourism mobilities and the valorization of heritage, but heritage landscapes were presented as static expressions of local places, thus in contradistinction with global movements (Chang & Yeoh, 1999). Furthermore, the growth of mass tourism became a threat to heritage (Graham et al., 2000, p. 22). Other work has hinted at interactions beyond the tourism-local heritage nexus. Beaumont's (2009) research on the Changi Prison as a site of memory, for instance, hints at the possibility of transnational or mobile heritage imaginary. The present project takes a different tack by considering the range of questions posed by heritage as an urban problem. It begins, contrary to the inherited impulse, by considering "relational space" as not threatening to heritage, but at the core of its global reach.

2.5   Conclusion

This chapter has introduced scholarly approaches to heritage within the context of the emergence of broad social and intellectual fascinations with the ways the past appears and is used in the present. It has noted the challenges of reckoning with heritage in urban settings, and considered Asian specificities related to heritage as a taken-for-granted universal category. The geography of heritage has thus far been wide-reaching in scope, touching upon issues related to identity, the political economy of the city as evidenced in consumption and the spatial restructuring under late capitalism. However, gaps in the discussion, as evinced the Graham *et al* (2000) volume, limit the horizon of the geographical understanding of the workings of heritage. In particular, the spatiality of heritage should be reconsidered in light of sustained critical attention directed towards key ideas that foreground spatial processes. For instance, the implications for heritage of Massey's work on the relationality of place (1991; 2005), understandings of scale as socially constructed heuristic (Marston et al., 2005), and writings on mobility have not been taken up in relation to heritage. The goal of this thesis is thus in part to offer a reworked geography of heritage that is responsive to global spatial processes that influence the ways places are made, contested and projected to the world. Moreover, the purpose is not only to bring this idea back a bit from the fringe at which it is currently located, but also to show what geography can contribute to interdisciplinary critical heritage studies. Hong Kong has begun to reckon with heritage as an aspect of its land-based political economy, its cultural transition, and its political landscape. It is in this place that a relational geography of heritage may be developed.

Chapter 3: Rereading the History of Heritage in Hong Kong

The Antiquities Advisory Board (AAB) devoted a considerable amount of time and energy after its formation in 1977 to the topic of commemorative plaques. A surprisingly simple idea provoked much discussion. The possibility of installing plaques to mark historically significant locations was first raised by R. H. Lobo, on behalf of the Rotary Club, in 1972 (Antiquities Advisory Board, 1977). The idea was then taken up by the Hong Kong Tourist Association, but not seriously considered until the introduction of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance (the Ordinance) in 1976. The discussion was then passed on to the AAB. It was decided that a programme would be developed involving plaques marking three types of locations: those where important buildings once stood, those related to significant historical figures, and those where key events had occurred.

Plaques were attractive for several reasons: they are an inexpensive method for showcasing heritage and history to local residents and visitors; they involve little investment or maintenance; perhaps most importantly, they do not require significant concessions by property owners. With the territory's heritage policy newly codified in law, the plaques would be a visible, tangible demonstration in the public sphere of the colonial government's nominal commitment to heritage. They were also ideally suited for Hong Kong, where few reminders of the past remained in the ceaselessly reinvented landscape. Thus, a plaque could be affixed to a modern high-rise building, and still serve its function of representing the past, long- or recently-vanished from view, replaced by a modern rendition on steel, concrete and glass. This practice was common in other cities, part of an emerging repertoire of heritage interpretation used for the purposes of tourism promotion and public education. The Board heard of the Greater London Council's blue ceramic plaques and of Vienna's practice of marking the many former places of

residence of W. A. Mozart (Antiquities Advisory Board, 1977). If plaques were a suitable gesture for historical European capitals, they represented a strategic direction for the Hong Kong government: recognizing the past with minimal disruptions to present and future growth.

The initiative was officially endorsed by the AAB on 3 October, 1977 and a press conference was held to announce the project and invite input from the public. A list of potential sites began to take shape: the former locations of the first Supreme Court, The Old Royal Mint, The Matheson Bungalow at the original Jardine Lookout, Lot No. 1 (the first plot of land auctioned by the British Government after the establishment of the colony); former places of residence of Sun Yat-sen, tropical medicine innovator Patrick Manson, and painter George Chinnery; and Possession Point and the former shorelines, lost to successive harbour reclamation schemes. It is obvious at first glance that the list is populated with places associated with colonial history. In 1979, the details for a trial run were finalized. The plaques would be plum coloured and elliptical in shape, fashioned in metal by the Prisons department. Text descriptions would appear in English and Chinese, side-by-side, with a note indicating sponsorship by the Antiquities Authority. Embossed images of the places described would also be presented. The first plaques were confirmed for the site of the original City Hall (to be affixed to the present Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corporation) and the Excelsior Hotel, the location of lot No. 1.

Several of the principal currents of early heritage conservation efforts in Hong Kong may be identified in this seemingly minor initiative. First, the eagerness of the AAB to distill descriptions of the city's lost landmarks for public viewing is part of a strategy for addressing the scarcity of historical elements of the built environment and of justifying the conditions that create this scarcity. Places that have been transformed or no longer exist may be made visible when marked with a plaque. This is not only a way to atone for past missteps; existing buildings

need not be retained if they may receive similar treatment in the future. Commemoration is, of course, a strategy for invoking and shaping collective memories (Till, 2005). Given, as we shall see, the lack of protection afforded to historic buildings and structures by the Ordinance, the plaques offer a way to recognize history within a framework oriented towards growth and development. Second, the fact that comparisons with other cities were evoked to justify the project is symptomatic of Hong Kong's approach to policy in many respects and also of early entrepreneurial city strategies. As the city-territory developed rapidly in the post-1945 period, the government continually faced new challenges in the domains of housing, transportation, employment and health. Drawing on knowledge and experience from other places, both Britain and elsewhere, was an important government strategy. As the plaques suggest, however, such practices were not only employed in the domains of social policy, but also in the interest of bolstering Hong Kong's image to attract tourists and investment. Third, the project proceeded with little public input, in spite of the appearance of efforts to solicit it. The failure of the government to engage the wider community may indicate a lack of interest in heritage among the general public; there were many more important matters to attend to. Furthermore, while the AAB invited comments on how to remember places that no longer exist, it was reluctant to accept advice on actually existing historical buildings.

The factors motivating the implementation of this early project are familiar to readers of the politics of heritage conservation. Tourism, education and place-making are latched to the heritage bandwagon in many places. The problems raised are equally familiar; at stake is authorship over representations of memory and identity, multiple and contested readings of the meaning of history and place, and differing perspectives on the uses of heritage. Here, however, I

propose to use this early initiative as a point of departure for a discussion that explores the history of heritage in late colonial Hong Kong.

3.1   Presuppositions

This chapter will deepen the analysis of the contemporary reassessment of heritage and resulting policy transformations by examining its historical context. As will be discussed in Chapter 4, the ongoing discussion began after 1997 is very much of the present, imbricated with a host of political and socio-cultural currents that are time and place-specific to post-handover Hong Kong. Interpretation of struggles over key sites, such as the Star Ferry and Queen's Piers, the Central Market, and Government Hill, leads analysis to identify moments in the recent past and similar kinds of debates – environmental activism, the harbour preservation movement, district-level community activism – as antecedents. These are, of course, directly related strands of an urban social movement centred on democratic political reforms such as universal suffrage and an end to the collusion between government officials and property tycoons, along with broader concerns about the repercussions of the dissolution of political autonomy since the return to Chinese sovereignty (Chung, 2011). But much more can be said about the contemporary situation by deepening analysis of its historical origins. Heritage became a point of contention in part due to the shortcomings of the Ordinance. The historical context in which this policy was developed had a direct bearing on its content, and hence its omissions. Most contemporary assessments begin simply with the fact of the existence of the policy; by better understanding it, we may be better suited to envision alternatives. This chapter thus brings into view a longer historical trajectory that includes the creation of the institutional and administrative framework for heritage in the 1970s. Not unlike in North America and Europe around the same time, there were heated debates over the demolition of historical buildings in the years surrounding the

introduction of the Ordinance. The involvement of expatriates in heritage advocacy reinforced perceptions of elitism and skepticism that this issue held relevance to Hong Kongers. It must be understood that the very idea of protecting heritage held deeply colonial implications. The chapter will argue, however, that this largely unsuccessful movement is not unrelated to contemporary struggles in the ways it sought to disrupt government decision-making premised on generating revenue from property development. A case involving a centrally-located, publicly owned historic building, the Kowloon-Canton railway terminus, will be examined.

This discussion will present several arguments that are crucial for understanding the present situation. First, Hong Kong's heritage conservation policy was an attempt by the colonial government to accommodate spaces for the valorization of material culture within a growth-oriented framework. Thus the policy is reluctant to allow buildings to be conserved or preserved lest redevelopment potential, in particular the rights of private owners to profit from investment, be negatively impacted. As others have pointed out (Cheng & Lau, 2012), the status of "Monument" was less likely to be awarded to buildings in the urban areas of Hong Kong than archaeological sites and villages in the New Territories and outlying islands. This is a result of the specificity of the Hong Kong context, where serious post-war land shortages forced the demolition of many historical structures in the urban core before they were recognized to have cultural and historic value. The built heritage of the outlying areas also happened to represent principally local Chinese cultures in contrast with a small number of colonial structures of the urban core. The geography of remembrance also speaks to the valorization of ancient relics and the influence of archaeology in the development of the policy. This orientation was never revised and still today the language of the Ordinance emphasizes historicity over social or cultural value.

As a product of colonial governance, the heritage policy and the debates that followed its implementation reveal complex power dynamics that involved the imposition of Eurocentric modes of interpretation. It is argued here that the policy set-up was developed in a relational fashion, both with respect to perceived local "needs" as well as the emerging best practices in Britain and elsewhere. The policy language and instruments that were drawn from the UK to this very different context were altered not so much to respond to the specificities of the setting as to identify and represent elements of a local culture whose treatment as "heritage" would not undermine economic growth. Thus, *perceived local needs* were just that; efforts on the part of the government to identify, rescue and represent artefacts and places of significance for local residents. Ironically, these were of little meaning to the majority of Hong Kongers whose family roots lay elsewhere. Moreover, the government was unwilling or unable to meaningfully engage residents in these discussions. The case could be made, and was by various parties in the 1970s, that ancient Chinese heritage is of foremost importance, and that landscapes with colonial associations are of secondary interest and perhaps best forgotten. But re-reading key debates of the 1970s reveals that these assertions emerged from conversations that unfolded within colonial government institutions, between various upper middle class, professional factions, and in fact, involved a very limited Hong Kong public. The reasons for these exclusions are complex, but it will be argued here that since the socio-political realities of the 1970s did not permit meaningful participation by residents in the identification and elaboration of their own heritage, let alone most other government institutions, we cannot state in hindsight whether the colonial buildings should have been retained and reimagined, or that it was beneficial for the populace of the city to raze them.

3.2 An Archaeology of Heritage

This chapter presents a history of heritage in Hong Kong. This is a curious task. Although heritage is concerned with the past, it is, as an object of study, quite different from history. Moreover, the methods used to study it are quite distinct from those used to study history. At a recent interdisciplinary gathering of critically-oriented heritage researchers, a plenary speaker quipped "and this is the moment when the historians get up and leave the room," to the chuckles of the audience[11]. The "moment" was the suggestion that social constructionism is the appropriate lens through which to understand heritage. This, of course, would be untenable to many historians who are more concerned with reconstructing or interpreting the past through a realist lens. If anything, heritage studies and history may be described as *faux amis* (false friends), a French term denoting words that appear to share similarities but in fact are unrelated. If heritage does nothing but distort history, and if the study of heritage is preoccupied with explaining and understanding these distortions, it must be beneficial to understand how they are produced historically and transform over time. It is for this reason that studies of heritage should pay greater attention to the history of their object of study than has been the case recently (Harvey, 2001). For David C. Harvey (2006, p. 19), such a history is not chronological but rather "a history of power relations that have been formed and operate via the deployment of the heritage process." The reading of power here is limited by the use of English language sources but nevertheless reveals the problems related to the production of a heritage discourse.

For the present purposes Foucault's methodological metaphor of "archaeology" is an apt approach. Archaeology, as a science concerned with reading history by uncovering and

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[11] Observed at the International Association for Critical Heritage Studies meeting in Gothenburg, Sweden, June, 2012.

monumentalizing relics from the past, bears little in common with Foucault's "archaeology", a historiography informed by a poststructuralist understanding of the workings of language, society and politics. *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (Foucault, 1972) is a post-hoc elaboration and refinement of the philosophy which guided his earlier study of medical history, *The Birth of the Clinic* (1973), and *The Order of Things* (1977). The philosophy underscores a historical method based on studying the development and constitution of discursive formations within socio-political constellations: "the archaeological description of discourses is deployed in the dimension of a general history; it seeks to discover that whole domain of institutions, economic processes, and social relations on which a discursive formation can be articulated" (Foucault, 1972, p. 164). The medical discourse that Foucault uses as a case study was elaborated to address non-discursive matters of the body and is reproduced in the workings of power relations that find expression in institutions. He writes that this discourse "as a practice concerned with a particular field of objects, finding itself in the hands of a number of statutorily designated individuals, and having certain functions to exercise in society, is articulated on practices that are external to it, and which are not themselves of a discursive order" (Foucault, 1972, p. 164).

Similarly, heritage discourse is concerned with material stuff and articulates institutionalized forms of practice by which this stuff is treated. An awareness of this relationship between the discursive and non-discursive is particularly useful for thinking about heritage, which is too often considered either in discursive terms, via critical constructionism, or from a materialist, practice-oriented perspective that ignores discourse entirely. Canguilhem's work has proven particularly influential for Foucault, and his approach to intellectual historiography may be useful for us here as well. For Canguilhem (quoted in Foucault, 1972, p. 4), "the history of a concept is not that of its progressive refinement, its continuously increasing rationality, its

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abstract gradient, but that of its various fields of constitution and validity, that of its successive rules of use, that of the many theoretical contexts in which it developed and matured." Following this, we cannot take for granted the ways "heritage" is framed in the language of policy documents and public discourse. Its inscription in the Ordinance is impermanent and does not determine the ways of thinking and feeling about this concept in different individual and collective spheres. In fact, the creation of the Ordinance marked a "rule of use" which limited the refinement and development of the idea of heritage.

It is important to note the unique facets of the colonial setting in which the heritage policy was created. The literature on colonial urbanism has emphasized the various ways colonizers exercised and realized power through the production of city space but also the ways in which residents resisted or benefited from their relationships with those in positions of authority (Yeoh, 1996; Kusno, 2000). Much of this work is informed by poststructural theory; power is understood not as a unidirectional operation of domination, but rather a diffuse and dynamic process evident not only in politics and economics, but also in the mundane interactions and places that make up city spaces. Geographers in particular have shown the material manifestations of these relationships as reflected in buildings and landscapes (Jacobs, 1996; Yeoh, 2001). The built environment does not neatly reflect binaries of domination and resistance, but rather the complexity and ambiguity of hybrid subjectivities and everyday experiences shaped by colonial governance (Chu, 2012). Although Hong Kong shares aspects of a common colonial urbanism with other cities, it is also unique. The colonial city is most often understood as a historical formation that began with European control and ended with independence. Such a view does not suit Hong Kong, where colonization did not finish with independence but rather, arguably, inaugurated a new form of colonization by the PRC (Szeto, 2006). As Cartier (2002, p.

234) writes, "decolonization was a move to the future but not to independent territoriality. Rather it was a return to a historical sovereignty of its origins – in some sense, a back to the future experience." And Cartier further points out that since Hong Kong did not exist as a coherent territory or city before the arrival of the British, it can hence be said to be almost entirely the product of colonization and the regional and global dynamics of trade networks and interactions with greater China and beyond. Finally, in part because of the long duration of British presence in the territory, the meaning and nature of colonialism shifted gradually throughout the twentieth century, to the point where its return to Chinese sovereignty had very little perceptible impact on the day to day workings of the territory and the lives of its residents.[12]

The literature on colonial governance in Hong Kong consists in part of historical studies of specific social and urban issues, such as housing (Smart, 2006), politics (Ngo, 1999), and religion (Smith, 2005), in the period up to 1960s. There was a flurry of writing considering the significance of Hong Kong's colonial experience from the outlook of its end around the handover in 1997 (MacPherson, 1997; Abbas, 1997b; Mathews et al., 2007) but comparatively little focused on the intervening "late colonial" years. In the late 19th century and through the first decades of the 1900s, the most tangible Hong Kong manifestation of colonial power in urban space was the Residential Registry Ordinance of 1888, which codified racial segregation of residential neighbourhoods. Hong Kong was not segregated upon its establishment and this ordinance was the product of pressure from European communities coming into increasingly close contact with rapidly growing Chinese neighbourhoods (Chu, 2012). The policy mandated the reservation of lands on the higher elevations of Hong Kong Island, which benefited from

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[12] The case could be made that the greatest impacts of the handover were felt long before and long after 1997. The emigration of the late 80s and early 90s was provoked in part by fear. In the 2000s, growing integration with the Mainland is creating feelings of unease.

breezes and thus cooler temperatures, for European (single family) housing. The *de facto*

Chinese city grew up on either side of the waterfront Central business district. The planning

regulations that inscribed this division were premised on racist pathologies of hygiene and social

order that spread through colonial networks in the late 19th century (Home, 1997). Furthermore,

for several decades in the second half of the nineteenth century, Chinese residents were required

to carry a pass and a lit lamp in the streets after 10pm (Bremner & Lung, 2003, p. 226). The lines

that separated the British from the Chinese quarters of the city dissolved in practice in the 1920s

and 30s but were not formally removed until the repeal of the Hill District Reservation

Ordinance in 1946. Though colonial institutions continued to influence the material landscape,

they arguably became less visible as the government focused on policies of social development

and housing (Smart, 2006) and as the public service began to replace expatriate Europeans with

Chinese Hong Kongers who had received English-language credentials at local universities

(Chan, 1997). Thus, if it is possible to locate the exercise of power in the direct coercive

regulation of space at the height of the 19th century and early 20th century, as modes of

governance later shifted to more benevolent forms, the dynamics became more complex.

As a comparison, in Indonesia the colonial government's "cultural policy" emerged

through efforts on the part of the Dutch to atone for past violence and wrongdoing. The cultural

policy allowed for the celebration and recognition of local cultural forms within a "civilizing"

framework. Architecture from this period, as shown by Kusno (2000), reflects a hybrid space of

indigenized colonial subjects working with local forms but within an overall colonial framework.

Though no such policy was adopted in Hong Kong, colonial policies, including those that found

expression in the urban form, began to take on a flavour of responsiveness to social needs, while

maintaining a mandate propelled by an interest in economic growth. It is precisely for this reason

– that colonial power became less visible in Hong Kong in the final decades of the colony – that attention should be paid to its manifestations in the final decades of the colony. The heritage Ordinance, studied through an archaeology of the discursive conditions that allowed it to exist and the government framework that executed it, is one such manifestation.

3.3   Historical Context of the 1960s and 1970s

The institutional framework for heritage conservation in Hong Kong was created in the 1970s following the most tumultuous decades in the territory's short history. Following the end of the Japanese occupation in 1945 the territory saw a prolonged period of population growth due to the arrival of refugees fleeing the civil war in mainland China. The resulting growing pains included labour strife and malcontent with the colonial government which erupted in violent clashes at several moments. Notably, protests over a rise in the price of a ticket for the Star Ferry in 1966 became an expression for broader contempt of the colonial government (Scott, 1989). The government towed the line, turning its focus to social infrastructure for the rising population, notably embarking on a massive public housing scheme in 1954. The emphasis was on creating the conditions for continued economic growth by ensuring social stability. In resettling 1,000,000 squatters by 1971, the government freed up land for private development while preempting any resistance that might have emerged through outright squatter clearance (Smart, 1989). It was incongruous for heritage to appear on the agenda at the tail end this time when the government was preoccupied with more practical matters. A number of factors made it so.

A tangible result of the government's pursuit of socio-political stability through housing provision was the emergence of New Town developments outside of the dense urban cores of Kowloon and Hong Kong Island. Hong Kong's New Towns are planned, high density, mixed-

use communities constructed on agricultural land alongside older villages in the New Territories. The impetus for this form of development was a fear of the deleterious effects of overcrowding in the years following the liberation of Hong Kong from the Japanese occupation in 1945 and the realization that pursuing development in rural areas would be both more easily and quickly accomplished than improving living conditions solely in urban areas (Bristow, 1984, p. 71). The opening of many previously isolated and unpopulated areas to intensive construction and infrastructure development raised new questions about the future of Chinese villages, archaeological sites and other places of significance that long pre-dated the arrival of the British. The comparatively early recognition of the importance of protecting these sites from destruction is evinced in their concentration among the early monuments declared under the Ordinance (see Table 1).

Table 1 Declared Monuments in Hong Kong: 1978-1983

Site	Date	Location	Type of site
1. Rock Carving at Big Wave Bay	1978	Southern Hong Kong Island	Archaeological
2. Rock Carving at Kau Sai Chau	1979	Sai Kung, New Territories	Archaeological
3. Rock Carving at Tung Lung Island	1979	Sai Kung, New Territories	Archaeological
4. Rock Inscription at Joss House Bay	1979	Sai Kung, New Territories	Archaeological
5. Rock Carving at Skek Pik	1979	Lantau Island	Archaeological
6. Rock Carving at Po Toi Island	1979	Islands District	Archaeological
7. Tung Chung Fort	1979	Lantau Island	Defense
8. Duddell Street Steps and Gas Lamps	1979	Hong Kong Island	Colonial
9. Tung Lung Fort	1980	Sai Kung, New Territories	Defense
10. Sam Tung Uk Village	1981	Tsuen Wan, New Territories	Chinese village
11. Fan Lau Fort	1981	Island near Lantau	Defense
12. Old District Office North	1981	Tai Po, New Territories	Colonial
13. Sheung Yiu Village	1981	Sai Kung, New Territories	Chinese village
14. Rock Carving at Cheung Chai	1982	Cheung Chau Island	Archaeological
15. Tin Hau Temple	1982	Hong Kong Island	Traditional Chinese
16. Rock Carving at Lung Ha Wan	1983	Sai Kung, New Territories	Archaeological
17. Island House at Yuen Chau Tsai	1983	Tai Po, New Territories	Traditional Chinese

Site	Date	Location	Type of site
18. Site of Chinese Customs Station at Junk Island	1983	Sai Kung, New Territories	Colonial
19. Man Lun Fung Ancestral Hall	1983	Yuen Long, New Territories	Traditional Chinese
20. Remains of Ancient Kiln at Wun Yiu Village	1983	Tai Po, New Territories	Traditional Chinese

Archaeological explorations had begun as early as the mid-1920s and were later understood to offer an important corrective to the "barren rock" historiography, placing early Hong Kong settlements in a broader regional context (Meacham, 2008). The Archaeology Department at Hong Kong University and a semi-professional Archaeological Society were influential in this regard. In reference to early efforts to regulate archaeological digs with permits, Solomon Bard, then Chair of the Archaeological Society, stated that "such law is common in all countries of the world where ancient relics are protected by regulation" (SCMP, 1976). This indicates a desire on the part of the Archaeological Society to create a policy framework to allow the government to better regulate archaeological activity, ensuring protection of relics and ruins. The Society succeeded, but it also influenced the heritage policy more generally, in particular the language on historicity and antiquity it contains. The difference between an archaeological artifact and a heritage object is worth noting. They share overlapping meanings but are quite different; archaeologists place greater emphasis on age, finding value and interest in antiquity and historical reconstruction. Moreover, archaeology as a science involves the technical practice of excavation and hence is interested in objects and structures partially or fully buried. Artifacts unearthed by archaeologists may also be understood to hold heritage significance, but this is not necessarily the case. The fact that early conversations about heritage in Hong Kong were foregrounded by archaeological interests contributed to an emphasis on

historicity rather than social value. As the conversation developed, however, a Heritage Society emerged as a separate entity, in part thanks to the assistance of archaeologists.

Another point worthy of mention is that the government showed a growing interest in culture in the 1960s and 70s. Hong Kong has long suffered from the reputation of being a "cultural desert"[13], lacking institutions for arts and culture, and perhaps, as would argue Bourdieu (via Kong, 2007), lacking the cultural capital required to build or nurture such institutions in the first place. In the 1970s the government took note and embarked on a programme to invest in the development of flagship museums in a cultural precinct in eastern Tsim Sha Tsui. This was the responsibility of the Leisure and Cultural Services department, the same department responsible for heritage. The effort was not only about the city's reputation, as seen through the eyes of visitors and tourists; it was also concerned with investing in the cultural life of the territory for the sake of the Hong Kong people. Cultural institutions were presented as gifts to the civic realm. They would offer enriching educational experiences that would benefit the city's residents *and* boost its reputation as an international tourist destination. The museums would include global developments in science and technology, spaces for performances and touring art exhibits, as well as local cultural heritage. But the nature of city-territory, forged by capitalist exchange, did not easily lend itself to representation in museum displays. More generally, whether or not it is possible to create a museum collection, let alone a museum-going public, where neither pre-existed is debatable. The Museums Select Committee, operating under the Urban Services Department, set this as its task. It would later pursue the adaptive reuse of

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[13] According to Luk (1991, p. 660), Hong Kong acquired this reputation as early as the 1920s and 30s based on the perspectives of visiting northern Chinese intellectuals who criticized the city for its conservatism and colonial atmosphere.

heritage buildings as museums, but initially there was a preference for modern buildings with air conditioning and well-planned public access (Urban Services Department, 1979).

There were also extramural factors at play. In 1972, the Hong Kong government signed the World Heritage Convention, a symbolic commitment to participating in an international dialogue on heritage. The Convention established the UNESCO World Heritage List, which includes natural and cultural sites of "universal value". The commitment is symbolic because it is non-binding and merely encourages signatories to meet standards relating to the sites on the list (Hazen, 2008), none of which are in Hong Kong. Nevertheless, signing the Convention did informally require the government to invest in the development of policies and capacities in the interest of safeguarding the few remaining heritage sites and structures in the territory.

3.4 The Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance

The policy framework for heritage conservation in Hong Kong is provided by the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance. Although it was promulgated in 1971 it did not come into effect until 1976 when a provisional Antiquities Advisory Board was appointed. Most contemporary accounts mention only the latter date; the five year delay was due to the difficulty of establishing the capacities required for the policy's implementation, including research expertise and conservation guidelines. When discussions were undertaken to form a provisional AAB, the Public Works Department was forced to look outside the territory to find a suitable candidate to fill the position of Secretary because there were no local university programmes training experts in this area. In 1971 *Eddie* in Hong Kong wrote to *Noel* in Australia to inquire as to whether any of the graduates of the Oriental Studies programme at the Australian National University might be educated in Chinese history and have enough knowledge of archaeology "to be able to recognise a relic" ([Eddie], 1971). The response, written on stationary from a hotel in

Taipei, offered to circulate a job advertisement. By 1974 the Ordinance had still not taken effect and this was blamed in part of the lack of candidates for the position of secretary ([Antiquities Advisory Board], 1974).

The Ordinance (Government of Hong Kong, 1976), serves several purposes: it creates an administrative framework, explains the language through which heritage is known and interpreted, and defines the scope of the government's responsibilities (personal interview, October 4, 2010). The administrative set-up identifies the Secretary for Home Affairs as the Chief Authority on heritage. The Authority is also charged with appointing the AAB, composed of a Chair (the Director of Urban Services, acting for the Secretary for Home Affairs), the Secretary for the New Territories and five other experts in relevant fields of expertise. The role of the AAB is purely advisory; it provides advice on how best to manage and expand upon the territory's roster of relics and antiquities. It does not have executive authority, nor does it have staff or funding (apart from that of the associated Antiquities and Monuments Office, AMO). When a potential addition to the list is identified, the AAB reviews research prepared by staff in the AMO and agrees on a recommendation to put forth to the Secretary of Home Affairs. The provisional Board appointed in 1976 included two official and five unofficial members. Though an independent body, it included members of the government service. The presence of public servants among the Board's members led some to question its impartiality. An interviewee who was a founding member of the Hong Kong Heritage Society called the AAB an "internal, circular, rubber-stamping machine," (personal interview, October 4, 2010). By this he meant that the decisions of the Board were influenced by the government and other stakeholders; they were not unbiased expert assessments reflecting research findings. The informant noted that this changed when the Board shifted to all unofficial members, and further with reforms in 1987.

The Ordinance allows the Authority, after considering advice from the AAB, to "declare any place, building, site or structure, which the Authority considers to be of public interest by reason of its historical or archaeological or palaeontological significance, a monument, historical building or archaeological or palaeontological site or structure" (Government of Hong Kong, 1976). The inclusion of archaeological and palaeontological value is indicative of the influence of archaeology on early heritage discourses. For the purpose of this analysis, we will note this conflation because it demonstrates the emphasis on historicity explained above. Architectural and social significance are not included in the basic premise of the Ordinance. In many respects the treatment of archaeological artifacts in the policy is more straightforward than that of buildings, the values of which are more susceptible to interpretation.

One of the main limitations of the Ordinance is its inability to recognize that privately owned properties may hold heritage significance for wider publics. This may be understood in relation to the operation of the Hong Kong land market. There are several important ideas here which will be developed in relation to questions about heritage throughout the thesis. First and foremost, the scarcity of land combined with government positive non-intervention results in redevelopment being highly profitable. The state control over the release of new lands for development, a fundraising mechanism developed early on in by the colonial administration, maintains high demand and ever-increasing value (Endacott, 1964). Where there is a difference between the permitted and actual intensity of land use, as specified by the permitted plot ratio (gross floor area to building height), most property owners would plan to increase the land rent either through sale or redevelopment where permitted. When a historically significant building or site is located on the property in question, the government may propose that the status of "monument" may be declared. However, the Ordinance allows for the property owner to resist

this designation as it infringes on the right to redevelop the property. Indeed, in 1979 the Annual Report of the AAB (p. 5) notes that "the experience of the board has generally been that its advice on the preservation of monuments is more likely to be accepted where there is no pressing alternative use for the site." The same year eleven buildings were considered for monument status but removed from the list due to resistance from property owners. The difficulty of limited public interest in private heritage properties is not unique to Hong Kong, but policies elsewhere do not provide so much freedom to owners. They may instead offer incentives to encourage conservation and maintenance (Listokin et al., 1998), a direction that would come later in Hong Kong.

As mentioned, "monuments" receive statutory protection by the government; they may not be demolished and may only legally be altered with government permission. There are other categories of recognition for structures that are not afforded this status. Buildings or structures of "lesser importance" may be awarded one of three historic grades after a review by the AAB. The graded approach, modeled after the English Heritage grading system, was not included in the original ordinance. It was considered only in 1979, in part after research on other jurisdictions inspired by early challenges to the Hong Kong policy. Unlike the British system, not all graded buildings in Hong Kong receive statutory protection. Modification and demolition are possible where such interventions are deemed appropriate. Evaluation criteria are broader than for monuments and include historical interest, architectural value, authenticity, social value, and rarity. Grade I buildings are said to have "outstanding", Grade II "special", and Grade III "some" merit (Yu, 2008a) . It is unsurprising that it is difficult to make the case for retaining graded buildings given the language through which their value is considered. Although the

grading system offers no statutory protection, the AAB may propose that monument status may be awarded to a graded historical building facing demolition.

The adoption of the Ordinance coincided with the redevelopment of several prominent buildings in Central Hong Kong and Kowloon. These projects tested the intent of the policy and several important questions emerged. In particular, could structures that date not from the 19th century, but rather the early 20th century be awarded the status of "monument"? Furthermore, does the policy have the capacity to recognize colonial buildings in areas of the city with high land value? Would the recommendations of the AAB be considered in decisions by the Antiquities Authority? These questions and others emerged when it became clear that equations of land economics and politics heavily influenced the government's approach to the heritage question. Onlookers in expatriate professional spheres perceived this direction as highly problematic and sought to intervene in an organized manner with the formation of the Hong Kong Heritage Society (HKHS).

3.5   The Hong Kong Heritage Society

The Hong Kong Heritage Society (HKHS) was founded in 1977 from a loosely organized network of professionals fighting to prevent the demolition of the Kowloon-Canton Railway (KCR) Terminus. As interest and participation grew, the emphasis shifted and broadened to a more general focus on heritage. HKHS was formed upon the advice of Lord Duncan-Sandys, the former British Secretary of State and head of Europa Nostra, a European heritage conservation body. The group's first official meeting, organized when the KCR campaign was already in progress, was held at St. John's Cathedral on Garden Road, just up the hill from the Supreme Court. As required of all politically-oriented associations under the Societies Ordinance, the HKHS was officially registered with the Police Department, its constitution and regulations

governing membership and meetings placed on the official record. The group elaborated a long-term mandate of preserving "what is best" in Hong Kong's human environment, and a more detailed aim "to represent, express and encourage interest and involvement in Hong Kong's heritage" (Hong Kong Heritage Society, 1977). The definition of heritage therein was broad, including "buildings and artifacts of historic, aesthetic, cultural or public interest and traditional activities of cultural and social significance." From its inception, the HKHS had a political orientation. It formed in part due to the inability of the AAB, under constraints imposed by the government, to carry out its mandate. It thus operated as a concern group, opposing the dominant ideologies espoused by the state and questioning its decision-making processes.

HKHS members were mainly professional expatriates from the English-speaking world, working in architecture and planning or academia. Mailing addresses for the HKHS are care-of the Hong Kong Institute of Architects, indicating a close relationship with this group (Hong Kong Heritage Society, n.d.). The membership also included the stay-at-home spouses of working expats and several students. Activities revolved around efforts to protect a number of "threatened" Western-style buildings. In this sense, in spite of its broad mandate, the activities of the group can be seen as responding to local plans and circumstances rather than proactively lobbying government. Due to the nature of its work, the organization mainly responded to issues as they arose and didn't manage to devise a long term plan or agenda.

The HKHS recognized the need to attract the support of Hong Kong Chinese people in order to achieve a greater level of legitimacy. Although it operated primarily in English, efforts were made to translate written materials into Chinese. Hong Kong Heritage Society was translated as *Heung gong man mat hok wui* (direct translation as Hong Kong cultural artifact scholarly society). Outreach and recruitment became key items on the agenda and the net was

cast wide (personal interview, October 4, 2010). The main targets were university students because it was thought that, due to their assumed cultural capital, they would share an affinity with older buildings or, that a youthful zeal of engagement would spark a greater awareness among the local public. Students recruited from The University of Hong Kong (HKU) took up volunteer responsibilities including typing and translation. The HKHS also sought support among university students by sending petitions to student associations at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) and HKU for circulation and endorsement. Other strategies for broadening engagement included publishing articles in the Chinese press, engaging the grassroots local media, liaising with Chinese academics, and forming partnerships with community associations, including the Tsim Sha Shui Kaifong Association [14].

Although recruitment initiatives did not obtain beyond nominal levels of success, the matter of support from the Chinese community was not trivial. With a core membership of expats, the HKHS was easily painted as an elite organization interested primarily in defending the waning materials of the British Empire. As Cuthbert (1984) suggested in one of the earliest scholarly examinations of heritage conservation in Hong Kong, the movement was easily seen as bourgeois and colonial in orientation. In a context where the government response to the needs of its constituents necessarily revolved around social reproduction (employment, housing, education, health), retaining elements of the built environment for their cultural significance was not a priority. Thus finding support among local communities was an effort to transcend the inevitable charge of elitism that the HKHS confronted from its creation. There is no easy

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[14] Kaifong associations are community-based mutual aid organizations. They were established by the government in the 1950s to mediate between the state and residents in areas of public interest. As the standard of living increased in the following decades, and as the government took on a more direct service-provision role, the importance of these organizations declined, along with their funding (Lau, 1981).

explanation for the failure in this regard. It is perhaps possible to venture that the Society's efforts were met with disinterest. But it may be a stretch to state that the predominant view was that colonial buildings, perhaps with a few exceptions, are best destroyed.

The government supported the latter view with little evidence to substantiate it. Their perspective was that the activities of the HKHS were an exercise in colonial nostalgia and that the true heritage of local Hong Kong-Chinese residents lay in the New Territories, particularly its historic villages and natural features. In this view, the colonial buildings meant little to Chinese residents of the territory, or worse, were damaging reminders of subjugation and figurative and literal violence. The KCR Railway Station, the Hong Kong Club building, the Central Post Office and other colonial buildings that the organization fought to save obviously had very different histories, uses and meanings. Conveniently, however, they shared in common the fate of lying on centrally located, potentially profitable land.

The following account of a confrontation between the HKHS and the government explores this incongruence. The Society's campaigns expressed a form of colonial desire that is met with capitalist aspirations for land development, masquerading as a form of benevolent cooperation with local Hong Kong Chinese. This discussion will emphasize the political dynamics of heritage contestation in the years following the introduction of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance and the creation of the AAB. This debate and others of the same period may serve as a comparative frame for heritage contestation in the post-handover period. In the 1970s there was already fierce debate about whether the retention of colonial buildings served to replicate colonial domination. This still resonates in the post-1997 period, as Hong Kongers seek to retain colonial buildings and recast their meanings.

3.6   The Kowloon-Canton Railway Terminus

Construction of the KCR Terminus (see Figure 1) began in 1910 and the station opened

its doors in March, 1916. The architect for the project, A.B. Hubback, was invited to Hong

Figure 1: KCR Rail Terminus c. 1950 (photo from Gwulo Hong Kong)

Kong from the Federated Malay States. The terminus was located at the tip of the Kowloon

Peninsula, overlooking Victoria Harbour, with the growing skyline of Hong Kong Island and

Victoria Peak in the distance. Few landmark buildings anywhere in the world had such a

privileged vantage of city life, at once teeming in the harbour and still in the distant shimmering

skyline. Architecturally the building was neo-Grecian, featuring tapered columns, carved

cornices and "scalloped capitals". Its pedigree, however, was not reducible to European origins.

Members of the Heritage Society pointed out that this was "a style which mainland China still

borrows upon to this day, and is no more foreign in origin than nearly any other building in Hong

Kong" (SCMP, 1977d). The building's façade was mainly composed of red brick and granite. Its

layout was U-shaped, adaptive reuse thus offering the possibility of greatly increasing the floor

area. Grand it was, designed as a gateway to China and, in fact, the end of a line connecting to

the Trans-Siberian route leading all the way to Europe. For years, it served this purpose for long-

distance travelers. For Hong Kongers, however, its presence was more modest. It was the starting

point for short trips to the New Territories or visits across the border in neighbouring mainland

provinces. One interviewee recalled little more about the station than impressions gained while

passing through it on school outings (personal interview, July 31, 2010). This is likely a common

memory; that of a building slightly outside of the everyday – a place visited only on rare and

special occasions when one's route required it.

The relocation of the train terminus to nearby Hung Hom was set in motion in 1967,

having been recommended almost two decades earlier in Sir Patrick Abercrombie's planning

study (1948). Over the coming years plans for the building and the land upon which it stood

solidified. The move would free up land for public uses and commercial development in

centrally located Tsim Sha Tsui district. The new red line of the MTR linking Kowloon to Hong

Kong Island would include a stop nearby and the land uses in this area had become focused on

tourism and retail; the train station was no longer the best use of land in this setting. Instead, the

Development Permission Area Plan (DPAP) specified that a swath of land from the tip of the

peninsula leading east, along with a portion reclaimed from the harbour, be used for cultural facilities. Thus, the government announced that the terminus building would be replaced with a new Cultural Centre. Although construction would not begin until much later, the rail terminus was deemed a liability and slated for demolition, with the exception of its clock tower. According to D. W. McDonald (McDonald, 1976), director of Public Works, this was a concession granted due to public pressure. It was also convenient; the tower had a small footprint and could be reserved without compromising the overall plan.[15]

Efforts to save the KCR building had begun quietly in 1970 when the Kowloon Residents' Association wrote to the colonial secretary to object to the building's demolition. The Tsim Sha Tsui Kaifong Welfare Association and Hong Kong Institute of Architects wrote similar letters in the mid-1970s but a public campaign only emerged with the formation of the Heritage Society in 1977 (SCMP, 1977c). The earlier involvement of neighbourhood-based groups is noteworthy because the cause later became weighted with colonial associations. For anyone to challenge the government's plan was a tall order. They would need to prove not only that the building was an example of heritage worth preserving, which the Ordinance did not permit, but also present alternative plans for the Cultural Centre. To do so, the HKHS argued that it was feasible and desirable to locate the cultural facility inside the renovated KCR building. While the government had early on rejected this possibility due to the condition of the building, the campaigners provided evidence to the contrary. In addition to arguing that it was economically and practically possible to retain the building, the HKHS continually refuted the government's claims that the plans for the site had progressed too far to be altered.

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[15] This small gesture was almost shelved due to pressure from government architects concerned about the "visual integrity" of the plans for the new building (SCMP, 1977a).

The capacity to consider conserving the KCR building under the heritage law was limited. The Ordinance had only just taken effect and the provisional AAB was in its early days of operation. More to the point, the content of the policy itself did not allow it. Since it dated from 1910 it was not old enough to be considered for monument status and the grading system was not yet in place. The station's advocates made attempts to explain the cultural and historical significance of the structure, but in the absence of the inclusion of such language in the official discourse, they had little success. Claims such as "It is a symbol of Hong Kong," "It represents Hong Kong," and "It has been with us for so many years" went unrecognized (SCMP, 1977c). The HKHS was charged with impeding the progress of the Cultural Centre and of defending a colonial landmark that was of little importance to Hong Kong people. It responded by attempting to show that local people were in favour of retaining the structure.

The HKHS gathered 15,000 signatures on a petition, 90% of which were by Hong Kong Chinese residents ([Indignant Ratepayer], 1978). A news report of this activity included a comment from one of the signators, Mrs. Wong, a 72 year old woman: "I come here every day to join other old friends who also come here to spend their leisure" (SCMP, 1977d). The *SCMP* newspaper sought to further demonstrate the varied opinions of Hong Kongers by conducting an small, informal street survey (SCMP, 1977b). Two of four people approached were in favour of demolishing the station because they felt it was incongruous with the modernizing landscape. The other two thought it should be kept, both for practical and aesthetic reasons. A bus inspector noted: "The typhoon signals and the clock offer a valuable service to the thousands who pass by the area every day." A man who works in the insurance industry thought the building was worth keeping because there are so few like it in Hong Kong. However powerful such anecdotes, the effort as a whole was unable to inspire action among a large enough number of Chinese Hong

Kong residents to make the case that the building was important for local people. A member of the Heritage Society argued that the reluctance of the wider public to rally was due to defeatism in the face of government. "We have from the very outset met with the comment: 'Of course we want to keep the building. But what is the good of protesting? The *jing fu* (government) has made up its mind'" (The Star, 1977). Here, the HKHS positions itself as a populist group, sympathizing with the experience of exclusion from government decision-making with indigenous colonial subjects.

The Cultural Centre was a project of an elected Urban Council, which maintained an aura of accountability to the Hong Kong people. As a public body, its decisions were meant to be held in check and balance by an electoral college of 350,000 (not the entire population). Cuthbert (1984) points out that only 37,000 people registered to vote in the elections in the late 1970s, and only 7308 actually voted. Thus the plans for the Cultural Centre were guided by elected officials representing only a fraction of the population of the territory. When assessing the impact of the project on the public realm, this political context matters. Indeed, one of the few dissenting councilors stated: "the proposed new Cultural Centre will be as much a colonial building as anything of an earlier vintage" (Hong Kong Standard, 1977). Similarly, a letter published in the *SCMP* suggested that refurbishing the railway station would perhaps have been a more generous gift to the public than the construction of a modern building and that perhaps the idea of a cultural facility for the people of Hong Kong was not as altruistic as it was presented to be:

> If some of us propose to preserve the KCR building, we do it with the single wish to enrich the cultural life of the people of Hong Kong, not only for now, but also for the future, not only for the consumers of concerts and costumed plays, but also for those who stand at the door of the hall of culture but do not, for whatever reason, enter (Watt, 1977).

Although the Cultural Centre was part of the government's investment in the development of the cultural life of the territory, its programming would not be open to the general public free of charge.

One of the reasons the KCR plans were so controversial is that they were developed in the absence of public input. They were gazetted in short form in the local print media, but not in sufficient detail for the public to envision the impact on the landscape or to engage them in the planning process. In recognition of this, David Russell, the President of the HKHS, called for the creation of a committee which would render development plans more transparent for members of the public. Russell went so far as to advocate a system of controls to ensure that major planning decision are not "made for reasons of politics and profits" (SCMP, 1977e). His vision of public engagement looks much like present practices in the territory: public exhibitions, films, drawings, neighbourhood advice centres, and community worker outreach. In spite of the lack of public engagement in the planning process, the Urban Council insisted that the public was overwhelmingly in support of the plans.

Differences of opinion among members of the AAB and the Urban Council are documented in exchanges in the South China Morning Post. A spokesperson for the Urban Council suggested that the AAB only studies buildings on the basis of historical and archaeological interest, failing to take aesthetic and financial costs into consideration (SCMP, 1977a). A response from an AAB member took issue with this characterization of the limited scope of the Board's deliberations. The debate continued in this manner, mainly limited to factions within the colonial administration and the HKHS. In the final instance, the plans proceeded with the concession that the clock tower of the KCR building would be conserved and integrated into the cultural precinct plans for the waterfront. Abbas (1997b, p. 66-67) references

the clock tower as one example of heritage as a type of celebration of "history to bring about the disappearance of history." In this reading, the function of the tower is not unlike that of the commemorative plaques, "a 'quotation' from Hong Kong's architectural history… an *image* of history meant for visual consumption… a sign of communal history," that allows the writing of the Hong Kong story to continue.

3.7   Colonial Heritage through a Relational Lens

Arguments against the demolition of the KCR terminus, and to a lesser extent other buildings including the Hong Kong Club, had a relational character, featuring references to and comparisons with other places. At times these were explicit critiques of Hong Kong. A commentator in the *Hong Kong Standard* wrote: "there is little tradition of aesthetic or architectural appreciation in Hong Kong, whereas in more enlightened countries school children are often taken to visit historic buildings as part of their education." He went on to state that "any culture which wantonly destroys all evidence of its own past is a sadly impoverished one" (Parkes, 1977). The same text suggests readers look to Europe for examples of new and old coexisting. This Eurocentric and perhaps racist commentary was likely intended as a critique of colonial policy, but the result was the suggestion that Hong Kong – a Chinese city – is inferior for not protecting its heritage.

Beyond comparisons, the actual work involved in heritage advocacy took on a relational quality. Facing limited success in their efforts, members of the Heritage Society attempted to tap into support internationally. In November, 1977 a seventeen-page petition was submitted to the Queen of England. No response was received. In another case, a Heritage Society member named Agnes asked her cousin, Henry, of Perthshire, Scotland, if he was aware of an organization in the UK, or a high level politician, such as M. Thatcher, that might take an interest

in the matter. Black's response was that politicians act with voting strategy in mind, and that the

National Trust keeps to national affairs. He indicated, however, that he may be able to access

Thatcher through a mutual friend, but that she is "overwhelmed with work and engagements"

([Black, 1977]). International support was received from the Secretary to the Commonwealth

Association of Architects, T.N. Watson, who wrote to the *Hong Kong Standard* (Watson, 1977).

He suggested that the building could be adapted similarly to an old railway station in Ottawa. In

July, 1978, Dale Keller, Chairman of Pacific Heritage, visited Hong Kong and criticized the

government for failing to take public opinion into account in their treatment of heritage

conservation and for not providing adequate open spaces for community use (SCMP, 1978).

Keller appeared on the RTV programme "Topics" with Peter Hodge, Vice-Chair of the HKHS.

He indicated that he believed there had been a deliberate attempt to mislead the public in the

government's report on the KCR. These efforts are an attempt to "jump scale" (Smith, 1992) in

order to achieve aims that cannot be realized in a local struggle. By seeking support in Britain

and Europe, Society members sought to secure legitimacy for a perspective that was not given

serious consideration in Hong Kong.

3.8   Conclusion

On a muggy late summer night I sat with Kai on the patio on the rooftop of the podium of

the IFC shopping mall complex in Central. Remarkably, this space is open to the public every

day, late into the evening. Small sections are roped off for restaurant diners, but it is mostly open

access, free of charge, no strings attached. The one catch is that it is not advertised and only

accessible via a poorly marked elevator from the upscale mall below. The space is criticized for

being privately operated and thus heavily regulated (discussion of similar cases will follow later

in the dissertation). It is a small concession to calls for public spaces in private developments and

quite a pleasant place from which to survey the harbour and night skyline. It is also open to everyone, not only shoppers, and thus it is one of the many gathering places for foreign domestic workers who congregate in public places on their days off work (Constable, 1997). On this night it was quiet, save for a few groups of young people chatting, sharing snacks and hoping for an ocean breeze.

I asked Kai to tell me his favourite Hong Kong building. As a young architect, I thought he might have an interesting answer – perhaps a building I didn't know of. I knew also that he had worked on a conservation management plan for a developer and that this had introduced him to new ways of thinking about the Hong Kong landscape. He paused and then answered, "I kind of like the Cultural Centre, actually… It's quite radical. To have this really enclosed block as the Cultural Centre – it sort of reflects how Hong Kong's culture is. And it has a nice form; people recognize it" (personal interview, October 2, 2010). This was not the answer I had anticipated. But in the distance, across the harbour where the KCR Railway Station once sat, a sand-coloured geometrical form, brightly lit, provided a striking contrast with its neighbours. I understood his reasoning. Kai was born long after the demolition of the KCR terminus. Would he feel differently if he had been around for the struggle? Efforts were made on behalf of the Hong Kong people to protect a building that was thought, by a small number of expatriates, to symbolize the city. This was but a rumour for young Hong Kongers, like Kai, for whom the view of the past is very much from the present.

Chapter 4: Tradition and Transition: Heritage, Culture and Politics in Hong Kong after 1997

4.1 Climbing the Lion Rock

On a warm Tuesday in early April, 2010 I arranged to join a hiking excursion at Lion Rock with my friend Betsy and a group of about 15 others. She had been invited by a friend; the others were new faces. It was the end of the Easter weekend and government employees (and some private sector workers) were enjoying a final day of holiday in summer-like weather before returning to work. I took the MTR to the Wong Tai Sin station, a place I had not visited before, although I knew of its namesake temple. We lacked a proper rendez-vous point, which in Hong Kong is usually an MTR exit number or one of the businesses that populate the underground concourse of every station, so I waited near the exit with signs pointing to our destination. After milling around for a few minutes, feeling slightly out of place in my hiking shorts and running tee-shirt, I eventually I spotted Betsy and our companions. We set off together to the trail head. As we walked along the deserted and dusty sidewalk of a high-volume, high-speed thoroughfare, I thought that this concrete and asphalt landscape could not possibly be near a mountain. I was proven wrong before too long, and we rounded a corner, turning away from the city, towards the shade of steep, forested hills looming in the distance.

We chattered along the way, partly as a form of distraction from the growing heat. It was a diverse bunch – a journalist, a high school instructor (formerly a Cathay Pacific flight attendant), a jewellery store employee, three accountants, a health department employee and a few others – and I never did piece together how they all know each other. My friend introduced me as a graduate student studying Hong Kong heritage and planning. When I added that I am

based in Canada, curiosity was piqued. What drew me to Hong Kong? The hiking companions

seemed genuinely surprise that someone would come from overseas to pursue such a study. As

the conversation continued, it turned more directly to questions I was researching. A connection

was made to Wing Lee Street, just west of Central on the edge of Sheung Wan, a site that had

received a great deal of media attention in the past several months (e.g. Ng, 2010). The story of

the street is indicative of the new purchase of heritage in the city. The area had been earmarked

for urban renewal but the plans were strongly criticized in light of a new recognition of the

unique historic character of the area, in part discovered and acclaimed due to the use of the street

as a set in an award-winning film, *Echoes of the Rainbow*. In the film, Wing Lee Street stands in

for the working class district of Sham Shui Po in the 1960s, its quiet terrace and dilapidated

tenements easily evoking a landscape from this earlier time. Although the film received mixed

reviews among the people I spoke with, it was widely celebrated for tapping into nostalgia for

the recent past and was a commercial success. What was eye-opening on this day was that

everyone seemed to been engaged and interested in the debate over Wing Lee Street; a few in the

group had even visited the street a day earlier to see it and photograph it for themselves. As the

conversation deepened, my new acquaintances presented their views about the URA's decision

to alter its plans for the street and the role of the government in this turn of affairs. Sam, in

particular, was certain the government's new plan to conserve the street was a result of the

popularity of *Echoes of the Rainbow*. The conversation continued, slowing as we ascended the

steep slope.

The fact that a group of young people in their mid- to late-twenties, working in

professions completely unrelated to the urban environment, were well-versed in a current land

use controversy related to heritage conservation was striking. It is risky to generalize from a

unique case such as this, but it is not a stretch to propose that the discussion signaled the presence of a public discourse about heritage that does not exist in many places, at least not among people this age, and that it did not exist in Hong Kong until recently. This was confirmed in an interview with a heritage expert who is versed in the cultures of heritage worldwide, who believes that the level of interest in heritage in Hong Kong is unprecedented globally (personal interview, 29 April, 2010). Cultural fascinations with the past, as described in Chapter 2, are often aestheticized visions, and find expression in the consumption – visual or otherwise – of heritage objects and places (Lowenthal, 1985). A cultural fascination for heritage has developed in Hong Kong, but it goes far beyond the aesthetic. Hong Kong people are curious about heritage, asking questions about the city's history, drawing links between heritage places, politics, property development and life in Hong Kong. At various places and moments, they have demanded a different approach: *in situ* preservation or conservation rather than relocation or rebuilding, the protection of traditional businesses and traditional low-cost dwellings, the identification of social networks embedded in older buildings and landscapes. The media have played an important role in this transformation by reporting extensively on instances of contestation that have arisen, such as that at Wing Lee Street, Lee Tung (Wedding Card) Street (Lai, 2007), the Blue House Cluster (Ng, 2012), the Graham Street/Peel Street markets (SCMP, 2008), and the Central Market (Ng, 2009a), among others. However, the glut of media reports is also a reflection of the emergence of an important area of political debate. Government agencies and politicians have given heritage a more prominent place on their agendas than in the past. This political turn is in part a response to pressure from civil society and public opinion. It is clear that Hong Kong has undergone an important transformation that has lent heritage a currency in the public, media, political and social discourse that, as seen in the previous chapter,

was mainly a colonial enterprise until very recently. Scholarly commentary has readily explained this transformation as a growing awareness of identity among Hong Kong people, that has found expression in a desire to hold on to the past (Kenworthy-Teather and Chow, 2003; Chu, 2007; Lu, 2009; Chung, 2011). An extended commentary may propose that the state has responded positively to the desires of Hong Kong people as a matter of care, responsibility or duty. This narrative, while not incorrect, does not follow a number of important threads that lay just beneath the surface. The intent here is to pick up and follow some of these threads with a view to placing the thesis in the contemporary urban Hong Kong context with its enmeshed cultural, political and economic characteristics.

The present chapter situates the discursive transformation of heritage in Hong Kong within a framework that will allow for the geographical analysis that comes in later chapters. The central question is deceptively simple. Why did heritage become important at this particular time and in this particular place, Hong Kong? This contextualization requires a recent-historical view, taking into account the handover in 1997, and shifting contours of the post-1997 political and cultural landscapes, and especially the points of friction of politics and culture. It will be apparent that although the government has made strides that some view as a positive and uncharacteristic step away from its characteristic unilateral corporatism (Loh & Lai, 2007), it did so not for the reasons that appear to have the most explanatory power. The government did not merely respond to collective calls to do a better job of conserving heritage by presenting critics with some recipe of the reforms they had been seeking. Rather, it proposed a patchwork of responses to an issue with a strategic orientation that it had been working on for more than a decade. Moreover, for civil society groups, heritage is one tip of a time-and-place specific iceberg of claims for change. It is a domain connected to many other ideas, such as planning,

democracy, local culture and history, public space, tradition and memory. It is also a topic

around which it is not easy to develop a clear consensus of defined purpose and meaning.

Therefore, when the government made heritage a focus, it became difficult for civil society to

respond and participate cohesively and meaningfully. It was only a small part of a much broader

vision for change in the city.

4.2   Layout of the Chapter

The first part of the chapter will ask how the return to Chinese sovereignty, in addition to

causing upheavals in the political landscape, inspired interest in cultural heritage among

members of the public and civil society. It especially gave rise to a politics of built heritage that

did not exist previously. The next section will examine footwork conducted by the government

in the area of heritage policy in the 1990s. It was clear to key actors that the approach was

inadequate, not least because the bitter controversies of the 1970s were still in view. The

question was: How should heritage be used? More importantly for the government, how could its

uses be harnessed for purposes that are not antithetical to Hong Kong's land (re)development

regime? (Tang, 2008) Two conferences in the late 1990s and the Culture and Heritage

Commission review conducted between 2000 and 2003 are emphasized as key moments in

which state and non-state policy actors began to think about heritage not only as a public

resource, but also a landscape attribute of the "global city". Following a number of other

accounts, the Star Ferry and Queen's Pier "saga" is highlighted as a turning point in which

heritage is the most accessible of a number of concerns expressed by civil society (Ng et al.,

2010; Ku, 2012). Here, the narrative stresses that the government responded as it did because the

protests created an opportunity to unveil a new direction for heritage policy (although not an

entirely new policy), in which heritage is paired with the pro-growth intent of the creative

economy. The following chapter will apply a relational lens (McCann & Ward, 2011; Jacobs, 2012) to this process of re-making, or rather reassessing, the extant heritage policy. The present task, however, is to understand the factors that contributed to the extraordinary politicization of heritage in Hong Kong since 1997.

4.3   The Meaning of 1997

Any discussion of contemporary Hong Kong must reckon with the meaning of the handover, the transferral from British Crown Colony to Chinese sovereignty that occurred on July 1st, 1997. And in turn, the meaning of 1997 must be understood in the broader context of Hong Kong society and politics of the last several decades. The event is frequently evoked as "historically unprecedented" (Cartier, 2010, p. 26), for the withdrawal of colonial rule was not followed by independence, but rather the return to a sovereign power from which Hong Kong had grown estranged after a long period of separation under opposing political-economic regimes. Furthermore, the agency of Hong Kong as a political entity was not on the table in this process of decolonization and recolonization; the territory, especially its citizenry, was excluded from a process of negotiation that played out mainly between Beijing and London (Tsang, 2007). Scholarship within and informed by cultural studies has attempted to understand what the handover has meant for the Hong Kong people (Erni, 2001; Fung, 2001; Mathews, 1997; Ku & Pun, 2004). The point here will not be to rehearse the work that has already been done, or to reach a firm conclusion about how 1997 impacted the outlook on heritage; rather it is to underscore some questions related to the handover – as transition – that have a bearing on the way heritage is discussed. The comment of Anson Chan, former HKSAR chief secretary for administration, on this process is frequently evoked: the transition beyond colonial rule is "much more complex, subtle and profound" because it "is about identity and not sovereignty" (quoted in

Yeoh, 2001, p. 458). It cannot be said, however, that this transition marks a return to the Chinese identity that waned under decades of colonial rule. Rather, it may be understood as a turn towards a Hong Kong-Chinese identity that only became possible to articulate under the conditions of the SAR.

Behind-the-scenes negotiations in the early 1980s culminated with the signing of the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984. This document set the date of the transferral of sovereignty in 1997, the year the 99-year lease of the New Territories to Britain expired, and began the inevitable anxious countdown to an unknown future. Although the agreement set out a continuation of the status quo for fifty years, with Hong Kong as a "Special Administrative Region" under the principle of "One Country, Two Systems," questions about the reality of such an arrangement simmered. The Hong Kong territory would be self-governing, excepting the areas of foreign affairs and defence, which would be assumed by the PRC. The Basic Law, Hong Kong's constitutional document, laid bare the protection of freedom of speech and various other liberties associated with Hong Kong's status as a semi-democratic, industrialized, capitalist territory. From the outlook of 1984, 1997 was a long way off and there was much to be done in the meantime. Hong Kong was in the throes of the 1980s expansion of the Asian tiger economies. For residents who had come to Hong Kong because it was a capitalist refuge, it continued to serve its purpose as a temporary way station where property, employment and business were lucrative, at least for the time being.

In 1989, simmering questions about the future were stoked to a boil when the PRC's Communist Government violently suppressed the student movement at Tiananmen Square in Beijing. An uncharacteristic outpouring of horror and solidarity in Hong Kong brought over one million people to the streets in protest, the initiation of what has become an annual rallying cry

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for democratic freedoms on June 4 (and followed by marches marking the handover on July 1 of every year). Tiananmen Square also galvanized feelings of anxiety and was a contributing factor in the decision to emigrate for many families and individuals (Li, 2005). Hundreds of thousands of people left Hong Kong, destined for countries with a high quality of life, educational opportunities and liberal immigration policies, especially Canada, Australia, New Zealand, the UK, and to a lesser extent, the United States (Skeldon, 1994). The departures peaked in 1992 but it became clear before 1997 that in many cases new homes were not permanent and that a second passport was more an "insurance policy" than a ticket to a new life (Ley & Kobayashi, 2005, p. 114). Overseas homes, in addition to providing a different quality of life, allowed children to gain fluency in English and a credential from an esteemed university, markers of cultural capital that translated into earning potential back in Hong Kong (Waters, 2006). One of the reasons that overseas migration trajectories were sojourns rather than permanent settlement was that the economic conditions in Hong Kong remained much more conducive to income growth than overseas economies (Ley & Kobayashi, 2005). While the exact number of Hong Kongers with overseas passports is unknown, the number of Canadian passport holders living in Hong Kong alone is estimated to be at least 300,000, with 7.8% of households counting a Canadian citizen over the age of 18 (Zhang & Degolyer, 2011). Though Hong Kong has always been the port of emigration from Greater China (Siu & Ku, 2009), the migration phenomenon of the 1990s was globally significant in its scale and has had long-term effects on the city's culture and politics that are only now coming into full view and remain understudied. A tentative assessment of the ways that return and circular migration has affected the outlook on heritage in Hong Kong, as home, is presented in Chapter 6.

The Asian Financial Crisis rippled through markets in East and South-East Asia the same year as the handover, impacting housing prices and consumer confidence. The Hong Kong government responded with various measures intended to stimulate economic activity, especially cross-border trade with China's Special Economic Zones. The Closer Economic Partnership Arrangement (CEPA) was designed to stimulate trade in the Pearl River Delta Region and included a scheme for short-term tourist visas for travel to Hong Kong. Through the Individual Visit Scheme, residents of wealthier cities in Guangdong and neighbouring provinces, as well as Shanghai and Beijing, could visit for tourist purposes. Increasing interaction with the Mainland was and continues to be unsettling for many Hong Kongers. Early discriminatory superiority, founded in colonial morals and Western tastes (Mathews et al., 2007), has given way to concern about the economic impacts of mainland investment in Hong Kong property (not least as a disturbing real estate bubble has been forming) and the siphoning of resources across the border. Ongoing and rising cross-border tensions problematize the prospect of social and political integration and contribute to localization of identity and interests in the Hong Kong territory.

The link between the effects of the handover – the outcome of which may be understood as a simultaneity of integration and its reverse – and the burgeoning postcolonial interest in heritage is usually explained by a growing curiosity about and interest in Hong Kong identity that only becomes apparent when it is threatened. Earlier generations had settled in Hong Kong from neighbouring provinces in South China and around the time of the Communist revolution, many merchants arrived from Shanghai and other port cities. Prior to these internal migrations the Hong Kong region had been sparsely populated and its indigenous clans did not have strong connections to the great traditions of Chinese culture and thought (Luk, 1991). Post-war economic refugees and earlier arrivals viewed Hong Kong as a temporary home, a place for

making money, finding employment, networking, buying property and finding opportunities for their families. It was a "city of the present" (Hughes, 1968, quoted in Mathews et al., 2007, p. 28). This changed as generations of children grew up in Hong Kong, experiencing a burgeoning local culture of television, radio and the unique landscapes of density and consumerism for which Hong Kong is well known. A sense of identity of Hong Kong-born and raised residents was further bolstered in relation to migrants from Vietnam and the Mainland in the 70s and early 80s, but it found a much fuller expression around the time of the handover.

Social scientific surveys of cultural identity in relation to the handover found many Hong Kong residents identifying as Chinese, Hong Kong-Chinese or a full-blown local *Heunggongyahn* (Hong Konger) (Fung, 2001; 2004). An interviewee who works in the creative industries field views Hong Kong identity as "beyond Chinese" and attributes this to the rule of law. This confirms Mathews' (1997) argument that Hong Kong identity amounted to Chinese "plus" other attributes: Chineseness plus affluence/cosmopolitan/capitalism, Chineseness plus democracy, Chineseness plus Westernness. For Abbas (1997b, p. 2), "It is not true, as some might wish you to believe, that if you scratch the surface of a Hong Kong person you will find a Chinese identity waiting to be reborn. The Hong Kong person is now a bird of a different feather." Over a decade and a half later, the meanings are no more fixed. To complicate matters there is a sense that the Central Government Liaison Office, Beijing's representative in Hong Kong, has a growing influence over internal affairs in the territory. As a result, political and social challenges related to Hong Kong's sovereign status, such as debates over the introduction of national education curriculum (Chong et al., 2012), proliferate.

If 1997 provoked questions about cultural identity via identification with the Chinese nation, it also inspired other engagements with culture, as manifest in "landscape of cultural

dynamics" that find expression in state led cultural infrastructure, art and activism (Cartier, 2008, p. 61). In relation to heritage, this dynamic opened a space of dialogue between policymakers, experts and advocates that had, until recently been clouded with antagonism. By rethinking its approach to heritage, the government was not only responding to local interests and needs. It was also a matter of the city's image on the international stage. If it was to be a Chinese city once more, it could also be a global city, and a global city might feature heritage buildings and landscapes to lure tourists and investors, while also reinvigorating a sense of local Chinese culture.

4.4   Heritage, Education and Tourism: Legitimating a Political Project

Two conferences held in the newly-minted SAR in the late 1990s augured the importance of action on heritage and suggested the willingness of the government to engage. The conferences were organized by David Lung, Chair of the Antiquities Advisory Board, a long-time advocate for heritage in the city, and co-founder of the Architectural Conservation Programme at Hong Kong University. In 1997 a conference was held on the theme of "Heritage and Education" and, in 1999, another on "Heritage and Tourism." The 1999 conference was indirectly funded by the Home Affairs Bureau through a grant provided by the Lord Wilson Heritage Trust, developed by the Hong Kong government in 1992 (Chu & Uebegang, 2002). These events were important staging grounds for the legitimation of new thinking on heritage, and especially so because they brought together experts from around the world, over fifty people at each conference, to share their perspectives and to comment on the Hong Kong situation. These events, especially the latter, reflected an emerging stream of thought at world-leading institutions, such as the Getty Institute and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), around the economics of heritage, in particular, who pays for heritage and, if

investments are made, whether it can be self-sustaining. In Hong Kong this marked the beginning of a shift away from the idea that heritage, as a public cultural resource, must be publicly funded, and towards the consideration of heritage as a land development issue, not entirely antithetical to the capitalist city, that may generate revenues not only costs.

The 1997 conference coincided with the "Year of Heritage", a year-long celebration featuring a programme of fifty-two events, designed to "entice all of Hong Kong" to consider the meaning of cultural heritage in the city (personal interview, 10 November, 2010). Education and heritage was a fitting theme; Hong Kong's education curriculum had long suffered a dearth of content on local culture and history which, as Luk (1991) explains, was due to its colonial status and peripheral position in relation to two centres, Britain and China. Following the Communist Revolution, scholars and educators who had arrived from the Mainland were tasked with developing textbooks and content for instruction in Chinese culture subjects. Previously these were produced by Chinese presses, but following the establishment of the People's Republic of China, the content became laced with communist propaganda. Meanwhile, textbooks from Taiwan were clouded with ultranationalism and also deemed inappropriately politicized. The new Chinese culture curriculum was thus rooted in a historical vision of Chinese culture, divorced both from contemporary concerns and geographically distant from Hong Kong. In schools, Hong Kong pupils learned "to identify themselves as Chinese but relating that Chineseness to neither contemporary China nor the local Hong Kong landscape. It was a Chinese identity in the abstract, a patriotism of the émigré" (Luk, 1991, p. 668). This began to change at the time of the handover and the conference on heritage and education drew attention to the need for further discussion on cultural education that would touch upon the particularities of local history, culture and landscape. It was also at this event that David Lung was encouraged by

participants to pursue the idea of developing a tertiary education programme in heritage conservation (personal interview, 10 November, 2010), which was undertaken at The University of Hong Kong in 2000. Education subsequently became a central focus of the activities of the Antiquities and Monuments Office.

The conversation took an economistic turn in 1999 at the conference on heritage and tourism. David Lung's presentation drew an explicit link between Hong Kong's image as a "global city" and its lack of attention to heritage:

> Should Hong Kong be developed into a world-class but faceless metropolis of the so-called 'global community' of the 21st century? Or should Hong Kong play an active role in preserving its cultural heritage which will enable it to be identified as a unique and culturally significant part of the world in the mode of New York, London and Paris? […] The successful long term development of Hong Kong into a better place lies not only with the physical, economic and technological "glitters", but also with the underlying cultural-heritage assets that will give Hong Kong its soul and identity. (Lung, 1999)

Lung also initiated a conversation on the policy set-up for heritage, which allowed only a limited engagement with tourism and development goals. He recommended that heritage be moved from the Home Affairs Bureau, which deals with Culture, to the Development Bureau, where it would be treated as a land and planning issue. If it was a cultural domain worthy of the attention of educators, it was also an economic resource. More to the point, perhaps the only way forward in Hong Kong was to embrace a heritage industry that could coexist with the creative destruction of the capitalist economy. Lung (1999) opened his address with the question: "Is our heritage for sale?" and his answer was a "qualified 'yes'".

4.5   The Culture and Heritage Commission

The Culture and Heritage Commission (CHC) was launched in 2000 to develop a strategic direction for cultural policy, an area in which Hong Kong was lacking. As Cartier (2008) notes, local culture was not a prominent feature on the agenda of the government until the

1990s, when investments and interest flourished, resulting in the development of cultural infrastructure such as museums, performance spaces and galleries. Earlier forays in this area by the colonial government were nominal, secondary to housing, education, transportation and, of course, the economy. Marking a new direction, the goal of the Commission was to advise the government on "long term policies and funding priorities in the development of culture in Hong Kong" (HKSAR, 2003, p. 1). Several concrete recommendations were made in the Commission's final report, including amending the administrative set-up, rationalizing the offerings at government-run cultural institutions, such as museums and performance venues, and investing in arts and culture education. A reading at a more abstract level permits the proper contextualization of this project. The Commission was motivated by a dual purpose of enhancing Chinese cultural roots, although perhaps through a modern lens, but also maintaining the pluralistic and open perspective on culture it had developed as a British colony. This was a post-1997 project, of course, with a view to integration. But it also recognized the importance of the singularity of the Hong Kong experience. The report affirmed that Hong Kong was in a "favourable position to integrate Chinese and Western cultures" (HKSAR, 2003, p. 43); it had both a local and a global orientation.

The CHC report pivots around a construct called the "global cultural metropolis," devoting an entire section to this idea (HKSAR, 2003, p. 42). There are several comparisons to New York and London, the foremost examples of the outlook animating the work. For instance, the number of museums in Hong Kong lags well behind, and more generally, Hong Kong simply lacks the "vibrant cultural environment" of these cities. One of the features of the "global cultural metropolis" is cultural heritage which, the report explains, "bears witness to the development of a place and helps its citizens to understand their history and cultural identity"

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(HKSAR, 2003, p. 42). And given the inclusion of heritage in as an item in cultural policy, the state plays a key role in this area. In Hong Kong, the government has not done enough, the report admits. There has not been adequate funding for the Antiquities and Monuments Office, the administrative structure has not allowed for adequate consideration of heritage as a land planning issue. "Efforts in heritage conservation often involve issues of land use and town planning. The ambit of the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance is not broad enough for the effective implementation of heritage conservation work" (HKSAR, 2003, p. 42). This had been mentioned in the Chief Executive policy address in 1999 and the Culture and Heritage Commission was in part intended to facilitate a transition in this direction. The report categorically states that "A city that neglects heritage conservation will never become a cultural metropolis" (HKSAR, 2003, p. 42).

A section of the report addresses the creative industries and proposes an interesting confluence of this area with heritage. In the early 2000s the discourse of creative industry as an urban policy area was gaining significant traction and circulating throughout Asia (Kong et al., 2006). The creative industries run the gamut from design to publishing to film and beyond and, according to the rhetoric popularized by Florida (2004), are strategically positioned to excel in the post-industrial knowledge-based economy. The idealism of Florida's treatise, blind to the workings of neoliberal urbanism, continues to flourish among consultants and policymakers in spite of scathing critiques from his academic peers (Peck, 2005). Here, to be developed in Chapter 5, there is a special connection to heritage, as arts and culture uses, in the most general sense, are positioned as the highest and best use of repurposed historic buildings (HKSAR, 2003, p. 43). Although they may also take shape in flagship megaprojects, such as the West Kowloon Cultural District, creative industries exist in a mutually reinforcing economic relationship with

aestheticized historic environments. They add value to older buildings by reinforcing their relationship with culture; old buildings add value to creative industries by situating them in a stylized urban realm.

The final report of the Culture and Heritage Commission is dated 31 March, 2003, less than three weeks after the World Health Organization had issued a global alert in response to the SARS virus. Hong Kong was deeply implicated in the spread of the disease as one of the early centres of infection and subsequent mobility of the disease (Ng, 2009). The epidemic temporarily crippled the city. Hong Kong is a place of inescapable density and communal gatherings in public places. The density of the city, combined with its links to other places, made Hong Kong the perfect vector for infection. But the very factors that encouraged the spread of the disease, first in Hong Kong and then outward, are vital to the territory's economy and social life. Thus, the impact was devastating: "the stress of this in the city was enormous. It was a highly emotional time. Nobody was in the streets. Nobody was in the restaurants" (personal interview, 26 May, 2010). An interviewee emphasized the pervasive pessimistic outlook during this time:

> I remember I went to a cinema with my wife. There were only two of us in the cinema. This never happened on a Sunday. And then we go to this Chinese restaurant for dim sum. Going to dim sum is the most popular thing in Hong Kong, with my family. And there were four of us in the vast restaurant, [a] 200 seat restaurant, there were only four of us. It was that bad. It was that bad. And nobody has any hope of Hong Kong coming around… (personal interview, 29 April, 2010)

The SARS crisis, the height of which lasted from March through the summer months of 2003, required the government's full attention. To make matters worse, the crisis coincided with debate over Article 23, a highly controversial proposed amendment to the Hong Kong Basic Law that would increase the government's powers of surveillance and intervention in the expression of dissension. The July 1st demonstrations in 2003 drew the largest crowd since 1989, in spite of the

recent scare of disease, and forced the retraction of the proposal. The recommendations of the

CHC were not a priority during this time and were relegated to the back shelf.

4.6   The Roots of the New Heritage Activism

An urban social movement in the first decade after the handover had various strands in

different but complementary areas, including the privatization of public housing, government-led

urban renewal, and the development of a cultural district at West Kowloon through a partnership

with a single developer (Chu, 2010). The common ground among these causes is a challenge to

the "land (re)development regime" (Tang, 2008), the hegemonic ideology guiding policy and

planning in the Hong Kong government and its persistent collusion with a "ruling class" of

tycoons and elites (Poon, 2006). Heritage, with its collective claims to space and challenge to the

imperatives of development, emerged as one of the trajectories of this movement. Its inclusion

among other concerns nonetheless requires a situated account. The present interpretation

highlights contestation over the Star Ferry and Queen's Piers as a turning point in the discourse

of heritage conservation as an urban policy issue in Hong Kong.

The roots of the current heritage conservation activism lie properly not in the heritage

activism of the 1970s and 80s discussed in Chapter 3 (although this was an important

antecedent), but more concretely in environmental and planning activism related to harbour

reclamation in the 1990s. Building out into the harbour had been an important source of

developable land and government revenue since the first decade of the colony (Bristow, 1984).

When the north shore of Hong Kong island was settled it was said that there were three

directions for growth – east and west along the narrow coastline, up the steep slopes behind, and

out into the water – and that all three were pursued with equal gusto (Endacott, 1956).

Reclamation proceeded unproblematically throughout the first hundred years of the territory, first

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carried out by landholders in a piecemeal fashion, and later planned by government. Markers of the earlier shoreline are surprising. Queen Street, originally on the harbour front, is so far removed from the shore that it is not even conceivable that water once lapped at its base. The same is true of the area around Reclamation Street and Shanghai Street in Kowloon. Opened in 1997, the Chek Lap Kok airport represented an entirely new scale of reclamation: a vital piece of transportation infrastructure serving millions of people a year was built entirely on reclaimed land. All told, 35% of all settled area of the Hong Kong territory is on reclaimed land (Shelton, Karakiewicz, & Kvan, 2011, p. 4).

In 1995, the Society for the Protection of the Harbour (SPH) was formed with the intent of revealing the harmful effects of reclamation for the sake of land development and challenging the government's future plans in this area. It was inspired to take action by large-scale reclamation projects in Central and Wan Chai that drastically altered Victoria Harbour: "it was turning into a river" (personal interview, 3 May, 2010). The turning point was the 334 hectare project initiated in the 1980s and carried out in the early 90s. The appearance of the shoreline and the experience of visiting it were changed beyond recognition. Indeed, by the mid-1990s the distance between Hong Kong Island and Kowloon had been reduced from 2.3km to 920 metres and the harbour's original area reduced by half (Ku, 2012). A last piece of this project, initiated in the mid-90s, would significantly alter one of the main places in Central where people could easily gain access to the harbourfront, and where they had done for decades. This area, around City Hall, was designed as a centre for cultural activity, featuring galleries, performance spaces and restaurants. It formed an ensemble with the Queen's and Star Ferry Piers and was an important space in the post-war period. The reclamation effectively cut this area off from the water. "It is one of the very, very big changes for us because we used to have piers that we can

all go to and just look out to the harbour… It was very disturbing, actually for people who …

lived in that area" (personal interview, 3 May, 2010).

SPH was formed by business and professional elites who were adept at navigating spaces

of politics and the judiciary system and it succeeded in passing a legislative bill in 1997, prior to

the handover, which effectively halted four reclamation projects. Smart and Lam (2009, p. 199)

suggest that this success "represents an important milestone in social learning by the protest

groups." In 1999, the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance was extended to the entire harbour.

Though the bill passed, it did not prohibit the completion of the reclamation project underway in

Central. The SPH, in spite of its political success, interpreted the continuation of this project as a

major defeat and resigned itself to another failure. As the project took shape, however, questions

beyond the environmental effects of the reclamation emerged. The cultural significance of the

harbour, previously taken for granted, became an important question[16]. One interviewee, a built

environment professional, said in no uncertain terms that "no one would argue" that the harbour

is the most significant heritage asset in the city, (personal interview, 29 April, 2010). "The

harbour is a unique natural asset that at the same time evokes something emotional for Hong

Kong people… It's just kind of in the DNA" (personal interview, 18 May, 2010). Other

questions followed: land is reclaimed, then what is it used for? Is it sold to the highest bidder? Is

a road built on it, for the ease of movement for the fraction of wealthy people in the territory that

own cars? And finally, what is done with the buildings, such as the Star Ferry and Queen's Piers,

whose functions are connected to the harbour, but whose meanings extend far beyond it?

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[16] Victoria Harbour was one of a number of places and landscape features considered in Hong Kong's bid for its first UNESCO World Heritage Site. Despite strong support among professionals and experts for the harbour, the government decided to put forward the Nunnery, a complex featuring a number of newly-built structures (Franchineau, 2013).

4.7   The Star Ferry and Queen's Piers

The eruption of heritage as a fully-fledged social movement was consolidated with the conflict over the destruction of the Star Ferry and Queen's Piers. The controversy was unexpected, not least due to history; both piers had already undergone a number of relocations. In 1912 a Star Ferry pier was constructed in the Georgian architectural style on Ice House Street. Queen's Pier, first a wooden wharf known as Queen's Statue Pier, was reincarnated as a reinforced concrete structure in 1925. The 1912 Star Ferry Pier and the 1925 Queen's Pier were constructed along shoreline created during the Praya reclamation scheme which took place between 1889 and 1903. Post-war reclamation during the period of rapid growth in the 1950s required the construction of new piers which, along with the Central Library, were constructed in a modern, utilitarian style by architects in the Public Works Department.

Hong Kong's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) legislation was passed in 1997 and took effect the following year. The third phase of the Central harbour reclamation, at issue here, was thus subject to an assessment which included a study of impacts on heritage components in the project site. This was conducted separately from the other components of the EIA and appears in an appendix to the final report. The assessment acknowledges the importance of the Star Ferry Pier; although it could not qualify as a historical building by its age alone, its "role played in Hong Kong's transport history of [the] modern era" is of "great significance" (Chan, 2001, p. 9). Interestingly, the report goes on to note that the destruction of the pier "would likely raise public objection and dismay." It recommends relocating the pier's clock tower, if not the whole building "to a new home suitably in harmony with its surroundings." Although less space is devoted to Queen's Pier and Edinburgh Place, the report does mention their "civic and political functions in the colonial period of Post-War Hong Kong" and state that "Their

demolition for reclamation would scrap forever the concrete link to a brief past of local development" (Chan, 2001, p. 10). This assessment only scratches the surface of the meanings of these buildings. Further explanation of their history will help properly contextualize the action occasioned by their demolition.

The Star Ferry Pier serves the ferry service of the same name, initiated in 1888 by Dowrabjee Nowrajee, a Parsi businessman who owned a hotel in the Central district of Hong Kong Island, but lived in Tsim-Sha Tsui in Kowloon. The crossing assumed a regular schedule in the 1890s in response to population growth in Kowloon, and the Kowloon Wharf took over operations in 1898. The highest use of the ferry was from the late 1950s to the early 1970s, prior to the opening of the cross-harbour tunnel, and especially the installation of the MTR link connecting Kowloon to Hong Kong. In its 110-year history, the Star Ferry and its piers have been the site of progressive political movements, an object of the tourist gaze and fixture of the urban scene. In 1966, plans to raise the ticket price were met with protests undergirded by dissatisfaction with the colonial government. The resulting riots are regarded as a significant moment in the development of civic activism in Hong Kong (Scott, 1989). The Star Ferry has also become part of Hong Kong's imaginative geography on a more mundane level. As a form of public transit, a simple mode of conveyance for commuters, tourists and Hong Kongers on outings, the ferry is convenient, inexpensive and offers views of Hong Kong's famous skyline and mountains. A one-way trip, lasting 7 minutes is $1.50HK for the lower deck and $2.20HK for the upper deck. The Star Ferry and its piers have featured in various cultural productions, most famously in the opening scene of the *World of Suzie Wong* (1957), a novel written through a problematic male orientalist gaze by Richard Mason and adapted for screen in 1960. The ferry has also been evoked in music. Clarence Mak Wai-chu's piece *Sentiments in the Wind* was

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inspired by memories of wind blowing across the harbour, as experienced while riding on the ferry as a child (Ingham, 2007, p. 166). Although the piers are an integral part of the ferry crossing, they are not as famous as the ferry crossing itself. The Hong Kong Island side pier was architecturally unremarkable. Unlike many transit hubs, it housed a few small kiosks selling refreshments, newspapers and ice cream, but not the chain stores found in malls and hotels across Hong Kong.

In contrast to the Star Ferry Pier's function as a place of transit, everyday activities and of tourism, Queen's Pier was used for ceremonial purposes. Throughout the colonial period it was the point of arrival and departure of Hong Kong's governors and visiting British royalty. Boats provided transport across the harbour to and from Kai Tak airport, but for all intents and purposes, Queen's Pier was the symbolic port of entry to Hong Kong. It was also the point of departure of Hong Kong's last governor, Sir Chris Patten, and thus held a special symbolism in relation to the handover. Initially reserved exclusively for special occasions, it was opened to the public in 1954 when it was rebuilt after the post-War reclamation. It then acquired a function as a space of gathering, rest and recreation. It was a place to go on dates, for picnics, to look at the harbour and find peace from the crush of the city. By the 1980s, on Sundays, it also became a popular place for foreign domestic workers to meet and socialize, being only a short walk from other popular gathering places, such as Statue Square and Chater Road (Law, 2002).

Further to the findings of the EIA, consultations highlighted the historical significance of the Star Ferry Pier and its status as a Hong Kong icon. The Antiquities Advisory Board discussed the heritage impacts of the harbour reclamation at a meeting on March 13, 2002. No objections were raised and there was no mention of the possibility of conserving either building through the grading process. Given some acknowledgement of the historical significance of the area, a

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consensus was reached whereby the design of the new ferry structure would be a "historic heritage" interpretation of the 1912 Ice Street pier. Although a modern design similar to the existing structure was considered, the Georgian architectural style of the early twentieth century building was deemed more appropriate. Thus, the symbolic importance of the existing Star Ferry Pier was recognized by enhancing its history with the construction of a replica. Frankie Yick Chi-ming, chief manager of external relations for Wharf group, which controls the Star Ferry, was interviewed in 2003 regarding plans for the redevelopment. His description of the new Star Ferry Pier emphasizes its appeal to tourists: "it will be an area of intense tourist interest," (Sinclair, 2003), featuring upscale dining experiences and international retail boutiques.

In the summer of 2006 a group of artists had begun weekly art actions at the Pier. The actions involved performances and public outreach and revolved around the theme of collective memory in the city. Through media coverage, both independent and mainstream, and the use of social media platforms such as online discussion boards and facebook, activist groups with different backgrounds began to participate in rallies and gatherings and public interest grew. What began as a loosely affiliated network developed into an alliance called "Local Action". While many of the participants were young students, they drew on the knowledge, experience and support of others, including Korean activists who had traveled to Hong Kong to protest against the WTO meetings in 2005. They learned demonstration tactics, such as the possibility of transforming the meanings and public perceptions of a place by reclaiming it: "if one demonstration happened on that street, then we can have it a second time. And then when we do it in a repeated way, then it would be accepted in the society and then we win that street or we win that area" (personal interview, 21 October, 2010). This confirms Ku's (2012, p. 8) assessment that the piers protests were "as much about forging a new understanding of urban

space in general [as] commemorating and protecting… particular places of value." And thus the success of the action at the Piers was largely a result of "live-ins" and performance art that invited the articulation of collectively redefined meanings. Protests at Queen's Pier built upon the momentum created at earlier gatherings at the Star Ferry Pier. The government had revisited and slightly delayed its plans in light of the growing controversy but proceeded after the reelection of Tsang. The last remaining protesters were forcibly removed on July 30, 2007.[17]

In spite of the force of the protests, there is a sense that for many participants, the cause was somewhat arbitrary and accidental. A heritage professional likened the atmosphere in the years after the handover to a pot of water reaching the boiling point (personal interview, 15 June, 2010). If not this issue, another would have tipped the balance. Fittingly, an interviewee who had participated in the protests explained that he did not feel a strong connection to the piers. Having grown up in Kwun Tong and later in an estate in the New Territories, he rarely visited Central and did not have memories of riding the Star Ferry. He took part because it was an opportunity to express dissatisfaction with the government and the status quo. He said: "we all are angry, but we don't know how to express our anger" (personal interview, 30 April, 2010); protesting the redevelopment plans on the Central waterfront became a tangible avenue to articulate such sentiments. The government didn't relent, instead suffering a full-fledged crisis of legitimacy as the perception of its insensitivity to public sentiments spread widely among the public. Work pressed ahead and the Star Ferry Pier was demolished while Queen's Pier was disassembled for later re-installation.

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[17] Henderson (2008) provides a detailed account of the interceding events.

4.8   After the Piers Protests

The protests at the Piers enlivened the urban social movement and subsequent directions

of the activists involved broadened to include related issues. In 2008, Local Action staged a

series of interventions in a privately owned public space at the Times Square Shopping Mall in

Causeway Bay (Wong, 2008). So-called "Public Open Spaces", another example of which is the

IFC rooftop mentioned in the previous chapter, are commonly included in large scale

developments in exchange for the relaxation of zoning provisions but they are often regulated as

private spaces would be. Local Action uncovered the planning deed for the Times Square

"Piazza" and found that the land holder is not entitled to control the public use of this space. It

organized music, art, fundraising and other kinds of activities to engage the public sphere and

disrupt the habitual use of the Piazza as an appendage to a space of consumption – the shopping

mall (Fung & Nip, 2009). When I visited for an extended period in 2010 members of Local

Action had begun working closely with residents of Choi Yuen Tsuen, a village in the New

Territories that would be displaced by the X-Rail, the high-speed train connection to Guangzhou.

The shift to a rural focus should not be seen as a retreat from urban activities but a realization

that expressions of state power, increasingly a reflection of PRD integration, that are manifest in

highly visible and concrete ways on Hong Kong Island also run deep in less visible places in

Hong Kong's rural hinterland and that resistance in these places is important as well (Lai, 2009).

Since Local Action is a loosely affiliated group, many of its members move in and out of its

activities depending on their availability and interest. Other groups that had played a more

behind the scenes role at the Piers protests continued working on redevelopment and heritage

conservation issues, less through direct action and more through established channels of dissent,

including letter writing, petitions, Town Planning Board representations, and public

consultations. A member of Local Action suggested that such activities are inevitably part of the operation of the established mode of governance and not divorced from elite interests (personal interview, 21 October, 2010). As we will see in later chapters, pressure exerted by softer means may be more predictable and easily absorbed, but it is pressure nonetheless.

The protests at the Piers and in the following years did not succeed in their stated aims. However, due to extensive media coverage and the widespread purchase of the movement, the government recognized the importance of the next steps in the planning process for reclaimed lands on the waterfront. As a result, the New Central Harbourfront was included on a list of eight publicly owned sites in Central in the "Conserving Central" initiative announced in 2009. The government promised that the new harbourfront would be beautified based on the wishes expressed in public consultations held between 2007 and 2011, following on the heels of the protests (HKSAR, 2008). As an early step forward, it announced that Queen's Pier's salvaged materials would be reassembled at a new waterfront location. The change in location left some commentators skeptical of the government's intent, since the Development Bureau had originally promised to consider rebuilding the pier at its original location (Ng, 2009b). Further controversy emerged when it became known that a portion of the new waterfront east of the ferry piers would be closed to public access for use as a berth for the People's Liberation Army (PLA) under conditions specified in the Garrison Law (Ku, 2012). Based on experience, this did not come as a surprise.

4.9   The Post-1980s ("Post-New Town Plaza") Generation

Although harbour reclamation is an important antecedent of the Piers protests, many of the individuals who became involved in the Local Action network over the course of the summer and fall of 2006 were different from the SPH members; they were younger, they came from

diverse backgrounds and many had little experience in political activism (although some had participated in efforts to prevent the renewal project at Wedding Card Street). An activist described his initiation with local politics at these sites as a fraught experience. He explained a Cantonese expression that means that when you commit to something, you "fall into" it. To pursue a career in a professional domain or even a hobby is expected, but to "fall into" a political commitment or concern is not. "This is quite embarrassing to tell other people that you are participating in something political." He went on to say that when he was growing up in the 1980s and 90s, Hong Kong people, especially young people, "don't dare to 'falling into something,' but after, I think 2003 and afterwards, many of us are looking for a way to 'falling into something' very local" (personal interview, 21 October, 2010). This was no less than a surrender to local issues.

This younger cohort of people in their 20s and 30s are part of what is known as the Post-80s generation. This phrase became popularized in Hong Kong in relation to new urban activism at these sites, and subsequent protests, mentioned above concerning the high speed rail link to Guangzhou and public space issues.[18] It has a political connotation that has at times been obscured in the discourse. Differing views on the meaning of the term are revealed in a letter written by Chan King Fai, a contributor to the independent online journal *Inmediahk.net*, to the Financial Secretary, Jong Tsang in 2010. The letter was translated to English by Alice Poon, author of the widely read book *Land and the Ruling Class in Hong Kong* and published in the *Asia Sentinel* (Chan & Poon, 2010). In the letter, Chan draws attention to a blog post by Tsang which suggests that members of the Post-80s generation are preoccupied with the pursuit of

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[18] In mainland China the phrase Post-80s refers to the period after the introduction of the one-child policy.

material gains; about not only owning a home, but one that includes access to amenities such as a swimming pool and club house. Chan aims to correct this misrepresentation. He describes the outlook of the younger generation that grew with the modern high-rise plazas and shopping malls that were constructed in New Towns such as Sha Tin and redeveloped areas of Hong Kong Island and Kowloon. For older generations, these were "plazas of wonder", a far cry from the crowded and chaotic city where there still existed large squatter areas and "wooden huts".

For Hong Kong people in their 20s and 30s, especially those that were raised in New Town public housing estates, there grew to be an intense interest in older neighbourhoods, borne of a fatigue over the monotony and meaninglessness of the experience of highrise living and dime-a-dozen shopping malls. A young activist I spoke to echoed the sentiments expressed in Chan's letter: "I find that when I grow up, life is so dull, and this is like the suburbs in the United States. It's so boring, so when I studied in university, I started to walk around old districts" (personal interview, 30 April, 2010). The evocation of suburbia is startling because the density of Hong Kong, even in the New Territories, bears no resemblance to American-style sprawl, but this interviewee notes a similar experience of placelessness (Relph, 1976) in new residential and commercial landscapes. By rediscovering and revealing the meaning of the city of recent memory, the places that exist under a continual possibility of disappearance and redevelopment (Abbas, 1997b), the young activists articulate a new vision of urban space. The aim is not to acquire better jobs, higher incomes or to achieve any kind of economic gain. Rather the vision is nothing short of a re-articulation of city life and city space[19]. Heritage is a part of this insofar as

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[19] The perspective that valorizes use value over exchange value aligns with Lefebvrian lens on the production of new city spaces through which a number of Hong Kong scholars have assessed contemporary urban social movements (Ng et al., 2010; Ku, 2012). Purcell's (2008) book on "recapturing" democracy in order to more effectively challenge the ever-mutating forms of neoliberal urbanism might also contribute to this conversation.

it respects historical neighbourhoods and spaces, and the communities that exist in and depend on them, in situ. "We see what's really important in Hong Kong are the labouring masses, the community that belongs to the citizens, the homes and the stories that belong to them" (personal interview, 30 April, 2010).

4.10 The State's Response

Every year the Chief Executive delivers a policy address, outlining the government's priorities for the coming year. In the colonial era it was a rare instance of direct contact with the populace and an effort to respond to their needs and desires. In the post-colonial period, it continues, a bellwether for important policy directions and still peppered with reassurances that the government is on track. Prior to the events at the Piers in late 2006 and 2007, heritage did not appear in the CE policy addresses. There was not one mention of the word "heritage" in the 2006-2007 policy address (delivered in 2006) and only one mention the year prior, in reference to the Culture and Heritage Commission. In contrast, in the 2007-2008 policy address, delivered on October 12, 2007, heritage is mentioned nineteen times. This marks a significant turn in the government's outlook and an emphasis on heritage as a policy area that deserves attention. The sections on heritage conservation appear in the section entitled "Quality City and Quality Life", sandwiched, fittingly, between sub-headings on Environmental Protection and Creative Capital. The topic is introduced as though it is a concession: "In recent years, Hong Kong people have expressed our passion for our culture and lifestyle. This is something we should cherish. In the next five years, I will press ahead with our work on heritage conservation" (HKSAR, 2007, no. 49).

The apparent government commitment to heritage is even more in evidence in a "letter to the people" read by the CE on the Radio Television HK on January 28, 2007. The tone of the

letter is constructive and conciliatory. Donald Tsang states he has heard the desires of the Hong

Kong people and says he is willing to respond to the "sea change" in public opinion. The term

"sea change" emphasizes the transformation of thinking on the topic of heritage to which most

people had previously not paid much attention. The letter attributes the new interest in heritage to

a growing sense of collective memory, not only for ancient relics and monuments, but everyday

places that residents have lived with for the past few decades, and that contribute to their sense of

place of place and identity. Tsang notes two challenges the government and people currently

face. The first is allowing for public input in an area that does not have pre-established

consultation channels. The second is balancing conservation with development in ways that will

not jeopardize Hong Kong's ability to compete with rival cities, especially in the Mainland. A

key ingredient in this competition, the letter notes, is infrastructure: "The community must

understand that investment in infrastructure is vital if Hong Kong is to remain a dynamic and

thriving world city" (Tsang, 2007). This is fitting, as the harbourfront reclamation was mainly

envisaged for road and railway infrastructure.[20]

Although the protests at the Star Ferry Pier and Queen's Pier surprised the government

because they involved groups that were "not the usual suspects," and because of the media

publicity they garnered, the government was actually well-prepared to respond. Behind the

scenes work in relation to the Culture and Heritage Commission and earlier reviews of built

heritage policies had provided directions for tangible changes. An expert I interviewed suggested

that the government took advantage of the opportunity created by the protest, and in doing so

appeared responsive to public demands.

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[20] The key role of transportation infrastructure – partly to provide an interface with China under reform - in Hong Kong's competitiveness was formulated in a Territorial Development Strategy in 1984, updated in 1989 (Ng, 1993; Ku, 2012).

> This is actually a good conservation policy. It's very well thought out, and there's no way you can come up with such a good policy within less than 10 months, a year. No way. That means the government always had this all along and they just didn't feel that it's the right time to push it out and then now, since it's under political pressure, this is something they can use to quieten down all of these grievances?

The use of the word "policy" in the preceding statement is misleading. The policy, as contained in the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance, remains unchanged. Rather than amend the policy, the government introduced a series of initiatives related to heritage conservation. If it had changed the content of the policy, state actors would need to admit the need for "directional change", something it is reluctant to do in any area that is perceived as a potential threat to economic competitiveness (personal interview, 18 May, 2010). It has taken a similar approach to environmental protection, instituting initiatives but failing to take a hard line with respect to air quality objectives. Interviews with built environment professionals reiterated this idea: "they want flexibility to do case by case deals" (personal interview, 8 October, 2010); "it's a quick response to all the happenings in the last few years, but it is not policy change" (personal interview, 11 June, 2010). Furthermore, although there were immediate changes based upon earlier work, the following chapter will reveal that an extensive reflexive exercise in policy learning was also undertaken in an effort to further refine areas of interest related to built heritage.

If heritage activism came to represent a generalized dissatisfaction with governance in Hong Kong, the government envisioned that a suite of initiatives and administrative changes ushered in in the wake of the protests might cure these grievances. The initiatives include the "Revitalising Historic Buildings Through Partnership Scheme," which earmarks government owned buildings for NGOs or creative industry start-ups in an adjudicated competition, as well

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as the introduction of heritage impact assessments and the initiation of a flagship project in

Central (HKSAR, 2009b; Ku, 2010). The Conserving Central plan, introduced in the 2009-2010

Policy Address, features eight projects for government-owned buildings and sites: the Central

Market, the former Police Married Quarters on Hollywood Road, the Police Station Compound,

the Piers sites and several others. The philosophy guiding these projects is "progressive

development", emphasizing a balance between cultural conservation and economic development.

The intent is to generate new spaces for leisure and consumption in these revitalized structures.

Plans will be carried out over a lengthy period. As we will see in a later chapter, conflicting

visions of the values of these sites has already emerged. The administrative changes include the

creation of the Commissioner for Heritage Office under a new Development Bureau, within

which are concentrated all of the departments which deal with land development issues and

hence are related to heritage conservation. Notably absent from the newly introduced measures is

a way for enhancing the protection of privately owned buildings.

4.11 The New Heritage Discourse

Aligning with the period examined in this chapter, beginning with the handover and

burgeoning interest in heritage in isolated quarters in the late 1990s and ending with the

existence of a pervasive interest in and understanding of heritage issues among members of the

general public, there is a noticeable increase in reporting on heritage in the media. As mentioned

above, one of the reasons that the government responded so swiftly to the Piers protests is that

extensive reporting in the print and television media generated widespread public interest. It is

impossible to establish a direct relationship between reporting, public interest in and sympathy

with the heritage movement, and the government response. Nonetheless, it may be advanced that

they are mutually reinforcing parts of a new heritage discourse. The mainstream newspapers, left

and centre on the political spectrum, reported heritage protests and controversies with increasing

frequency during this period. A keyword search of just one paper, the English-language South

China Morning Post, reveals both the importance of events in 2006 and 2007 and more general

trends.
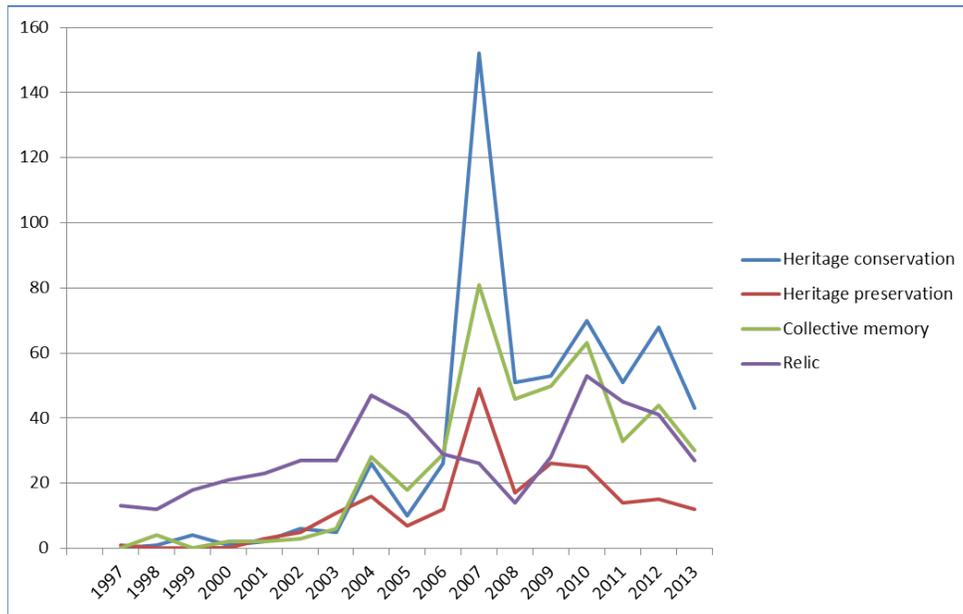
Figure 2: Heritage content in the South China Morning Post 1997-2013

Figure 2 shows the number of mentions of heritage keywords – heritage conservation,

heritage preservation, collective memory, and relic – in the SCMP each year from 1997 to 2013.

Searches of other words and word combinations were attempted but returned content not related

to urban and cultural heritage or Hong Kong. There are several things to be said about the trends

represented on this graph. First, the term "relic" was in fairly common usage in the late 1990s

and early 2000s. This may be due to the earlier emphasis on archaeology and historicity in

Antiquities and Monuments Office, and in the government more generally, as explained in the

previous chapter. "Relic" is also a literal translation of the Chinese term for heritage, the former

falling out of usage and the latter becoming more common[21]. Both "heritage conservation" and

"heritage preservation" had next to no mentions in the late 90s. The gradual increase in their

usage coincides with key events and trends around the year 2000, including the international

conferences in 1997 and 1999 discussed in this chapter, a burgeoning interest in heritage as a

feature of urban renewal, and the creation of the Architectural Conservation Programme at HKU

which, as Chapter 4 will show, had a significant impact on heritage discourse in the city.

"Collective memory" is a term which is part of the heritage discourse and, though problematic in

some ways for its exclusions (Boyer, 1996), speaks to the interest in an identifiable Hong Kong

culture and experience (distinct from China) that may be located in the recent past. The spikes,

most notably the one in 2007, are related to particular sites. In 2004, the Wedding Card Street

controversy erupted, in late 2006 and early 2007 the protests at the Piers garnered prolonged

media coverage, and in 2009 and 2010, the King Yin Lei and Wing Lee Street controversies and

heritage initiatives introduced by the government, including Conserving Central, were much in

the news. Over the course of the entire period the language of heritage entered the mainstream

English-language media in a steady and sustained fashion, signifying not only an interest in this

issue among reports, but also an appetite among members of the public readers of the newspaper.

The overall trend, barring a few dips and bumps, is an increase in heritage content, using the

international discourse of cultural heritage, and a less consistent usage of the language

archaeology and antiquity represented by the term "relic."

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[21] "Heritage" is often used as an object noun in Hong Kong English as a direct translation from Chinese. In contrast, in North America and the U.K. heritage is used as a general noun and is often followed with another noun (house, building, object). In Hong Kong it is not uncommon to refer to "a heritage", which may be an object (relic) from the past.

4.12 Conclusion

This chapter has situated the present concern over heritage in Hong Kong within a constellation of political, cultural and economic currents that have emerged since the handover in 1997. The purpose of this brief contextual history has been to debunk analyses that propose a simple causal relationship between heritage as a public concern, as expressed at protests in 2006 and 2007, and the government response that followed. The situated account provided here has shown that work was undertaken in this area behind the scenes in the late 1990s. These early discussions, manifest in conferences and policy studies, were both part of the HKSAR's emphasis on cultural development in the postcolonial period, and a response to regional and global developments in the area of heritage policy. That is to say, they aimed both to develop a sense of local and regional Chinese cultural identity and to enhance the territory's use of heritage as a tool for place marketing and tourism. Central to this agenda was the idea that heritage should be complementary to development, properly placed in the post-industrial creative economy. When the third phase of the Central Reclamation inspired a wave of experimental civic activism which included, among other concerns, the articulation of a vision of collective Hong Kong heritage, the government was able to respond quickly, wrapping the complicated, shifting and contradictory meanings of heritage into a manageable bundle. The rapid response is therefore not due centrally due to a concern for the public on the part of the government, but rather it also represents a strategic direction for the entrepreneurial global city. The reaction to the initiatives has been tepid; there is a tacit understanding that "directional change" in this policy area is not possible due to Hong Kong's land regime and economy.

Chapter 5: The Geography of Heritage Policy Learning

In 2007 the HKSAR heritage policy portfolio was relocated from the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) to the newly formed Development Bureau (DEVB), created to replace the Bureau for Housing, Planning and Lands. Carrie Lam was appointed Secretary for Development (SDEV), head of this policy area, and served a five year term until 2012[22]. With heritage at the forefront of policy issues of public concern during the time of her tenure, Lam was entrusted with the very sensitive work of shoring up the perception of the government's mishandling of the review of heritage conservation policy, and the unresponsiveness to public desires evinced in recent controversies. This was done in a variety of ways, most visibly through the creation of initiatives, such as the Revitalising Public Buildings through Partnership Scheme (HKSAR, 2007, no. 49-56), but also through public relations work and adjustments to the management and administration of heritage in the HKSAR government. Less visible, but no less important, was behind the scenes work involving policy learning.

The DEVB addresses specifically urban forms of development; it is not interested in indicators of human development or even economic development writ large, but rather the development of Hong Kong's most scarce but highly profitable resource: land. As such, it advises the government on policies for urban planning, land administration, building registration, urban renewal and areas of related interest, including built heritage. Lam's duties as SDEV, typical of any such high-ranking public official, included regular travel for state business. The themes engaged during her travels varied widely across the work of the bureau and according to

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[22] In 2012 Carrie Lam moved to the position of Chief Secretary of Administration, assisting the Chief Executive in overseeing the work of the policy bureaus.

the purpose of the travel: in response to an invitation from a foreign government, to attend or speak at a conference, or a Hong Kong-inspired mission involving meetings and visits to gather information and build relationships. Of interest here is how the work done on these travels relates to the process of working through the Hong Kong situation and attempts to remake policy. In particular, the focus is on how the theme of heritage has figured in these travels, and how these engagements, understood as instances of policy learning, are related more broadly to a relational geography of heritage policy.

During her term as Secretary for Development, Carrie Lam traveled internationally for business that included the heritage conservation policy area approximately seventeen times[23]. Although heritage conservation may not have been the primary purpose of the travel, it was nonetheless included in official announcements issued to the public and generated for internal circulation. In January, 2008 Lam travelled to Shanghai where she visited "distinctive buildings" including 1933 Old Millfun, a slaughterhouse undergoing refurbishment as part of the Shanghai government's creative industry strategy (DEVB, 2008a). She was shown how the municipality was "sparing no effort" in reinventing the building as a hub for creative firms. Later the same year Lam visited New York City to give a plenary address at a symposium on vertical density in Hong Kong and New York (DEVB, 2008b). During this visit she also met with the Chair of the Landmarks Preservation Committee and toured historic buildings including the Grand Central Terminal, the New York Public Library and public spaces such as the Union Square Green Market. In 2010, a visit to Wellington included a meeting with the New Zealand Historic Places

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[23] This figure was generated through a review of DEVB press releases published online (http://www.devb.gov.hk/en/publications_and_press_releases/press/index.html). Press releases on specific issues may be isolated using a keyword search. Among those on the topic of heritage conservation were announcements or reports of seventeen international trips. As heritage overlaps with other issues, it is possible that the number is higher. This figure does not include local travel within the Hong Kong territory.

Trust in which adaptive reuse of historic buildings was discussed (DEVB, 2010). The Trust

shared with Mrs. Lam their experiences of managing an incentive fund to encourage the

conservation of privately owned heritage buildings of interest to the public. Lam was also given

a tour of the Old Government Building, home to the Faculty of Law for Victoria University.

Constructed in 1876, it is claimed to be one of the world's largest wooden office buildings

(Wellington Local Government, 2014). Visits to Scandinavia, Macau, Singapore, Seoul,

Guangzhou, Paris, Melbourne, London, Tokyo and equally far-flung destinations featured similar

itineraries of site visits, meetings with heritage experts, planners and bureaucrats to discuss

policies, programmes, architecture, urban redevelopment, and "greening", and additional

courtesy visits with overseas Chinese media, representatives of trade offices and other groups

with connections to China.

The issue of heritage buildings under private ownership discussed with the Historic

Places Trust in New Zealand is of particular interest in Hong Kong where ownership rights

appear to inalienably include the possibility of generating surplus value through redevelopment

(Tang, 2008). Very few privately owned properties are on the list of declared monuments and

among those with historical grades, the guarantee of protection is minimal and the possibility of

demolition omnipresent. King Yin Lei mansion at 45 Stubbs Road on the western slope of Happy

Valley is an exemplary case. The building, constructed in 1937, is considered one of Hong

Kong's best examples of a hybrid of Chinese décor and Western construction but it was not

provided statutory protection as a monument because it was privately owned. The property's

zoning was residential and did not include heritage protection among possible land uses. In the

late 1990s and early 2000s there were discussions among planners about the possibility of

amending the zoning in order to grant the possibility of heritage protection, but no action was

taken (personal interview, 19 May, 2010). In 2004 the owner announced plans to demolish the building but rescinded when the Conservancy Association, a long-established environmental NGO, launched a campaign to raise public awareness and support for its conservation (Smart & Lam, 2009). The Conservancy Association offered a symbolic bid of 6 million dollars (the property was valued at more than $400 million), planning to raise this amount by asking for a contribution of one Hong Kong Dollar from each Hong Kong resident (Lau, 2004). An offer to sell the property to the government was refused due to prohibitive costs and it was instead sold to Ice Wisdom Limited, an off-shore shell company registered in the British Virgin Islands, for 430 million HKD (Li, 2007). This anonymous new owner, quite possibly a major player in Hong Kong real estate but not identified by name, then began to remove the building's ornaments, an initial step towards demolition and the eventual construction of a luxury townhouse development. This occurred shortly after the Piers protests during a time when there was extensive media coverage leading to new and widespread public scrutiny of heritage issues. Carrie Lam, newly appointed, intervened on behalf of the government with a stop-work order and awarded the structure temporary monument status (Wong, 2007). A resolution was reached with the offer of an adjoining piece of land, zoned for the townhouse development, in exchange for the transfer of the building, newly zoned for heritage purposes and restored, to public ownership. King Yin Lei received the permanent monument status on 11 July, 2008.

Despite the solution reached at King Yin Lei, and a handful of similar cases involving privately-owned properties, the government does not have a comprehensive set of standards for encouraging or forcing private owners to conserve heritage structures (Information Services Department, HKSAR, 2011). Treating such cases on an ad hoc basis carries tremendous financial risks. The possibility exists that other owners of historic buildings could approach the DEVB

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with similar, potentially costly, demands. While King Yin Lei is trumpeted as an example of the Hong Kong government's willingness to engage with private owners of heritage properties, it has not resulted in a solid strategy. Thus, when Carrie Lam learned about the incentive programme at the Historic Places Trust in New Zealand three years after the controversy over King Yin Lei, it was with a view to recent events in Hong Kong. Likewise, attention paid to the reuse of historic buildings in Shanghai for creative purposes and the interest in conserving significant public buildings in New York's landscape of vertical density were directly related to ongoing discussions back home. While it is not clear how the knowledge and comparative frames generated in Lam's travels are put to use in Hong Kong, it is important to recognize the relational geography of the policy learning process as a way of challenging the sedentarist assumptions that underpin theorizations of heritage, as outlined in Chapter 2.

5.1 A Relational Politics of Heritage Policy Learning in Hong Kong

This chapter and the next build upon the contextual discussion of Chapter 3 by examining the recent challenges to and reassessment of heritage policy in Hong Kong through a relational lens. The interest is in understanding how connections forged and enacted between Hong Kong and other places have influenced the way heritage is discussed and policy trajectories formulated in the territory. These connections involve communication, travel and other forms of mobility of people, knowledge, capital and other material and immaterial resources, embedded in and extending beyond the bounds of the state. Chapter 6 examines the role of returnees and travelers in rethinking the meaning of Hong Kong as "home" and the place of heritage in this construction. The current chapter highlights forms of mobility more directly related to policy, particularly an understudied aspect of the urban policy-making process: learning. The emphasis is on learning activities that occur through formal, institutional channels involving politicians,

heritage experts, bureaucrats and civil servants. Temenos and McCann (2012, p. 1394) write that

teaching and learning – the production of policy knowledge – involve "a politics of persuasion

and coalition-building in and through which long-term and effective consensus is established

over the definition of key problems and specific rationalities and technologies through which

problems will be addressed." It is argued here that learning about heritage policy and practice in

other places is undertaken so as to better make decisions that respond to the unique

circumstances in Hong Kong. It is shown, however, that the learning process is highly

politicized, motivated by ideologies shaped by entrepreneurialism and competitiveness.

Although the Hong Kong situation animates the policy learning process, the process itself is

constrained by an underlying neoliberal politics.

In spite of the challenges posed by protests and widespread public desires for greater

heritage protection, especially for places of everyday heritage, the government has chosen to

retain the policy outlined in the Antiquities and Monuments Ordinance. Nevertheless, an

extensive process of policy learning has taken place within government departments, among civil

servants and agents peripheral to the state but that may be understood as quasi-state actors. The

response to heritage as a policy issue has thus been "extrospective", meaning outward looking

(McCann, 2011a; McCann, 2012). The policy tools and knowledge necessary to effectively

address the situation did not exist in Hong Kong, hence the government, with the assistance of a

variety of sources, has sought to learn from elsewhere to fill the gaps. However, the unique

political, economic and cultural conditions in the territory mean that there are no off-the-shelf

solutions. Notably, the lease-hold land administration system established by the colonial

government in the 1840s persists, implicating revenues from the auction of land to developers in

the provision of public services[24]. In this system, that has led to what Haila (2000) has termed a "property state", the prospect of reserving parts of the built environment as "heritage" is not easily realized (Cuthbert, 1984). The response is also "extrospective" in another sense related to image-making. The Hong Kong government is developing a place brand as "Asia's World City" and heritage, among other forms of cultural hardware and software, figures in this construction (Kong, 2007). While policymakers approach heritage with a spirit of economic pragmatism, the NGOs and community groups that brought the issue to the attention of the government and public are concerned foremost with protecting local communities in the places they depend upon for their continued existence.

As discussed in Chapter 2, urban policy-making in the "global age" is as much about emulating successful models from other places as it is about responding to local needs and dynamics (McCann & Ward, 2011). Urban scholars have begun to study policy mobilities in order to better understand urbanism and urbanization under the conditions of global capitalism. While the interest in the circulation of models of urbanism and planning is not new (King, 1984; Masser et al., 1986; Saunier, 1999), the post-structural and critical tenor of the recent work is, and has opened new horizons. New work asks how mobility has become intrinsic to policy-making, but also poses questions about the political implications of relational urbanism in an era of entrenched neoliberalism (Peck, 2006; Ward, 2006). Work by researchers in North America and Great Britain has advocated attending to the seemingly mundane details of the policy-making process, evident in meetings, conferences and in the travels of bureaucrats, consultants and experts (González, 2010). Policy diffusion popularized by political scientists has been much

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[24] For an account of the establishment of the lease hold system see Endacott (1958). In the early years revenue from land rent was central to establishing the British visions of law and order (Scott, 1989, p. 54).

criticized (Peck, 2011) and current thinking encourages researchers to go beyond instances of

transfer and to understand the politics that underpin the selection and mutation of policy models.

Assemblage has emerged as the concept *de rigueur* (McCann, 2011a). Still, however, in much

research the focus remains on policy models and best practices and questions of transfer and

diffusion remain implicit. Privileging of evidence of actually-existing policy presences, warns

Jacobs (2012, p. 148), may "feed universalizing narratives of same-ing and… position some

cities as command centres (exporters of ideas) and others as passive receivers and imitators."

Even where policies themselves are not transferred, policy-making and learning is still a

productive process. As Kong *et al* (2006, p. 175-6, following Yapa, 1977) argue in their study of

the diffusion of creative industry policies in Asia, non-adoption should not be equated with

disinterest, but must be properly contextualized.

In Hong Kong, the failure to overhaul the heritage policy in favour of a model from

another jurisdiction is a result of local constraints. The process of learning from elsewhere, with

learning understood as a taken-for-granted aspect of urbanism, is still important. For McFarlane,

(2011, p. 361) "learning is a process of potential transformation… It is more than just a set of

mundane practical questions, but is central to political strategies that seek to consolidate,

challenge, alter and name new urban worlds." Local constraints do more than prevent policy

change; they shape decisions about which cities Hong Kong should be compared with, what

kinds of policy examples should be sought out and how heritage relates to other urban questions,

crucially in this case, property ownership and development. In this process, learning

environments, even those outside of the government apparatus, codify and legitimate certain

forms of knowledge and propose that local issues be studied on the ground, but through an

extrospective lens (McCann, 2011b, p. 114). Crucially, their political influence may be

extensive. As explained above, this process has been overlooked in the literature in favour of instances of policy transfer (Peck, 2011). The discussions about heritage that occurred during Carrie Lam's travels share a common thread; they all relate to accommodating heritage in ways that are not antithetical to development. Or, perhaps, in ways that are not antithetical to the governance regime in which development figures so prominently.

5.2   Layout of the Chapter

The relational lens attuned to the dynamics of mobility is appropriate and necessary for the study of heritage policy in Hong Kong in part because the territory is sustained through relationships with other places and relies on the movement and circulation of people, information and capital, especially the latter, for its success (Siu & Ku, 2009). The next sections of the chapter examine processes of policy learning in which mobility figures prominently. First, heritage conservation policy learning undertaken by the Panel for Home Affairs is examined. Second, the key role of the Architectural Conservation Programme at Hong Kong University as a node for policy learning is highlighted. In both instances, actors draw on knowledge of and comparisons with certain cities and jurisdictions selected not only for their similarity with Hong Kong, but also because they have pursued directions that are of interest to the Hong Kong government. Three sources of policy learning are then examined: Macau, Australia, and Shanghai[25]. Each of these places has been an important source of ideas, knowledge and resources with respect to heritage policy in Hong Kong. The different scales of city, SAR and nation-state

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[25] As noted in Chapter 2, heritage has been an important feature of Singapore's urban landscape since the 1970s and a significant body of scholarly work has explored the implications and results of this direction in planning and governance. Although Singapore is frequently positioned as a rival to Hong Kong in many respects, it is not referenced in terms of comparisons related to heritage any more than the jurisdictions examined here. Macau, Australia and Shanghai are discussed here because each approaches heritage in ways that Hong Kong actors have found appealing.

are recognized but we shall see that similar processes are at work across these scales. The conclusion highlights the iterative and selective dimensions of relational politics of policy learning process and explains how they are conditioned by Hong Kong governance.

5.3 Policies in Motion I: The Panel on Home Affairs

The Queen's Pier and Star Ferry Pier protests, along with events at Lee Tung Street and other sites around the city, signaled an urgent need to revisit the update of heritage policy that was proposed in the Culture and Heritage Commission Report. A consultation process undertaken in 2004 had generated some ideas (LegCo PHA, 2004) but concrete directions for action had not yet been defined. At the legislative level the matter was referred to the Panel on Home Affairs (PHA) for review. The PHA is one of eighteen panels that deliberate and advise the government on policy matters. Heritage conservation was under its purview at the time, which includes "district, community and rural matters, civic education, building management, youth matters, provision of leisure and cultural services, development of arts and culture, public entertainment, sport and recreation" (PHA Terms of Reference). Heritage figured prominently on the agenda of the Panel in 2007 and 2008 as a result of the widespread public interest and concern on the topic. In addition to assessing the review of potential amendments and initiatives, the PHA devoted significant time and resources to learning from other places. This work included the generation of research and information reports for review by members of the Panel, and the Legislative Council (LegCo) more broadly, as well as visits, potential and actual, to gain first-hand experience of heritage conservation policy and its effects in other cities.

On March 9th, 2007 the Panel discussed heritage conservation policy at a regularly scheduled meeting. Among the items on the agenda was a research project to be undertaken on heritage conservation policies in overseas place. A background paper prepared for the meeting

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(LegCo PHA, 2007b) notes that "the study aims to provide members of the Panel with overseas experiences relevant to the Hong Kong situation." It recommends the study of three places: the UK, Singapore and Macau. The UK was chosen for its comprehensive heritage protection system, which includes voluntary organizations, NGOs and heritage trusts, and for the diverse funding sources from which these bodies and the government draw for the heritage portfolio. Singapore was included because it has successfully integrated heritage conservation with land planning. In addition, like Hong Kong, it has a severe shortage of developable land, making heritage a challenging prospect. Finally, Macau was selected thanks to its successful bid for inclusion on the UNESCO World Heritage List, and its responsiveness to the interests of both local residents and tourists. It is worth noting that the former colonies of Macau and Singapore are very different from the UK in their scale and governance set-up, not to mention the complexity of heritage in the post-colonial setting. Moreover, these two former colonies also differ vastly, Macau sharing with Hong Kong the experience of returning to the "Motherland", unlike Singapore's status as a sovereign state. The study of this trio would be carried out by the Research and Library Services Division of the LegCo Secretariat. The Panel discussed supplementing the research report with a "duty visit" so that members could enrich their understanding and knowledge with direct experience.

The term "duty visit" is unique to the Hong Kong English lexicon. It refers to travel by government representatives, normally politicians or senior bureaucrats, for official purposes. Since the Hong Kong government maintains ties with overseas governments in numerous capacities the term "duty visit" appears regularly in government documents. "Duty" emphasizes the obligatory nature of such travel; it is undertaken strictly for the purposes of government business, its forms including meetings with foreign officials, trade missions, and, of interest here,

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visits for the purpose of acquiring experience and knowledge with respect to an area of policy interest. "Visit" appears to contradict "duty" as it has connotations of leisure, discovery, and spending time to connect with personal human contacts in a place other than one's home. As "work", duty visits are heavily programmed and closely scrutinized. Every member of each LegCo Panel is allotted a budget of 55,000 Hong Kong Dollars for visits over the course of the four year term. The expenditure of this fund is closely monitored. Visits are planned long in advance, only considered after research is undertaken. Even when this is done a prospective duty visit may not become reality.

Over the coming months the idea of a heritage policy duty visit for members of the Panel on Home Affairs was revisited a number of times. The visit had three principal goals (LegCo PHA, 2007b). The first was to "obtain first-hand information on the strategies and conservation measures" that are part of the redevelopment process. The second was to study modern adaptations to historic areas, and the integration of old and new built forms. The third was to exchange views with relevant authorities and experts in the places visited. The emphasis on "first-hand" experience is here a supplement to a textual report, the product of research about other places conducted from at home in Hong Kong which, it is assumed, cannot provide the same level of understanding of context as a visit. The thematic emphasis on redevelopment and adaptive reuse is directly related to Hong Kong's current challenges but also to the broader challenges posed by land constraints. With the scope and justification of the travel defined, the question of where to go remained. Patrick Lau, LegCo member for the Architecture Functional Constituency, proposed a visit to European cities, including London, Athens and an unspecified city in Germany (LegCo PHA, 2007b). It was pointed out by another member that the Panel on Planning, Lands and Works had visited Singapore, London and Berlin in 2002 and that heritage

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had been one of the principal themes of these visits with respect to land development and urban renewal. This earlier duty visit of a different LegCo Panel on a similar topic was noted and the potential destinations were modified to include Rome and Munich, in addition to Athens.

In the final instance two options were proposed: a visit to Athens and Rome or to Athens and Munich. The proposals included only two of the three cities due to prohibitive costs and the amount of time required for such long-distance travel. It is worthy of note that Athens is retained in both itineraries because it is "a city renowned for heritage conservation" (LegCo PHA, 2007c). Research briefs were prepared for Athens and Rome, but not for Munich, as relevant information was unavailable. In addition to the overseas travel, a day-long visit to Macau was also proposed, as well as a half-day visit to local sites and neighbourhoods in Hong Kong, with an emphasis on areas that were in danger of being demolished. At a meeting in July, 2007, the value of the visit to European cities was questioned (LegCo PHA, 2007d). A member expressed concern that it was not "appropriate for Hong Kong to make reference to the conservation experience of Athens" given that the Greek city was so much older. He suggested that it would be more appropriate for the Panel to learn from cities that share attributes in common with Hong Kong. As a result of this discussion, the visit to Europe was postponed in favour of additional research and instead the Panel planned to pursue the duty visit to Macau in quick order.

The Macau visit took place on 27 July, 2007 and had a similar purpose as the scrapped overseas visit. Eight members of the Panel and four staff members made their way to Macau on a morning ferry and were met with a full slate of meetings and site visits. The day began with a briefing and sharing session with members of the Macau Cultural Affairs Bureau. This was followed with a visit to the A-Ma Temple, a lunch reception and an afternoon tour of World Heritage Sites in the old central quarter of the city. The report of the visit highlights some of the

salient points touched upon. One area of note is the designation of heritage districts in Macau, rather than only individual buildings: "The Macau Government's policy conserves not only individual buildings, but also an entire district around a central square or along a street, and these spots of historical interest are linked up with pedestrian walkways if feasible. As a result, a complete historical ambience is preserved" (LegCo, 2007e, p. 5). Although it stops short of suggesting that the visit may provide a useful point of reference during the assessment of improvement measures, to be undertaken later in 2007, the report does identify areas to which Hong Kong should give consideration.

The proposed research report that was the original inspiration for the scrapped visit to Europe and the visit to Macau proceeded. In the end it was decided that the UK and Singapore components of the study would be removed and Australia would be added. Macau was retained[26]. The report is titled "Built Heritage Conservation Policy in Selected Places." A short note on methodology explains that the information was gathered using a "desktop research method" consisting of internet searches, review of relevant documents, analysis of documents gathered and correspondence with the relevant authorities. The introduction provides only a brief explanation of the purpose of the report, which is "to study the built heritage conservation policy adopted in selected places, thereby providing the Panel on Home Affairs with overseas experiences relevant to the Hong Kong situation." Chapters on Australia, Macau and Hong Kong share a similar format, with sections on institutional arrangements, law, the heritage protection system, the general approach for heritage conservation, funding mechanisms, incentives of conservation, and public participation. This report and the two other information notes represent

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[26] The United Kingdom and Singapore were nevertheless studied for the same purpose. Findings were published in Information Notes (Yu, 2008b; 2008c) rather than in the main report.

a significant amount of research on the heritage policy mechanisms and infrastructure in other places. They present their findings factually, with no discussion or analysis. They were no doubt supplemented for members of the PHA by the duty visit to Macau.

5.4   Policies in Motion II: The ACP as a Node for Heritage Policy Learning

A central node for heritage policy learning in Hong Kong, in which mobile practices figure prominently, is the Architectural Conservation Programme (ACP) at Hong Kong University. Though not situated within the architecture of the state like the PHA, the ACP is noteworthy with respect to policy because it was established specifically to fill a gap in government employee training resulting from an absence in the offerings at local universities. In fact, the mandate of the programme at its outset was to train professionals working in government locally (personal interview, 10 November, 2010). It is implicated in the transformation of heritage policy knowledge in a variety of ways. First, in its programming, it offers undergraduate and graduate level degrees, as well as a diploma, in heritage conservation practice and policy. The post-graduate level programmes are designed to be accessible to mid-career professionals, especially those working on areas related to heritage, and over half of their students and graduates work in government positions (personal interview, 15 April, 2010) In addition to formal academic programming, the ACP has been engaged to hold training sessions for staff of government departments, including the Architectural Services, Planning, Transportation, and Structural Engineering departments. The ACP thus helps train individuals that play a variety of roles in and outside of government on a formal and ad hoc basis, thus facilitating the streamlining of understandings of heritage across the public sector. Faculty members also encourage students to participate in a public dialogue, especially by writing letters to the editor in both English and Chinese newspapers, thus broadening the reach of the discourse

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beyond the confines of the classroom and the various settings in which graduates work (personal interview, 15 April, 2010). Professors in the programme also serve on government committees, including the Antiquities Advisory Board, thereby connecting directly with key decision-makers in government, and even writing recommendations for the Central Policy Unit (personal interview, 10 Nov, 2010).

The elevation of some policies and places as exemplary models produces uneven comparative frames that position some cities as always leading and others as bound to follow (Robinson, 2011; Jacobs, 2012). Hong Kong, as a centre of global finance, is a beacon in networks of mobile capital, and its neoliberal formula is emulated, especially in East Asia (Zhang, 2012). The same city may be both a leader and a follower, however, and in some policy areas, including heritage and sustainability, Hong Kong looks elsewhere for knowledge and solutions. At the ACP, this has meant tapping into international networks of professionals, policymakers and knowledge, to build local capacity. The programme's professors attempt to bring what they feel are the best examples in the field, globally, to their students. This results in the inclusion of field study components, site visits and guest instructors in the curriculum. Which policies and best practices are applied in teaching depends upon a variety of factors, which can be understood as "path dependencies" (McCann, 2011b). Importantly, these change over time. One of the founders of the programme arrived in Hong Kong with perspectives informed by her experience serving for ICOMOS Canada and networks based more in Europe and North America than Asia. This led to long-term relationships with Canadian experts who have been regular visitors to the programme. With respect to policy, some of the early emphases in teaching included the adoption of the "Conservation Management Plan"[i] as a planning tool and the assessment of heritage values drawn from Australia's Burra Charter (Australia ICOMOS,

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1999). The social values of heritage, sometimes articulated as living heritage, stressing social networks, practices and use value, grew to be a crucial area of thinking after the faculty members attended a conference on this theme in Bangkok and recognized its applicability in their work. It has important policy implications in Hong Kong, where the ways in which the assessment of the architectural and historical value of brick and mortar heritage may neglect social landscapes, including markets, small businesses and affordable living spaces. International networks and models thus inform the programme, but the emphasis is on showing how they can be translated locally. One of the professors noted "we're of a school where it's very important to place things in an international context, but at the same time to recognize… not just recognize… but to operate in a local context" (personal interview, 27 September, 2010).

While some of the global leaders on heritage are far away, others are very close. Realistically, due to time and budget constraints, engagement with other jurisdictions is limited, but face-to-face contact and site visits are important (personal interview, 27 September, 2010). Frequent visits to Shanghai, Macau and Singapore permit ongoing relationships with heritage professionals in these cities, creating opportunities for field study, work placements, and eventual guests in Hong Kong. The programme usually begins with a visit to Macau because it is "an example of best practice very nearby" (personal interview, July 31, 2010). Shanghai is a learning destination but has also been influenced by thinking generated in Hong Kong. One of the professors of the ACP has advocated the twinning of creative industries and conservation as a way of rendering heritage profitable and thus palatable for developers (personal interview, April 1, 2010). While the HKSAR only recently began facilitating projects in this direction, notably at government-owned properties under the Conserving Central plan (HKSAR, 2009b), the Shanghai government made this a strategic direction as early as 2004 and now has examples that

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are used in ACP teaching (personal interview, 1 April, 2010). Creative industry is an area of

urban policy that has recently appeared on government agendas across Asia in a relational

fashion (Kong et al., 2006). While the activities of ACP have played an important role in

facilitating public discourse and generating teaching and learning opportunities on the topic of

heritage, and ultimately influencing the policy landscape, it must be borne in mind that other

non-state actors, including activists, academics, architects, and community organizers, do similar

work and that policy learning involves "sociospatially uneven and selective processes" (McCann,

2011b, p.121); some have greater access to the means of mobility and learning than others.

Policy-makers themselves, such as Carrie Lam and the members of the Home Affairs Panel, have

a full itinerary of "policy tourism" (González, 2010), involving overseas attachments for public

servants and regular travel for the purpose of learning about approaches to heritage in other

places. With so many people contributing to the way heritage is framed and discussed, some with

vested interests in an emerging heritage industry, it is important to consider "the power that these

actors have in shaping the process and more controversially what they stand to gain from it"

(González, 2010, p. 14).

5.5   Learning from Elsewhere: Knowledge and Expertise

Three places are referenced with remarkable frequency in discussions about heritage

policy and best practice in Hong Kong: Macau, Shanghai and Australia. As seen above, the Panel

for Home Affairs abandoned plans for a duty visit to Europe in favour of an immediate trip to

Macau. This decision speaks not only to logistics and cost, but to a greater level of comfort with

drawing comparisons from a place with a similar history and political and cultural context.

Similarly, educators in the ACP programme draw on the experiences of Shanghai because it is a

dense, rapidly developing, "global", East Asian city. Australia, though removed from the Asian

context, is nonetheless included in the greater Asia-Pacific region and serves as an important model for its treatment of culture in heritage policies. The next section will analyse the development of these places as sources of comparison, and the knowledge and possibilities generated by placing Hong Kong in relation with them. The discussion is limited to three examples that have had an identifiable influence on heritage policy considerations in the city. Singapore, though an important regional referent, is not included because it was discussed in Chapter 2, and also because, perhaps due to small but important differences with Hong Kong in areas such as quality of life, politics and civil society, was not referenced as frequently as one might expect in textual sources or by informants.

5.5.1   Learning from Macau

Perhaps Hong Kong's most immediate point of comparison for heritage is the Macau Special Administrative Region. Lying just 65km away, across the mouth of the Pearl River, Macau shares with Hong Kong a history of European colonialism, contemporary cultural hybridity, rapid development and an unusual arrangement with the "Motherland" to which it returned in 1999. The similarities are also points of difference, for Macau was occupied by Portugal almost 300 years before Hong Kong, in 1557; it was envisaged as a centre for missionary activity and a Jesuit community was confined to Macau until it was permitted to enter China in 1582. Given its longer history, the territory developed a distinct Macanese patois, cuisine and other cultural traditions, resulting from the long term hybridization of Southern Chinese and European influences, along with those of communities from South Asia, Africa and South East Asia who have long lived in the territory. Macau did not undergo the same level of rapid development in the 1960s and 1970s and thus retained much of its historical built form. By the 1990s Macau's tourism industry was booming thanks to its gambling industry, benefiting

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from the easing of visa restrictions for mainland visitors. Gaming had begun with horse and dog racing in 1875 and had continued through the twentieth century, with Macau gaining a reputation as Asia's "Monte Carlo" and more recently its "Las Vegas". The arrival of major American and global hotel and casino brands with the opening of the Macau gambling market to foreign competition in the early 2000s further bolstered the industry. Although it is widely recognized for its cultural heritage today, Macau only began to pursue the development of a cultural heritage tourism industry in response to the overwhelming growth of gambling and the threats tourism development posed to heritage sites (du Cros, 2009).

Heritage buildings in Macau were included in the national heritage list in Portugal in the 1950s. Local heritage legislation was created in 1976 (Macau Government, 1976), an era during which greater autonomy and independence from Portugal opened new possibilities for local policy directions. The Decree was created by the Committee for the Defence of the Urban Environmental and Cultural Heritage. Whereas the original list considered only individual buildings, the new policy permitted the recognition of streetscapes and groups of buildings. The Cultural Institute of Macau was created in 1982 (later renamed the Cultural Affairs Bureau) and under it a new Cultural Heritage Department, responsible for the implementation of heritage policy. Policies were amended again in the 1980s, mostly to allow for greater public participation. Sixteen museums opened in Macau in the 1990s, a result of an effort to develop cultural infrastructure in advance of the return to Chinese sovereignty. "Lottery" funding is a source of financing for heritage conservation projects in Macau. Gaming firms are required to contribute 1.6% of their gross revenue to the Macau Foundation, a statutory body for social, cultural and economic development, funds from which are used for restoration work (Yu, 2008a). Despite its largely intact historic core and extensive museum offerings, heritage was not

on the radar of most visitors in the 1990s and early 2000s and was not prominently featured in maps or tourism literature. In 2005 the Macau government, with the backing of the Chinese government, submitted a collection of sites for consideration by UNESCO for the World Heritage List. The effort was successful and twenty nine sites were included under the broad title of "Historic Centre of Macau." It is the 31st site in China to be added to the UNESCO list and it was the only one put forward for consideration in the country that year. The listing is intended to showcase Macau as a meeting place between East and West for the purposes of expanding its tourist appeal. Karman Yeung Ka-Man, president of the Macau Hotels Association affirmed, "Just as Disneyland or Universal Studios are a tourism product, heritage will also be a tourism product, only more real and unique" (quoted in Wan, 2005). With the majority of government revenues coming from gambling taxes, the territory was exposed to risk in the event that this industry should falter. The increasing recognition of heritage can thus be seen not only as a means to protect and enhance local culture, but also as a pragmatic diversification of the tourist economy.

Macau's success in the area of heritage conservation and tourism is frequently referenced in Hong Kong both in positive and negative terms. At times Macau is presented as a nearby source of knowledge and experience from which to learn. In 2005, activists and members of the Central and Western District Council considered applying to UNESCO to have the Central Police Compound, consisting of the Police Station, the Central Magistracy and Victoria Prison, added to the World Heritage List. District Councillor, Cyd Ho Sau-Lan, indicated that the group would seek assistance from authorities in Macau since it did not have prior experience with UNESCO (Lai, 2005). Other times Macau's success is used as an excuse to not pursue heritage conservation in Hong Kong. So the argument goes, Macau has a similar history to Hong Kong

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but is much older and has many more monuments intact. Why should Hong Kong even bother when there is such a good heritage tourism destination nearby with which Hong Kong will never be able to compete? In reality, much of Macau's heritage protection system is very similar to Hong Kong's and has had similar results. Macau's policy also allows for the designation of "Monuments" (of which there are 52 – fewer than in Hong Kong!). But it also permits the recognition of "ensembles" or "groups of buildings in a coherent area" (Yu, 2008a, p. 31). The absence of such a "district approach" has been much bemoaned in Hong Kong. The Macau legislation also protects sites, buildings of architectonic value and "areas" – the sum of which amounts to a holistic approach notably absent in Hong Kong. A tangible example of the impact of the policy is Leal Senado Square (see Figure 3). Located in the centre of the city, it is a pedestrianized space, encompassing refurbished historical buildings in every direction. At any time of day late into the night it is filled with tourists enjoying the atmosphere.

In spite of its global reputation, heritage in Macau doesn't always receive the protection one might expect. In the mid-2000s the government announced plans to allow the construction of a high rise development near Guia Lighthouse, one of the UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The lighthouse, built in 1865, is the oldest modern example on the China coast and is situated on top of a hill. Heritage advocates in Macau worried that the development would impact views of the lighthouse. The plans included a 99.9 meter tower for the Macau Central Government Office (the representative of the Mainland in Macau), symbolically referencing the 1999 handover. A

Figure 3: Leal Senado Square, Macau Special Administrative Region

campaign to protect the Lighthouse and its Guia Hill setting referenced not only the historical

role of the building, but also the *feng shui* of the whole property, citing fears that a barrier

created by the construction would affect not only views, but also air circulation (needed by

people who exercise on the hill) and less tangible qualities of the site. Concerned citizens and

groups wrote to UNESCO and ICOMOS about the plans in 2007 since inclusion on the World

Heritage List comes with the responsibility of safeguarding the historic visual context of sites.

Acknowledging the concern, UNESCO representatives then contacted the State Administration

of Cultural Heritage in Beijing which forwarded the concerns back to Macau officials with

questions for review (Hu, 2007a). Although Macau shares with Hong Kong the autonomy of the

status of Special Administrative Region, foreign affairs are managed by Beijing. Thus the

"scaling up" from local concerned groups to UNESCO brought about the involvement of the

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national heritage body, an unusual experience in Macau, but not unexpected since the heritage recognition is international.

Although the Guia Lighthouse case arose due to development pressures in a context of severe land shortage (Hu, 2007b) it was dealt with differently than similar cases in Hong Kong where the possibility of recourse to international bodies and the involvement of Beijing is limited. Apart from this debacle, the Macau context serves as an example for policy and practice in the regional context. It has successfully harnessed cultural heritage for the purposes of tourism and enhancing local identity by legislating the creation of heritage districts and, crucially, garnering credentials and recognition beyond the local scale. Though the historical and contemporary spatial realities of density and cultural palimpsests in the landscape are similar, Macau offers an unattainable example of what is possible in a Special Administrative Region on the South China coast.

5.5.2   Learning from Australia

The story of the relationship between Hong Kong and Australia's heritage policy and practice begins in South Australia in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In this era of unfettered entrepreneurialism, state governments in Australia began the lucrative business of exporting technology and knowledge for profit. South Australia, the driest state on the continent, had developed significant advances in dry land agriculture and these were suitable for export to rapidly developing countries in Northern Africa and the Middle East. In 1979 SALGER (South Australia – Algeria) was incorporated as a government-owned enterprise for a project in Algeria. Its name later changed to SAGRIC (South Australia – Agriculture), nodding to the Department of Agriculture in which it originated (Shea, 1994). This company paved the way for the commercialization of public sector resources, responding profitably to opportunities in

developing markets. It was so successful that the South Australian government expanded international consultancy to other areas, including heritage. In the 1980s, government heritage experts from the South Australia architect's office sought work in Asia to increase revenue. According to an interview respondent, they had planned to work in Singapore but did not find opportunities there (personal interview, 22 July, 2010). They were more successful in Georgetown, Penang in Malaysia, which is a sister city to Adelaide, the capital of South Australia. The work done in Malaysia gave the architects confidence to pursue other projects, one of which was the Ohel Leah Synagogue in Hong Kong. The project involved extensive research and the work was carried out by 24 Australian tradespeople. Although the Australian team's bid was the most costly it was selected based on the reputation of those involved, and on the effort shown during the bidding process when members flew to Hong Kong to meet with synagogue trustees and visit the site (interview, 22 July, 2010). No doubt the reputation of Australia as a worldwide leader in heritage conservation policy and practice was also considered. Though the Ohel Leah project is just one example, similar cases involving the sourcing of expertise, knowledge and experience from Australia have since proliferated. A number of Australian professionals have been guests of the ACP programme and, in this capacity, have served as advisors for government bodies, including the URA (personal interview, 20 July, 2010).

The Burra Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance is the principal reference document for heritage conservation practice in Australia. It was developed at a gathering of the Australian chapter of the International Council of Monuments and Sites in 1979, taking its name from the mining town in South Australia where the meeting took place. It was envisioned as an adaptation of the Venice Charter for the unique circumstances of the Australian

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context, where places of cultural significance to indigenous peoples have long been threatened by the presence and growth of settler communities. As the first such effort, it has become a global benchmark in the field and is widely cited in the Asia-Pacific and globally.

Although the Burra Charter draws cues from ICOMOS international documents, it goes beyond to advocate an approach that understands that the cultural significance of a place extends beyond the physical fabric to its "setting, use, associations, [and] meanings" (Australia ICOMOS, 2011). It is also widely cited for laying out the order in which the most ethical and sensitive conservation management practices may be achieved. This procedure begins with gathering information that will allow the cultural significance to be understood (in all its complexity) through research and participatory methods such as consultation with communities. Only when cultural significance is understood can policies be developed to guide conservation management and use. It is these two features, understanding cultural significance from the outset, and developing directions for use according to this significance, for which the Charter is often cited globally, and with increasing frequency in Hong Kong (by many different actors and for widely varying purposes). When participation lies at the heart of the process, so the argument goes, the risk of one interest dominating the process is lessened. As a whole, the approach is one of minimum intervention: a "cautious approach", involving care and maintenance only to allow for continued use.

The Burra Charter is not a policy document, but like other charters, it is intended to provide a framework for policy decision-making. Other jurisdictions lacking such a framework have turned to Australia for assistance in developing one. China is a notable example. Though Hong Kong is somewhat removed from the equation, it has monitored this project closely. The Australian Heritage Commission, the body that advises the national government on heritage

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matters and whose staff feature in the membership of ICOMOS, was invited to participate in the development of a document that would guide the management of cultural heritage in China. China had management plans for many of its heritage places, some of which were well-established and widely recognized, but it lacked a general point of reference. *The Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China* (Agnew & Demas, 2002), would fill this gap. The project was undertaken with the assistance of the Getty Institute. The international partners were involved as consultants, sharing knowledge and expertise, but working with local stakeholders to develop the document. The *China Principles* document was adopted in 2002 to serve as China's first nation-wide guidelines for conservation. It does not have a regulatory function and instead attempts to highlight the importance of steps in the conservation management process, such as the assessment of value and significance. Although it does not have an official status in Hong Kong, the China Principles document is referenced often in the territory. The elements that are given particular emphasis, including contextual research leading to well-justified assessments of heritage value, are influenced by the Burra Charter. Other elements, including flexibility in cases of overriding alternative uses, are said to be "Chinese particularities" (Qian, 2007).

The debate over the West Wing of the Central Government Offices (CGO) Complex (discussed in Chapter 7) demonstrates the mobilization of ideas from both the Burra Charter and the China Principles as a basis for policy-related decision-making in Hong Kong. The Development Bureau had earmarked the CGO Complex for new uses following the relocation of offices to other sites, including the Hong Kong waterfront. The DEVB commissioned a study of the historic and architectural value of Complex by British Architectural firm Purcell Miller Tritton (AMO, 2009). The study suggests that, while the site has significance as a whole, the West Wing is of lesser importance than its other components. This point was subsequently used

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to justify a plan to sell the West Wing, which fronts on Queen's Road, to Li Ka-Shing. Li's plan was to demolish the building and construct a shopping complex and 30 story tower in its place. As early as 2006 members of the Civic Party cited both the China Principles and the Burra Charter when arguing for the need for a proper community consultation to assess the cultural value of the site before proceeding with plans for redevelopment (SCMP, 2006). After plans to sell the West Wing were announced and concerned groups mobilized, the DEVB was on the defensive and attempted to justify the plans by using the Burra Charter to suggest that the cultural significance of the Complex as a whole would not be disrupted with the removal of the one building that the research report had deemed of lesser significance. When news the government's referencing of the Burra Charter surfaced it was denounced by Hilary du Cros, an Australian-born heritage expert who works in Macau and Hong Kong. Du Cros, who is a member of the International Council of Monuments and Sites, told the *South China Morning Post*: "I must say, they were cherry-picking from the [Burra] Charter to fast-track the scheme" (Ng, 2011g).

5.5.3   Learning from Shanghai

I was in Hong Kong during the 2010 World Expo in Shanghai. The buzz about the city to the north was palpable on the streets and in the newspapers from this bubble-like perch in the south. Media reports ranged from positive to neutral to critiques tinged with thinly-veiled disdain. Descriptions of the lavish architecture of the pavilions (Yan, 2010) and the development of new transport infrastructure risked being overshadowed by accounts of the chaos that ensued when the event was opened to the public (Ren et al., 2010). Such stories reverberated more widely, bolstered by first-, second- and third-hand accounts. Acquaintances in Hong Kong, both locals and expats, some of whom had visited Shanghai, others observing from a distance,

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remarked on the inability of "country bumpkin" Chinese visitors to properly queue for tickets and follow other unspoken rules assumed to be the norm for such events. The underlying outlook of such assessments was that had the Expo been held in Hong Kong, it would have been more civilized. Hong Kong is a more global city and Shanghai is merely a newcomer benefiting from the backing of Beijing's plan for it to become China's centre of global finance. But of course Hong Kong once held a similar status as young upstart to the global "hai pai" city of Shanghai in the 1930s at the eve of the Communist Revolution. It is with some irony that Shanghai's many heritage districts and heritage-focused revitalization and redevelopment projects now serve as a model for Hong Kong. And it is with some embarrassment that Hong Kong now attempts to learn from Shanghai once again. As a heritage expert I interviewed put it: "Shanghai is doing this. They make Hong Kong look bad!" (personal interview, April 15, 2010).

Heritage is a very recent invention in Shanghai, beginning to gain steam around the year 2000 in landscapes of consumption in revitalized areas of the older city. The 1990s had been a decade of wholesale demolition, with housing and land reforms that turned real estate into a commodity encouraging the intensification of land use. The 365 plan, introduced in 1992 by Deng Xiao Ping, called for the replacement of 365 hectares of substandard housing through demolition and rebuilding. This was achieved in the year 2000. Several figures speak to the effects of marketization (Shanghai Statistics Bureau, 2004, cited in Ren, 2008): between 1995 and 2003 over 700,000 households were relocated; the number of high rises above 30 storeys went from 15 in 1990 to 374 in 2003. Perhaps surprisingly, the recognition of the value of heritage proceeded swiftly as well. The list of locations with heritage status grew with 175 additions in 1994, 162 more in 1999, and 235 in 2004. According to Ren (2008), approximately one third of the inner city is protected from demolition. Much of this land is in the old European

Concessions and includes commercial districts, grand mansions and houses, and large areas of more modest landscapes, including *shikumen* row houses, a distinct Shanghai typology built by Western landlords in the colonial period to house Chinese tenants. The most celebrated of Shanghai's central heritage districts is Xintiandi, an area of refurbished *shikumen* laneways, where the shopping, dining and leisure offerings cater to expats and wealthy "cosmopolitan" locals.

While heritage has become an important revitalization tool in Shanghai, it has often been balanced with new development. In a large *shikumen* district a section may be demolished to make way for new buildings, while the retained buildings are refurbished and given new uses. A heritage district serves to generate prestige and interest for accompanying high rise developments. Such a development strategy is explained by Harvey (2012, p. 102) with the concept of monopoly rent, in which investment in the un-replicable character of a heritage building or district serves to invite further waves of investment and new development in a "circular and cumulative" fashion. This process, of course, is extremely problematic because it fails to recognize social heritage, often requiring the relocation of working class residents and the severing of neighbourhood networks. Instances of resistance are not widely reported and organizing is difficult. The type of community-led heritage, as resistance to development, that has emerged in some places in Hong Kong is not evident in Shanghai. Thus, Ren has suggested that heritage preservation in Shanghai is not inspired by a desire to counteract development, but is rather part of the growth process. She writes (2008, p. 31): "The nature of historical preservation efforts in Shanghai is highly pragmatic. Historical preservation is driven by expectations for potential economic return, through raising property prices as well as attracting investment and tourists."

A more recent direction is the adaptive reuse of industrial buildings as centres for creative industry. With the creative sector occupying a prominent place in Shanghai's 2004 "Outline for the Culture Development Planning", district-level government officials were eager to experiment in this area. By 2010 when I conducted field work in Hong Kong I was told of several high profile "creative industry clusters" occupying old buildings, not in the inner neighbourhoods of old Shanghai, but in outer areas. Tianzifang, for example, was an artist neighbourhood that formed organically due to its cheap rents. When a redevelopment of the area was announced, overseas-educated artists living in the area launched a campaign to save it (Wang, Yao, & March, 2009). The district authorities then realized its value and produced a strategy to reinvent it as a district for creative industries. Old Millfun 1933 and Bridge 8 are two other projects both mentioned to me by an expert in Hong Kong (personal interview, 15 April, 2010) and visited by Carrie Lam in 2008 and again late in 2012 (DEVB, 2012). The former was used as a municipal slaughterhouse and restored in 2006 by the Shanghai Creative Industry Investment Company. The latter was a factory for the production of automobile brakes. Both have been reinvented as spaces of creative production and consumption where architects, designers and advertising firms (re)generate the latest trends and global luxury brands to discreetly offer stylized products to new moneyed classes.

As Shanghai emerges as a key competitor for Hong Kong in finance, real estate, and tourism, increasing attention is paid to its image-making strategies and its attributes. The city's approach to heritage conservation has been of special interest to experts and policymakers in Hong Kong and there is a recognition that Shanghai is leading in an area that is of particular importance in the East Asian urban context. "In Shanghai they're doing better than in Hong Kong in striking a balance between development and conservation" (personal interview, 17 May,

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2010). The Shanghai model has involved minimal government intervention, the willing

participation of developers, and a balance of development and conservation. This model is

especially attractive in Hong Kong where the government is hesitant to take a strong stand, in

spite of continually being asked to do so, where developers are only just beginning to identify the

generative possibilities of including heritage in redevelopment schemes, and where, as a result,

the balance almost always swings in the direction of development. The celebration of examples

such as Xintiandi, Bridge 8 and 1933 appears to be motivated by an aspiration to have Hong

Kong developers assume similar directions in older buildings in both central and marginal

districts in Hong Kong. One area where this seems to be happening in an ad hoc fashion,

according to my informant in the ACP programme, is Sheung Wan. In the past five years this has

become an art and design district with little encouragement from government. While of course

some of the urban form of this area, including a dwindling number of *tong lau* has remained

intact, residents and commercial tenants are rapidly transforming. This is a vision of heritage that

emphasizes the conservation of the materiality of place, not the social values embedded in it, as

proposed in the Burra Charter.

5.6   Conclusion

An informant stopped me in my tracks during an interview to ask "what exactly do you

mean by policy?" (personal interview, 27 September, 2010). This question is especially apt in the

present context because amidst the ongoing assessment of this urban question in Hong Kong, the

policy itself (the Ordinance) has not changed. Jacobs' (2012, p. 414) suggestion to "think more

carefully about what exactly is moving when 'policy' travels," is thus a helpful directive. Policy

does not move to Hong Kong as a fully-formed object, but rather knowledge, best practices,

models and ideas are brought to Hong Kong through "connective tissue" (McCann, 2011b, p.

109), especially in processes of policy learning. This chapter has focused on the official layers of the connective tissue, those, like the Panel for Home Affairs, that are part of the state bureaucracy, and like the Architectural Conservation Programme at Hong Kong University, that are recognized in an official capacity as centres of knowledge and expertise. Central to this analysis is the point that context matters for policy learning. This point is far from original (McCann & Ward, 2011) but it bears repeating, especially in the present context where the Hong Kong government's interest in heritage may easily be explained as a response to public desires, rather than a search for a neoliberal fix for criticism. The context – political, cultural, economic – of Hong Kong matters because it shapes the trajectories of learning that are pursued. The context in Macau, Australia or Shanghai matters because it naturalizes and, thereby legitimizes, policy solutions. When Hong Kong looks to Shanghai to understand the potential for the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings as centres for creative industry, it does so because Shanghai is an appropriate source for policy learning. There, the connection between creative industries and industrial heritage buildings is presented as a necessary feature of the aspiring global city. Finally, another way that context matters is that heritage is a policy area imbricated in practice and which finds expression in the material landscape. As this chapter has shown, it is thus impossible to refer to heritage policy without discussing its instantiation in the urban landscape. To discuss the mobility of heritage policy is also to consider how it takes shape in place.

Chapter 6: City as Home: Heritage Mobilization among Non-State Policy Actors

> We're seeing two parallel trends which may seem contradictory: both globalization and localization. And Hong Kong has experienced the same. I mean, Hong Kong has always been an open city and that… I think Hong Kong people, you know, a lot of them are, have all sorts of international links, whether it's through family, through schooling and so on, and business. Now, in that sense, Hong Kong is really international. Now, but when we talk about heritage issues, I mean surely, it's about the preservation of local culture. (personal interview, 20 May, 2010)

I met Julie at a café a stone's throw away from the places where she spent her childhood. We talked for about an hour on a small verandah at the back of the building. She told me stories about her neighbourhood, a community organization that she had co-founded, and the various causes she has worked on since she began to take an interest in urban planning and local culture a decade earlier. When the interview was finished she asked: "…and what are you doing now?" I told her that I didn't have any place to be right away and she replied, "well, let's go for a walk!" We left the café and walked down the hill into the narrow streets of Central. Julie had told me during the interview that she leads walking tours of this area to help local residents and visitors discover the city and it was clear that she knows the area very well, that she has a habitual itinerary on such walks, and that she is accustomed to a leisurely pace. Although I had explored many of these streets before, Julie pointed out shops, restaurants and architectural features that I had never noticed; it was certainly a different city through her eyes. And at every turn faces lit up with recognition and greeted her with a friendly exchange: shop keepers, elderly folk out for a walk, a stylishly dressed middle aged man – all were pleased to see her. We walked past family-

owned businesses that had thus far survived the gentrification of the area, *dai pai dong* cafes where patrons sit on plastic stools in the street, and an umbrella shop in a nook seemingly carved out of a building. Continuing west we reached the former Police Married Quarters, a large site that Julie's group had lobbied the government to remove from the land sales list from 2005 to 2007. It lies just below the H19 urban renewal district, above the antique shops of Hollywood Road, and in between the rapidly gentrifying districts of Sheung Wan to the west and Soho[27] to the east. Sitting quietly while plans are finalized, it stands in contrast to the neighbouring Centre Stage, a 46-storey residential tower by the Henderson Land Development Company, one of Hong Kong's leading property developers. In a city where many living spaces are small by global standards, where detached homes are virtually non-existent, where comparisons of apartments to "shoeboxes" or "cubicles" are not unusual, and where some subdivided flats take the form of "cages", Centre Stage offers duplex units that include "private staircases that link up the two levels, a symbol of the ultimate in urban luxury" (Henderson Land, n.d.).

Julie fits the profile of many who left the city in the 1980s and 90s. She grew up in a comfortably middle-class family and attended a private school in the Mid-Levels. Her grandfather owned an antique store on Hollywood Road and her family lived nearby. Despite remaining behind, she has thought deeply about emigration because so many in her peer group, youth and young adults in the period between the Sino-British Joint Declaration of 1984 and the 1997 handover, went overseas with their families or to pursue studies. She notes a transformation, both among emigrants who returned and those, like her, who stayed:

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[27] Hong Kong's Soho, like its counterparts in London and New York, refers to a neighbourhood So(uth) of a street or place beginning with the letters H-o, in this case, Hollywood Road. Its usage is recent, dating from the mid-1990s after the construction of the Central-Mid-levels escalator that brought increased pedestrian activity and commercial gentrification to the area around Staunton Street and Elgin Street. The name was coined by a bar owner whose establishment has since closed. Its usage is widespread in English and as a transliteration in Chinese.

> The transition is… now Hong Kong is the place we will stay. This will be our home. We just thought even if the environment in Canada or Australia is so much better, well this is our home, and we will have to live with it and find the good things about it anyway… and a lot of things are good about it. Because your family is here, your friends are here, and you know so much about the history. So I think it's the revelation that… if it is our home, we have to take better care of it. (personal interview, 3 May, 2010)

This represents a significant shift from the symbolic construction of Hong Kong as a capitalistic "half-way there" point, en route to a fixed abode. Hong Kong has traditionally been understood as a place of refuge for mainland migrants in which to make money through business pursuits and hard work, to increase earning potential through education, to invest in future family success by buying property. This construction would appear to provide little room for forms of city-making and urban politics that do not carry economic returns. Furthermore, if many residents have considered Hong Kong only as a temporary base, and if politics and planning have proceeded with similar short-sightedness or longer term pragmatism, Hong Kong has perhaps not been inhabited with the care with which citizens would inhabit a city that they consider a permanent home. "Better care", in Julie's words, thus refers to ensuring that the urban environment is constructed and reconstructed in ways that improve the lives of the people of Hong Kong, not only in ways that generate profit.

When asked how the experience of spending time abroad, either during travel or, speculatively, migration, has impacted perspectives on Hong Kong, Julie replied: "I think I can only say that it somehow confirmed that… you know, to be at home is very important. *It's very important.* I think the feeling… where they immigrate, it's like they're floating. It's not, you know, rooted." This statement extends, perhaps unintentionally, Xi Xi's fantastical image of Hong Kong as a "floating city" (Xi Xi, 1997) beyond the SAR to the experiences of migrants. To return to Hong Kong is thus to become grounded, to become re-rooted to a life in Hong Kong,

which may include different kinds of priorities than before, but which does not foreclose the possibility of future transnational mobility. As suggested in the contrasts encountered on the foregoing walk around Central and the surrounding neighbourhoods, these priorities are increasingly reflected in the influence of people like Julie, and others to be introduced in the following pages, on the reproduction of the landscape.

6.1   Layout of the Chapter

This chapter builds upon and acts as a counterpoint to the previous chapter by extending the relational analysis of the reassessment of heritage conservation. While Chapter 5 focused on policy mobilities with a particular emphasis on the involvement of state agents in extrospective policy learning, the present chapter examines non-state actors whose travel and migration experiences have influenced their understandings of heritage and involvement in the politics of heritage in the city. Following the work of McCann (2008), these people may be thought of as policy actors in spite of their tangential connections to the formal bureaucratic processes through which policies are made and remade. If these individuals are beginning to think of Hong Kong as home, and if this direction has implications for place attachments and new understandings of heritage, it is important that "home" not be understood in opposition to mobility. A brief overview of Hong Kong as a "mobile city" will be followed by an effort to situate the city as home, emphasizing the distinction from, but relation with, the well-developed analytical approaches to home as a national or domestic sphere. In the second part of the chapter I examine ethnographic cases that suggest that experiences of travel, overseas education and return, and migration and return, have inspired new engagements with heritage that are at times quite at odds with, and other times complementary to, the ways in which the government is attempting, as explained previously, to integrate heritage into the neoliberal fabric of Hong Kong as Asia's

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World City. This is not to suggest that the heritage movement is the exclusive purview of globally mobile and cosmopolitan elites, but rather that similar forms of extra-territorial learning and comparison are present among Hong Kong residents who work on heritage in non-official capacities as those that occur within the state. The difference, however, lies in how the interest in heritage is animated. The state mainly uses heritage for the purpose of marketing the city as a centre for tourism and the creative economy. In contrast, among many residents heritage is an expression of identity and a strategy for interrupting the status quo development regime. At the risk of denying the contributions of the many Hong Kong people who have not had the experience of living or traveling abroad, the chapter suggests that the alliances and networks that have formed among Hong Kong residents with varying degrees of mobility and rootedness have been instrumental to the reassessment of heritage.

6.2   Situating Roots in a Mobile City

Representations of Hong Kong as a "mobile city" refer to historical and contemporary practices and processes across a number of scales. Locally, human mobility may reference the fast pace of life conditioned by the capitalist ethos and the transportation networks that regulate movement through the dense city. International travel and migration, which includes some forms of regional mobility by virtue of the semi-permeable border with China, is reinforced by the connections of the airport at Chek Lap Kok. Train and road networks that extend into Guangdong and beyond have sustained important cross-border interactions with social, cultural and economic dimensions through most of the history of the territory (Kwok & Ames, 1995). The percentage of ethnically Chinese residents hovers around 95% and many maintain links to family in the Mainland. Others are immigrants from a range of countries, especially South-East Asia. Hundreds of thousands are migrant workers, mainly from the Philippines and Indonesia,

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who work as domestic helpers and lack permanent resident status (Constable, 1997). Many others, mainly from the middle and upper classes, emigrated in the late 1980s or early 90s and have returned to Hong Kong, either temporarily or permanently (Li, 2002; Ley & Kobayashi, 2005; Salaff et al., 2010; Ley, 2010). A much smaller number are foreign expats, some temporary, others long-term residents, who maintain strong links with distant places (Findlay et al., 1996). These human engagements with mobility are prominent among the symbolic associations of Hong Kong. As Oswin and Yeoh (2010) point out, discourses that celebrate Singapore in similar terms work to reinforce its construction as a global city. The conceptual twinning of globalization and mobility plays into narratives of cosmopolitanism and rootlessness in which there appears to be little room for thinking about these cities as distinct places, or homes (although see Yeoh & Chang, 2001). If anything, increasing mobility would appear to threaten place identity. However, the equation is not so simple; many of the individuals involved in rethinking Hong Kong's place identity are highly mobile; further, their mobilities (migration and travel) have influenced their attachments to and interpretations of the city and related contentious politics.

Since Hong Kong migrants of the 1980s and 90s (as outlined in Chapter 4) were mainly from middle and upper classes, they have at times been presented as members of a "Transnational Capitalist Class" (TNCC) (Sklair, 2001, quoted in Waters, 2007: p. 479) whose perspective is "outward-oriented global rather than inward-oriented local… on most economic, political, and culture-ideology issues." The involvement of foreign-educated returnees and long-time resident expats in social movements and activism signals the need for more research on the political activities of cosmopolitan subjects whose erstwhile preoccupations may most obviously be oriented to private pursuits. This is not to suggest quantifying the political involvements of

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returnees in absolute numbers, but rather that the qualitative effects of the involvement of mobile subjects as key agents in a local politics of heritage is noteworthy.

Mobility emerged as a frame of analysis in the early planning stages of this research project. Three years before beginning field work in Hong Kong I read of Loretta Yau Wai-lam, a Hong Konger living in Toronto whose protests against the Star Ferry Pier demolition inspired the involvement of others (Lai, 2006; York, 2006). There is a literature on the political activities of transmigrants with respect to voting, translocal organizing or political party activity in their home countries from a distance (e.g. Ostergaard-Nielsen, 2003; Levitt & Jaworsky, 2007). The transnational activism associated with the Piers seemed a bit different because it concerned a handful of people living overseas, like Loretta, but also significant numbers of returnees (temporary or permanent) in their place of origin. Moreover, the nature of the political questions at play, specifically dealing with an urban problematic, appeared unlike those topics broached in the literature. Hong Kong's unprecedented migration story of the last three decades, especially in relation to its return to China, pointed to further questions. Once in Hong Kong I was not forced to actively seek out research participants who had returned to Hong Kong or who had traveled extensively abroad; they naturally appeared in large numbers in my sample of key informants. They also appeared all around me in my daily life in the city. I purchased a gift for a friend at a chocolate shop in a shopping mall in Kowloon; the person behind the counter had spent six years in Calgary. I went to a restaurant with a friend; someone at the next table wanted to talk to me about Vancouver because they had lived there for their teenage years. I asked the man sitting next to me on the bus where to get off; he told me he had lived in Melbourne for seven years. Being privy to the personal migration histories and stories of strangers was likely influenced by my visibility as a foreigner. People were eager to talk to me about Canada because they miss it

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and more than a few wanted to know what I was doing in Hong Kong. Since I was away from home, I also appreciated these encounters as they contributed to my sense of the closeness of this faraway place to my family and friends and fostered the growth of a sense of familiarity with my temporary home in Hong Kong.

6.3   The City as Home

Home is a concept, like so many put to use by geographers, at once straightforward and complex. It may refer to a place of dwelling, such as a house or apartment; it may also refer to a national homeland. In both cases its meaning relies less upon the object it references than associated intangible qualities, such as comfort, security, and the identity affirmation that is made possible by feeling "at home". Home is also linked to relations of care for family members and the collective "imagined community," and also care for self and of one's surroundings. The "affective significance" of the concept has contributed to its relative neglect among scholars, a situation that has been rectified with increased attention since the 1990s (Duncan & Lambert, 2004; Blunt & Dowling, 2006). Geographies of home have focused mainly on scales that reference the predominant conceptions of home. At the scale of the domestic sphere issues of the divisions between public and private, processes of social reproduction, gendered labour, sexuality, expression of taste and status through home décor are just a few of the areas of enquiry explored by feminist and cultural geographers (Duncan & Duncan, 2004, Blunt & Varley, 2004). There is also a recognition that benefits associated with having a home or feeling at home may be absent for those whose homes are not safe and tranquil due to abusive relationships and for those for whom the financial burdens associated with the costs of housing renders access to a home impossible (Klahr, 1999). At a much larger scale geographers have considered the meaning of the home for migrant communities living in diaspora. Here, distance amplifies

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feelings of lack and absence leading to efforts to maintain and sometimes strengthen identification with a faraway home shared not with members of biological family, but rather an imagined community (Wiles, 2008). Research has also investigated the importance of diasporic home-making as the domestic home provides a space in which reminders of the national homeland may be constructed in order to create experiences and invoke memories (Tolia-Kelly, 2004). Finally, a significant amount of research has also been conducted on conflicting visions of neighbourhood and home aesthetics among Hong Kong transmigrants and long-time residents in established neighbourhoods in Vancouver (Ley, 1995; Ley, 2010).

Scales of feeling "at home" that fall in between belonging to a nation and being part of a household have begun to receive attention. In particular, the city is a space which may come to represent a shared sense of home and inspire certain forms of imagination, association, and political action. Blunt and Bonnerjee (2012) have written about the city as home for diasporic communities. Drawing on research with Chinese-Indians and Anglo-Indians from Calcutta living in Toronto and London, the authors ask how diasporic identity is generated in and influenced by the city, rather than the nation or the domestic sphere, as home. Focusing on the city as a space of dwelling, everyday practices, memory, and nostalgia, they find it to be the locus of particular forms of belonging, comfort and familiarity, "in contrast to the less homely spaces of the nation" (Blunt & Bonnerjee, 2012, p. 237). In the contemporary era of unprecedented urbanization and mobility, along with splintering nationalisms in many parts of the world, the city as home appears an apt configuration. Like Blunt and Bonnerjee, however, I reject the "methodological territorialism" of the city as a container (Ward, 2010), and instead develop the idea of the city as home for return migrants by using the relational comparative frame introduced in earlier chapters.

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Thinking of Hong Kong as home has several implications. In Chinese culture the "place to which one always returns" (Georgiou, 2006) is the ancestral village. China remained mainly rural until economic reforms beginning in the late 1970s and, as a result, connections to villages, some swallowed up by urbanization, others still existing, are sustained in practice or in living memory. Since the vast majority of Hong Kong residents trace their ancestral roots to places outside of the Hong Kong territory, in nearby South China provinces or places further north and west, the idea of an ancestral home among Hong Kongers is not unlike that of overseas Chinese residents living all over the world. These connections and the feelings they entail have been perhaps further strengthened by the sense of being close, but for so long being unable to travel across the border. Increasingly, for those who left Hong Kong the ancestral home is supplemented by the idea that Hong Kong itself is a home to which one returns, perhaps not permanently, and in which one finds a sense of familiarity, opportunity and the financial stability that is lacking in overseas abodes (Salaff et al., 2010). A sense of the permanence of Hong Kong as home is also accumulating among those, like Julie, who never left.

If Hong Kong is increasingly thought of and "felt" as a home by those who have lived there one or more generations, by recent arrivals and returnees, this sense has particular characteristics in this densely populated city with astronomical housing costs which is, significantly, both part of and apart from the nation to which it returned in 1997. The normal housing experience in Hong Kong is of a flat with a small floor area in densely packed mid-rise and high-rise buildings (Forrest et al., 2008). Subdivided flats with little more space than for a bed are not uncommon among the working poor, unemployed, and new immigrants and reports have shown that the cost per square foot of the dwellings of some of the most city's most impoverished residents may be higher than those in its poshest neighbourhoods (Society for

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Community Organization, 2011). Newendorp's (2008) ethnography of mainland immigrants, many of whom are women reuniting with Hong Kong based husbands and family members, reveals the poor living conditions in overcrowded tenements in Sham Shui Po, a far cry from the glittering modern city. Small apartments, whether an overcrowded 100 square feet or the relative luxury of 500, force their residents to spend time outdoors or in indoor public spaces such as shopping malls in order to find entertainment, a sense of spaciousness, and food. Due to these constraints entertaining in the home is rare. A friend who returned to Hong Kong for graduate school after emigrating to Canada as a child with her family encountered this social norm. She invited classmates to her flat for dinner and later learned that her Hong Kong-born and raised cohort had found this unusual and concluded that it was an inappropriate expression of largesse. Ironically those who leave home to socialize join crowds and may end up with less personal space in a restaurant or in the street than they have in their own abode, cramped as it may be. As we have seen, there is nothing accidental or innocent about the connection between housing costs, planning, development and land policy in Hong Kong. As explained in Chapter 4, the massive shopping malls that have proliferated across the city over the last few decades, especially above transit stations, no longer unequivocally hold the lustrous promise of the "modern" they did for past generations. For young people, increasingly, the streets, buildings, and public spaces, in particular those that are invested with collective memories, are celebrated and guarded as places of belonging because they represent the city as home.

6.4 Returning Home to the City as Home

The following pages introduce three people that I met over the course of my field research whose experiences illustrate the transition to different ideas about Hong Kong as home. These individuals share in common the experience of coming to new understandings about the

value of historic places and heritage after traveling or living abroad. Their work is related to heritage in different ways but they all work outside of – sometimes with, other times against – the state. In the first example my respondent's overseas travel for work in the fashion industry permitted short visits to historic cities in Asia and Europe. His travels contributed to the decision to pursue employment related to heritage conservation and to become involved in community heritage initiatives as an activist, researcher and writer. In the second case, the respondent's experience of living abroad for university study in Boston inspired an understanding of the compatibility of heritage and development. Both of these cases are elaborated with a discussion of the individual's involvement in a case of contested development in which heritage figures prominently. In a third example, touched upon more briefly, it is the respondent's return to Hong Kong after several years abroad, and not the experience of being abroad, that has inspired political activism and an interest in local identity.

To focus only on return migrants would risk denying the agency of a large number of people who are not as internationally mobile as the people whose stories are told in this chapter. Many of the people working on heritage and related issues are young Hong Kongers, especially from the post-1980s generation, who have always lived in the territory. Interestingly, their partnerships and networks often include returnees. For instance, one local leader who works closely with student activists participated in Taiwan's vibrant urban social movements; two others completed studies in radical social science departments in the US. An interviewee working in partnership with a grassroots community network described these kinds of partnerships:

> Young people always want to change the system. At least I hope they do. But what this lot, this particular younger generation has got, is people coming back from overseas where they see how it's done and how people get involved… The

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politics, the institutions you need, the way you organize NGOs, the way you actually form activist groups, how you advocate, how you try to get support… they've done it, they've seen it in [places] where it's just taken for granted. And I think it's been a very interesting melding of two groups… (Personal interview, 27 September, 2010)

Due to the constraints of space this chapter will include only the handful of illustrative cases introduced above. However, the young student activists, some of whom are featured in other chapters, are never far away from the issues at play. The conclusion presents a case for a local politics of heritage in an era of global mobility. This local politics involves partnerships and solidarities that cut across many assumed barriers of scale, class, professionalism and positionality.

6.5   The Local Traveler

I was introduced to Michael, the director of a community-based cultural and heritage advocacy group, on the walk I took with Julie after our interview. It was a chance encounter on a neighbourhood street that both of them know well. Michael and I exchanged cards and he invited me to contact him to set up a time to meet. He also said that he was planning to go Cheung Chau Island for the bun festival and asked if I would be interested in accompanying him. The bun festival is a Chinese folk tradition of worship for local Buddhist deities that includes, most famously, a "bun snatching" event that involves a race up a bamboo tower to retrieve a bun placed at the summit. This event has become very popular in recent years and draws enormous crowds. We had discussed going on another day when less spectacular worship rituals would take place with comparatively smaller numbers of visitors. I was also intrigued by the fact that the whole island becomes vegetarian for three days during the festival, with even fast food chain restaurants such as McDonald's altering their menus. Interested in the prospect of this outing as a chance to discover some of Hong Kong's intangible heritage with an expert on local culture, I

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contacted Michael a few days later and agreed to meet him at his workplace. The plans to go to Cheung Chau did not proceed due to scheduling conflicts but our meeting was confirmed for a mid-week afternoon in May.

Michael grew up in Hong Kong and his family lived in a traditional Chinese *tong lau* building near Central. He began to develop an interest in Hong Kong culture at an early age: "when I was young, I was always interested in community, culture… especially the street market, old shops. I think this kind of thing is very interesting… the life of the common people" (personal interview, 14 May, 2010). This early curiosity did not translate into a career path. Instead Michael worked as a marketing manager for clothing companies, including the American brand Liz Claiborne and Japanese Itochu. His work in the fashion industry involved overseas travel to China and other parts of Asia, and further afield to Europe. It was during this period in the 1990s, when Hong Kong was changing very rapidly, that Michael's experience of exploring historic cities elsewhere contrasted with what he saw in Hong Kong, where "so many things disappear very quickly." This is, of course, the era of Hong Kong's real estate and development boom which peaked before crashing with the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997. It is observations of these years that led Abbas (1997b) to famously describe Hong Kong's "culture of disappearance." When I asked Michael if any place in particular had had an impact on his thinking about heritage he mentioned European cities: "Rome or [cities in] Spain… is a very nice, very classic place, very historic or cultural…" If he was enamoured by the classicism of Western capitals, not unlike members of the Panel on Home Affairs who considered a duty visit to Europe to learn about heritage conservation in 2007, he admits that it was on a superficial level. "During that time I was still young, was interested in other countries' culture. But after, around 2002 and 2003, during that time I found that Hong Kong is my own place… every life

and everything happening in Hong Kong directly or indirectly [affected] me." Michael transformed this interest in Hong Kong as the place where he belongs and which affects his life into pursuits of various kinds. He began to write books about Hong Kong culture and community histories, with a special focus on street markets, and had published eight of them by the time we met. He also began to work on neighbourhood issues with the Central and Western Concern Group, in addition to the job he would later hold at the heritage advocacy group. Of interest here is the fact that, if not for his experiences overseas, Michael may not have pursued the path he did. His interest and personal and professional investment in the city he calls home was transformed in part by seeing contrasts between Hong Kong and other places.

Michael's commitment to his city, and in particular his neighbourhood, is illustrated by his involvement in a photography exhibit in 2005 at the John Batten Gallery. The works on display in "Coming near you: The destruction of Central, Hong Kong" directly addressed the state-led redevelopment of the neighbourhood by evoking themes of memory and community in the urban setting. The connection to the gallery was made when Julie, a mutual acquaintance, approached Batten on Michael's behalf. The exhibit featured documentary photos of the Yue Lan (Hungry Ghost) Festival and other fixtures of the neighbourhood compromised by planned redevelopment. Michael helped organize the exhibit and wrote the text accompanying the photographs, in the form of handwritten notes (SCMP, 2005). The photographer, Leong Ka-tai, grew up in Hong Kong, left to study engineering in Texas, before deciding to pursue photography. At the time of the exhibition he lived across the street from his childhood home. The photos document the Yue Lan festival over the course of a day in 2001, capturing offerings of food and paper bullion to ward off spirits, among other activities. In the photographs it is raining. Participants explained that it rains every year at the festival just until the ceremonial

distribution of rice to the elderly folk, at which moment the skies clear up "just in time." Such

weather is typical in the summer in Hong Kong, but has taken on a mythic quality at this event.

A review of the exhibition in the SCMP was mixed, suggesting that "advocacy-driven art" has a

fragmentary effect, succeeding entirely neither as a political project or as art (SCMP, 2005).

Knowing those involved, I am inclined to think that the political side of the equation was more

important for this particular intervention. In an interview Leong stated as his hope for the

exhibition that people would visit and, "consider whether we need new shopping malls and new

residential blocks at the expense of demolishing old ones" (Lo, 2005). The exhibit foreshadowed

the redevelopment planned for the former Hollywood Road Police Married Quarters bordering

the stretch of Staunton Street depicted in the photos where the Yue Lan festival takes place. The

art event was a catalyst for action.

6.5.1   The "Former Police Married Quarters" campaign

The Former Police Married Quarters are located in Soho, between Sheung Wan and Central,

midway up the hill to the Mid-Levels (see Figure 4). The building occupies an entire block

between Hollywood Road and Staunton Street on the north and south, and Aberdeen Street and

Shing Wong Street (a pedestrian only stairway for this stretch) on the east and west, respectively.

The story of the plans for the site has an arc that would have been impossible even a decade

earlier. The buildings had sat vacant since 2000 and the complex was placed on the Land Sales

list in 2005. Beginning two years later, a shift in the fortunes of the site is revealed over the

course of a series of announcements in the yearly Chief Executive's Policy Address. After

several years of uncertainty, rising public concern about this site and heritage conservation more

generally, the 2007-8 Policy Address included the news that it would be removed from the list

temporarily to allow for consultations to gauge public aspirations (HKSAR, 2007). A year

Figure 4: The Former Hollywood Road Police Married Quarters

later the 2008-9 Address announced that it would be removed permanently and conserved for

creative industries uses (HKSAR 2008). Finally, in 2009-2010 (HKSAR, 2009b), the Chief

Executive unveiled the eight government-owned sites to be included in the Conserving Central

initiative, including the Police Married Quarters. A selection process identified an organization

called the Musketeers Educational and Charitable Foundation to oversee the revitalization of the

site as a landmark for creative industries. The involvement of community groups and members

of the public in the early stages, in particular the Central and Western Concern Group, reveals

the influence of the aspirations of Hong Kongers to improve the place they call home, to

recognize and celebrate heritage and to question the need for further private high-rise

development.

In August, 2005 Katty Law and John Batten, shortly thereafter to be known as the Central

and Western Concern Group[28] (CWCG), with Michael's assistance, prepared a submission to the

Town Planning Board's Metro Planning Committee to have the site rezoned from "Residential"

to "Government, Institutional and Community," which was the zoning of the site until shortly

before it was placed on the land sales list. The intent was to challenge the plans under the

residential zoning for the site, which would permit two towers of forty storeys in an already

densely populated historic neighbourhood on sleep slopes with narrow streets unable to cope

with the high traffic volumes. They hoped that the site would instead be used for a museum or a

park to honour Sun Yat-sen[29], open space and an elderly care home. Their submission, an

"Amendment of plans on application to the board" (Section 12A of the Town Planning

Ordinance), presented two main arguments. First was the strategic point that the site holds

heritage significance in light of its historical connection to Sun Yat-sen. Second, they argued that

the site would be better used for open green space, lacking in Central and the surrounding areas

to the extent that these neighbourhoods do not meet the minimum open space requirements set

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[28] John Batten and Katty Law, the Co-Convenors of the Central and Western Concern Group, became acquainted while working on an earlier campaign to protect the "Cloth Street" fabric market. Batten is an Australian ex-pat who has lived in Hong Kong since 1990. He has worked on various art and culture initiatives and become very involved in urban planning activism through his work with Katty and other affiliates. Their first submission was made to the Town Planning Board in their own names but shortly thereafter they decided to form an entity. They chose "Central and Western District Concern Group" but quickly dropped the word "District" because it sounded too much like the government's District Council for the area. As required by a colonial-era ordinance, they registered their organization with the Police and have worked on a number of campaigns. In the years since, a number of similar neighbourhood concern groups have been established including Kennedy Road Protection Group, Sai Wan Terrace Concern Group, and the Mid-Levels West Concern Group (Siu, 2008). These residents' organizations use legislative channels in an effort to challenge the deleterious effects of development on the quality of life in their neighbourhoods, including threats to heritage. Not unlike similar organizations in North American cities, their members generally come from middle class and professional backgrounds. Some, like the Central and Western Concern Group, spend a significant amount of time engaging residents from all social classes and backgrounds.
[29] A pre-existing Sun Yat-sen Park is located near the Western Park Sports Centre. The campaigners argued that this park should be renamed and that the Hollywood Road location is a more appropriate location for a park bearing this name since it has a historical connection to Sun and is in close proximity to other prominent historical locations, such as Possession Point (Wu, 2007). A museum for Sun Yat-sen was opened in Kam Tong Hall, former residence of comprador Robert Ho-tung.

by the government (England, 2008). The preparation of the submission involved research on the site's past using library resources and archival records from various government departments. The research uncovered neglected histories that point to heritage significance that, the CWCG argued, should be recognized and protected. The application was unsuccessful but plans for the redevelopment of the site stalled when the District Council for the area also expressed concern about the further densification of the area. The Central and Western Concern Group submitted another unsuccessful proposal to the Town Planning Board in January, 2007. This time their arguments were bolstered with support from a signature campaign and various community members. With an estimated sale value of 3 billion HKD, the site promised significant revenue for the government but, asked these voices, at what cost to the tangible traces of the history of the neighbourhood and the quality of life of its residents?

As they lacked previous experience with legislative challenges to planning decisions, they also spent time learning. Michael began to read more about heritage conservation in other places, especially in Japan, and began talking to people that had worked on similar efforts in other places. Some of these contacts he and his colleagues approached, others sought them out. "When we did the campaign, then some people come to talk to you or try to help you." He speaks of the assistance they provided not only in terms of their expertise, but also their "passion". They also received assistance from a planning consultancy. The legislative route was a different but complementary tactic to activist networks that began to emerge around the same time. At Lee Tung Street and the Harbourfront piers activists used direct action and civil disobedience to achieve their goals (personal interview, 7 June, 2010).

The crux of the heritage significance of the site lies in its use during the first century after the founding of the colony. It was the location of the first Shing Wong temple in the city, dating

from 1843. Shing Wong, the home of the urban deity, is said to play an important role in protecting the city from invasive evil spirits and ensuring peace and order. When the government sold the site to the temple founder in 1853 fifty houses were constructed on the surrounding land and the temple came to be used as a town hall for the Chinese community. The land was bought back by the government in 1877, the temple was demolished, and construction of a new school on the site began in 1884. In 1889 the Central School relocated from Gough Street to the newly completed building on Hollywood Road and changed its name to Victoria College. As the first government-run public school, it played an important role in the social and civic life of the city. Instruction was divided equally between Chinese language teaching and curriculum and English for all students, including those of South Asian and European backgrounds that had been attending the school since 1866. Its first headmaster, Frederick Stewart, is known as the "founding father of Hong Kong education" (Bickley, 1998). The original Gough Street location is particularly recognized for being the site of Sun Yat-sen's early schooling but it is thought that he attended the opening ceremony of the Hollywood Road location. Also on the site, at the corner of Staunton and Aberdeen Streets, is one of the city's first underground public latrines, built around the turn of the twentieth century. As public hygiene was an important feature of early colonial governance in the city (Ip, 2004), and as this facility provided a counterpoint to the many privately operated, for-profit facilities, it also holds heritage significance. However, although significant, the Shing Wong Temple and the latrine did not feature prominently in the initial campaign and discussions.

The Police Married Quarters replaced the school in 1950 but a large part of the campaign for the conservation of the site consisted in showing that walls from the school are still standing and that they, as material evidence of the past, hold heritage significance. The connection to Sun

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Yat-sen is important because he is celebrated in Hong Kong as a figure of the Chinese nation in ways that are meant to evoke nostalgia for the motherland without denying Hong Kong's unique status as a cosmopolitan centre in Greater China. A trail in Central and Sheung Wan, created for the occasion of the historic figure's 130th birthday, links together a number of places associated with his time in the city in the late 1880s and 1890s. The places are mainly buildings housing institutions where Sun was educated and spent his time. None of them are still standing and hence instead they are marked with interpretive plaques, some in isolated or overly busy locations[30]. The walls, as actual remains of a place frequented by Sun, were to be an important addition. Confirmation of the provenance of the walls was not easily achieved and was pursued in different ways in accordance with competing agendas. Michael spoke with workers who helped build the Police Married Quarters and received first-hand accounts that provided evidence supporting the existence of the walls of the Central School (SCMP, 2005). The community activists were first granted access to the site to examine the walls in December 2005 and doing so further solidified this interpretation. Shortly thereafter a government assessment based on photographic evidence suggested the walls may date from after 1897 and hence may not be part of the school (SCMP, 2006a). The impact of the publication of this news is unclear but in February 2006 the Town Planning Board approved the plan to allow high-rises on the site, with the condition that demolition would proceed carefully and that the developer would notify the AMO if historic features were uncovered. Definitive evidence of the wall's connection to the school contradicting the government's findings came later when activists uncovered a report by the Surveyor General from 1883 which includes plans that indicate that the school building

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[30] This view was expressed by the professors of the Architectural Conservation Programme at The University of Hong Kong.

consisted of a brick structure on a granite foundation, the same materials of the wall in question (Lai, 2007). This important information appeared to be too little too late.

Discussions centred on finding material remains of the Central School and a tangible link to Sun Yat-sen led to increased scrutiny from experts. The meaning of heritage at the site was soon extended beyond the pragmatic purpose of the TPB application to include the existing buildings. The blocks of Police Married Quarters were the first residences constructed for rank and file officers following the war. A Heritage Impact Assessment conducted for the Architectural Services Department (2011) in advance of the final plans for the revitalization work revealed that they hold special significance as examples of utilitarian architecture in the post-war decades. In the period of rapid population increase and overcrowding in the 1950s the buildings acted as a recruitment advertisement for the police force (Architectural Services Department, 2011). Although few civilians gained access to the buildings and courtyards while they were in use, they were a fixture in the neighbourhood through the second half of the twentieth century. For Michael, who attended events at the Police Married Quarters as a youth member of the Junior Police Core, the site also holds personal significance (SCMP, 2005). Ironically, Donald Tsang also has a personal connection to the buildings, having lived in them as a child since his father was a member of the police force. Once the plan to conserve the buildings was announced, Tsang's link to the site was noted in the media (Architectural Services Department, 2011).

Although the bid by the Central and Western Concern Group to rezone the former Police Married Quarters was unsuccessful, it succeeded in revealing the history of the site, creating the impetus for further research and, crucially, raising public awareness that led to pressure for careful consideration of alternatives. As plans for "PMQ", as the creative industries landmark

will be known, are solidified, it may become apparent that this is not an ideal scenario for the site as it will encourage further speculation and displacement of long-time residents and businesses in the surrounding areas. However, it is a more desirable outcome than an additional private high-rise development which would further obscure the connections to the past that have been revealed.

6.6   The Overseas Educated Returnee

Professors in the Architectural Conservation Programme at The University of Hong Kong put me in touch with Carla, a recent graduate who works for a developer. In her role in the company's marketing division, Carla works on various aspects of the development portfolio, including media relations, advertising, and the selection of commercial tenants for development projects. I was interested to hear her perspectives because she is employed in the development industry but is also a heritage expert. The project's centrepiece, a well-known upscale restaurant called The Pawn, is located in rehabilitated shophouses on Johnston Road. In Hong Kong this is an unusual case, but her employer is one of a number of developers that has begun to experiment with the incorporation of heritage components in redevelopment projects.[31] The company's flagship project in this regard is the J Residence in Wan Chai, which includes a commercial complex in refurbished historic buildings called J Senses. The project's centrepiece, a well-known upscale restaurant called The Pawn, is located in rehabilitated shophouses on Johnston Road.

Carla grew up in Hong Kong and went to university in Boston to pursue an undergraduate degree in quantitative economics with a minor in studio arts. The arts focus

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[31] I was told by another informant that a number of developers that are experimenting with heritage are "second generation" companies operated by the children of aging property tycoons.

satisfied an interest in vintage design and old Hollywood films that she had developed in her youth. When she returned to Hong Kong, with the advantage of a highly valued English-language educational credential from a respected American university (Waters, 2008), she found work in the development industry. She soon learned of the HKUSpace, a Hong Kong University satellite campus for continuing education that is located nearby in the North Point area. There she enrolled in classes leading to a diploma in cultural heritage management. She then decided to further advance her post-graduate studies with a Master's degree at The University of Hong Kong's ACP. Although she initially pursued these educational opportunities out of personal interest, the relevance to her career in real estate and urban development soon became apparent.

When I asked Carla how she became interested in heritage, she, like Michael, spoke of the experience of growing up in a rapidly changing Hong Kong. She remembers being surrounded by old buildings, but quickly adds, "well, not comparing to those in the States or Britain." And the transformations she witnessed provoked a certain sense of unease: "the city development is just in and out, in and out, come and gone… for many years." Such rapid change takes on the appearance of normalcy when it continues unabated for years. Carla's time spent in Boston opened her eyes to other possibilities. There, she says, "I was surrounded by all those fascinating old, red brick buildings. I lived in Boston for four years. And what I experienced is like… all these buildings quite harmoniously exist with those new high rises right in the Metropolitan city… and [they] give accent to the city." The "accent" Carla refers to may be akin to a sense of the uniqueness of place that is sometimes lost through redevelopment, but that developers are increasingly attempting to incorporate into their projects all over the world (Graham et al., 2000). It is this kind of marriage of "metropolitan" development and traditional heritage that Carla now finds herself working on, along with the more ubiquitous high-rises that

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are part of her company's portfolio of projects across the Hong Kong territory, in the Mainland and overseas. J. Senses, in particular, exemplifies the use of heritage in urban redevelopment. The project had already begun when Carla joined the company, but she was involved in the later phases.

6.6.1   "J Senses": Cosmopolitan heritage for sale

Figure 5: Shophouses at "The Pawn" and J Senses

The Johnston Road redevelopment project is the result of a partnership between the Urban Renewal Association (URA) and Union Profits Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of K. Wah International. It is a fairly typical project from the URA. The URA identified the area as a renewal district based on indicators including overcrowding, low-quality housing and the age of the buildings. Over several years it bought flats in the district and arranged relocation for

resident-owners. The Land Resumption Ordinance includes provisions that allow the URA – or in the case of a URA-facilitated project, a developer – to render the sale of properties in a renewal district compulsory once 80% of the total have been acquired through negotiations with owners[32]. For this project the resumption process was complete in 2003 and the tender was awarded in 2004. The unusual element of the project is the inclusion of heritage properties dating from the late 1800s and early 1900s. These buildings, located on land reclaimed prior to 1887, are some of the oldest in Wan Chai. Rehabilitation plans were included in the evaluation criteria of the tender, along with overall design and revitalization impact. The first building, consisting of four adjoining shophouses between 60 and 66 Johnston Road, one of which housed the Woo Cheong Pawn Shop from the late 1940s until 2003, have been renovated and combined to form one building. By combining the buildings the developer was able to create a much larger floor space on each of three levels than was available in the original layout of the shophouses, each with a narrow street frontage (see Figure 5). The common ground floor pedestrian arcade providing shelter from the elements, was retained, and upper floor balconies that had been transformed into indoor rooms to maximize floor space, typical of the few remaining buildings of this vintage in Hong Kong, were returned to their intended use.

Many similar projects carried out by the URA and its predecessor, the Land Development Corporation, had proceeded with little thought given to the retention of historic buildings. In contrast, the time and place of the present case required strategic planning on the part of the

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[32] The compulsory purchase threshold was lowered for some lot types on April 1, 2010 from 90% to 80% (DEVB 2010). According to the Development Bureau, the change is intended to facilitate the redevelopment of industrial buildings in residential districts and to acquire properties with a small number of flats. What appeared as a minor change had a widespread impact even prior to its introduction. Developers gained confidence, withdrawing from negotiations in anticipation of the introduction of greater powers of resumption. Owners became fearful and more likely to agree to sell through negotiation, not wanting to be among the remaining 20% forced to sell at a non-negotiated rate.

developer and the URA to "handle it very carefully". With greater public scrutiny of government-led renewal projects in the years following the handover, the URA had begun clarify its mission and the four Rs involved in its work[33]: *Redevelopment, Rehabilitation, pReservation and Revitalization* (DEVB, 2011). The third "R", which ironically begins with a "p", appears antithetical to the principal interests of the agency and had been included in only a handful of prior projects. The *time*, of course, is also concurrent with the Star Ferry and Queen's Pier protests. Although construction began well before the protests erupted on the waterfront, the finishing touches of the project and the opening of the commercial enterprises were carried out during these highly visible confrontations between the government and activists. The *place* is Wan Chai, one of the city's oldest neighbourhoods, and which includes its widest extremes of income distribution. Older buildings with subdivided apartments sit cheek by jowl with a rapidly increasing number of luxury developments. J Senses is also a stone's throw from Wedding Card Street, a site of foment for a network of community activists concerned with unsustainable development and the loss of neighbourhood character and traditional businesses. The company was cognizant of these conditions and, according to Carla, took care in selecting the tenants and attempting to shape the messages about the project conveyed in the media. The meaning of J Residence and J Senses as a product sold to consumers is apparent on the project's website. The "J" is intended as a "cool" and "hip" toponym for Johnston Road. The residential component, a narrow tower rising above the corner at Ship Street, features small studio, and one and two bedroom flats, as well as larger penthouse suites. All are equipped with luxury European bathroom fixtures and appliances. Residents have access to a rooftop clubhouse level featuring a

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[33] These elements had been present in the work of the URA from its inception but became clarified as "the 4R business strategy" in the Urban Renewal Strategy consultations beginning in 2008.

pool and fitness centre, cigar room and lounge. The lifestyle is further enhanced with access to

"heritage meets cosmopolitan" restaurants and shops in the J Senses commercial complex.

Viewers of the website for the project are given a hint of the experiences to be had by moving

the mouse over each of the five senses: "Sight: a fresh look at times gone by and of modern

living; Taste: tantalise your palate with international deli and gourmet; Hearing: listen to the

peace and tranquility amid our landscape garden; Smell: let the alluring aroma of fine cuisines

whisk you away; Touch: indulge in the tangibility of history and modern living" (K. Wah Real

Estates Holding Ltd. Co., 2008).

Upon the project's completion in 2007, a number of businesses opened to the public in

the J Senses commercial complex. The ground floor of the Johnston Road building housed

Ovologue, a trendy restaurant and lounge operated by a design group that has a furniture store in

a newly constructed building that is also part of the development. Ovologue has since closed. As

an anchor tenant, a restaurant called "The Pawn" was chosen to operate on the first and second

floors (1F and 2F) of the building on Johnston Road (see Figure 5). Although the name provides

a historical nod to a landmark predecessor, the Woo Cheong Pawn Shop, which relocated around

the corner, the restaurant is quite unlike what came before it. It is a Western-style eatery, with

stylistic references to Chinese heritage in its décor, which caters to wealthy expats, locals and

visitors. It is owned by the Press Room Group, a hospitality company that runs a number of

similar establishments in gentrifying areas of the city, including Sheung Wan. Two of its

restaurants are located on the ground floor of Centre Stage, a similar URA high-rise development

directly abutting the former Police Married Quarters on Hollywood Road. The menu at the Pawn

features British dishes including roasts, fish and chips and a dessert called "Eton Mess" which is

named after the private school from whence it originated. The restaurant was featured in a 2012

magazine article about the expansion of the availability of British and American pies in Hong

Kong, its offerings in the former category being a chicken and gammon pie with a five cm

herbed shortbread crust and an oxtail cottage pie which includes meat brined in-house (Kwan,

2012). Patrons may choose to be seated either in the "Living Room", a less formal space

occupying the first floor, or the "Dining Room" upstairs. By naming these rooms after spaces

within a (Western) home but decorating them in a Chinese-fusion style, the restauranteurs

attempt to carve out a space of comfort for mobile global elites in a neighbourhood that others,

like Michael and his friends, have attempted to claim as home in different ways.

The terrace on the rooftop above the Pawn is open to the general public. The URA

granted this concession because the building is a well-known landmark, highly visible in

approaches from both directions at the point of a bend in Johnston Road and across the sports

field to its north. Like many public spaces in Hong Kong development projects, however, it is

not easy to access and, as a result, underutilized. It also suffers from hazy boundaries blurring

private use and public access. On the day I visited the rooftop with an interview respondent, we

shared the elevator with well-dressed patrons of one of the restaurants. I felt out of place wearing

a backpack, shorts and sandals and dripping with sweat after having toured the nearby Wan Chai

street market in the midday summer sun. Once on the roof, however, I discovered outdoor

furniture and plants arranged in a beautifully designed space that awaits the use of all those brave

enough to attempt to find it. I was told, however, that the space isn't truly "public" because it is

often closed for special events hosted by the restaurants and because it is available to rent for

private functions. The gradual erosion of the urban public realm in favour of aestheticized spaces

of consumption and securitized spaces of surveillance has received considerable attention in the

West (Sorkin, 1992). In Hong Kong, it is widely understood in activist circles that the types of

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public spaces offered in private developments are quite different than the street, and limitations placed on access are vigilantly scrutinized. In this case, the roof only became a public space through the redevelopment process, but its accessibility was quickly put into question. Controversy erupted in 2009 when members of the public visiting the space were asked to leave in preparation for a private function (Tsang, 2010). A clarification published by the URA in the *SCMP* noted that although the roof is open to the public it is not an officially declared "open space" and that neither the land lease nor the Master Layout Plan for the property require the terrace to be reserved exclusively for public use (Tang, 2010). It is leased and managed by the restaurant and only opened when it is not reserved for private use. In spite of the controversy, Carla expressed confidence that J Senses was, on the whole, a success, and that it puts K. Wah in a position to carry out similar projects with heritage components.

Carla was involved in the process of selecting tenants for the J Senses building which was, in her words, was guided by notions of "care" in which the goal was to find businesses that operate "with heart", not only to maximize profit. Her position as an employee of the developer, but also an expert on cultural heritage interpretation gives her a unique perspective. She indicated that the project was a case study in her programme at the ACP. Nevertheless, since I spoke with her in her place of work, there were limits to our conversation that could not be broached. Why would a developer pursue the inclusion of heritage elements in a project if they did not add value, either to the image of the company or to the rent of the units in the adjacent towers? The notions of "care" and "heart" were necessary rhetorical corollaries to the marketing campaign that coincided with great public interest in heritage, but localized resistance to gentrification. I spoke with others who added complexity to these interpretations of the project's presentation of heritage and its impact on the neighbourhood. Annie, an employee of the

Antiquities and Monuments Office, was critical of the exclusivity of the high end businesses that were chosen to operate there, but felt that the heritage elements maintained a connection with the past: "the Pawn can still preserve its original context or architectural features because when you go into that you can still know it is a pawn shop before it is a restaurant" (personal interview, 4 June, 2010). She felt that it is more successful in this regard than Heritage 1881, a project at the tip of Tsim Sha Tsui peninsula that retains no hint of its former use as a Marine Police Headquarters or even the original topography of the area, which included a hill that was removed. Andy, an employee of a community-based social service provider located near the J Senses project, was more critical. He walked me from his office, across the street to the "Blue House Cluster," a group of historic buildings undergoing sustainable revitalization through a project undertaken by the Hong Kong Housing Society. Unlike most instances of urban renewal in Hong Kong, this project, an experiment for the URA, gives residents the option of relocating or staying in refurbished apartments. It was spearheaded by a network of activists, including academics and students, in partnership with residents, along with Took-fai's group and a funding partner. As we walked, Andy told me how quickly the neighbourhood is changing, and in an instant, we were standing at the foot of new high-rise serviced apartments. Around the corner, back in the old Wan Chai market, my guide took on the same chattiness that Julie had shown while walking through her neighbourhood. We continued on and turned a corner, passed by the Pawn Shop (relocated from Johnston Road to a side street) and arrived at the side entrance to "The Pawn." From the baking sun we stepped into the cool air conditioned interior of the J Senses building. It was clear to Took-fai that this building did nothing positive for the neighbourhood that we had walked through to reach it. An employee of the URA that I spoke

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with, on the other hand, spoke only of the aesthetic impact of the development: "the end result, of course, is so spectacular!" (personal interview, 3 June, 2010).

6.7   The Professional Returned Migrant

I was introduced to Marcus by Carla. Marcus is an engineer by training but now devotes most of his time to politics and community work. His work in the civic realm has touched on a wide range of topics related to public interests, including, in recent years, heritage. An organization that he is heavily involved with developed an interest in heritage when it began to work on urban planning, community sustainability and local identity. The group has investigated conservation options in communities facing redevelopment pressure and gentrification, including Wan Chai and Central, the neighbourhoods described above.

Like many of his generation and class background, Marcus grew up and received his post-secondary education in Hong Kong, moved away temporarily in the lead up to the Handover, and later returned. He had some contact with early heritage conservation movements through his involvement with the Conservancy Association as a young adult in the 1970s and remembers when the organization assisted the Hong Kong Heritage Society's efforts to conserve significant public buildings (discussed in Chapter 2). He admits that only a small minority of Hong Kong residents were interested in this movement and, even among his peer group, such activity was a bit unusual. Principally, he explained, since the Conservancy Association was the only "green group", there were not many opportunities for such activities. Marcus pursued a career in engineering and moved overseas in 1989, living first in London, and then Sydney, Australia. During the seven years he lived abroad he was relatively apolitical; he did some work with community organizations but mainly focused on his career as a telecommunications consultant for multinational corporations investing in industrial operations in Asia. After living

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overseas for eight years he formed a new company focused on water infrastructure projects in China and, as a result, relocated back to Hong Kong in 1996. Upon his return he found a city immersed in "anxiety on the future" (personal interview, 20 May, 2010). This anxiety, he suggested, provoked work and action of different kinds. "People are busy planning for themselves, families are… not necessarily migrating, but people are making all sorts of plans. And we are also looking for a new type of politics."

Marcus spoke of being inspired to return to the political involvements of his youth by the opening of new spaces of engagement in post-1997 Hong Kong. If heritage was not a serious issue in the 1980s and 90s, he ventured, it was partly because the colonial government did not want to address it: "they try not to touch it." This changed in the late 1990s and early 2000s with the harbour reclamation activism, resistance to backroom deals with developers for sites like the Central Police Station, which Marcus suggests was so contentious because there was great concern that it would end up like Heritage 1881 in Tsim Sha Tsui. The networks of activists working together on these issues, using new methods of outreach, engagement and organized opposition, not including the direct intervention represented by Local Action, were new in Hong Kong. Marcus suggested that these kinds of activities were inspired in part by the participation of members of the Hong Kong People's Council for Sustainable Development in the Johannesburg Earth Summit in 2002. Organized movements working on labour issues and politics have a much longer history, but Marcus suggested that the interest in sustainable development (including heritage and planning) only really became organized and effective, especially in relation to outreach and public engagement around the formation of the 2002 delegation, which consisted of an alliance representing a number of groups. He noted that in first public charrette organized by civil society took place at Victoria Park in 2003, and the first "public hearing", a visioning

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exercise inviting discussion and ideas on the future of the harbour, at HKU the same year. The summit that preceded these events, and more specifically the networking and alliance-building that allowed Hong Kong organizations to participate in it effectively, contributed to the "new type of politics" Marcus described. Of course, it is important to note the broader political context at this moment. Tung Chee-Hwa, the HKSAR's first Chief Executive, was faltering – courting Beijing too closely, misjudging Hong Konger values, maintaining closer and closer relationships with tycoons, and ultimately stoking the flames of a rapidly growing interest in universal suffrage. According to Marcus, Tung's government would be forced to reckon with the true meaning of sustainable development. In Chinese, "sustainable development" has five characters. One is sometimes left out, resulting in a meaning closer to "continuous development" which, of course, was already part of the core governing ideology.

6.8 Conclusion: "A New Type of Politics"

This chapter contributes to the conceptualization of the city as home, as distinct from but related to the scales of the national and domestic. Hong Kong has been framed as a transnational home for mobile subjects (Ley, 2010), and within it, the family as a space of comfort and stability (Salaff, Wong & Greve, 2010). The movements back and forth on the Pacific shuttle continue but new political demands, of which the present article only scratches the surface, signal an affective investment in Hong Kong that is new. As recently as 1981 less than 3 per cent of Hong Kong residents considered the territory their 'place of origin' (Lin, 2002, p. 68). The passage of time, the transition to Chinese sovereignty, and widespread transnational migration have resulted in a shift in the idea of Hong Kong as a place, a home. A desire to hold on to familiar elements of the landscape is evidence of this shift. A larger study of perceptions of heritage, memory and the built form would provide additional evidence of the role of returnees in

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heritage activism and its production more generally, and the work accomplished by networks consisting of both returnees and long-time residents in this regard. This chapter has provided a small sample of such work, and the complex and contradictory expressions of home it involves.

Returning to the two earlier cases, the experiences of Carla and Michael are similar. Both came of age in Hong Kong during an era of rapid growth in which demolition and reconstruction was assumed to be necessary for the success of the city. Both encountered other models of urban development overseas and returned with the view that the city can do a better job of protecting and enhancing historic landscapes, whether the traces of long-vanished relics, such as the Central School, colonial institutional buildings, such as the Former Married Police Quarters on Hollywood Road or traditional shophouses, such as the buildings on Johnston Road that were formerly home to the Woo Cheong Pawn Shop. Michael and Carla share the idea that the city they call "home" should include places that reflect its past, as "heritage". If they are in agreement around a basic concept of heritage, however, they may have quite different ideas about its execution. While Michael is concerned about social and living heritage, as documented in the photography exhibit at the John Batten Gallery, Carla works for a company that derives profit from the presentation of heritage buildings as aestheticized spaces of consumption. These differing perspectives on the uses of heritage reflect a dissonance that accompanies the reality that the meanings and values of heritage are socially constructed (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996). These differences are worked out to a certain extent in what Marcus referred to as a "new type of politics." This politics is based on emergent values of participation, equality, and democratic representation but everywhere in Hong Kong it faces the reality of the neoliberal property regime, and behind that, the surveillant eye of Beijing wary of too much independent thinking among its unruly citizens in Hong Kong.

Chapter 7: A Challenge to Progressive Development: The West Wing Controversy

Government Hill is situated in the Central district on the north side of Hong Kong Island. It rises from near the original, pre-reclamation shoreline as it existed when the European settlement was established in 1841. Hence, while it was once near the water's edge, it is now separated from the harbour by four city blocks upon which sit some of the tallest buildings in the city. It has been called Hong Kong's last remaining historical precinct (Wordie, 2002, p. 21), because it is home to three Western-style colonial buildings that have the official status of "monument": St. John's Cathedral, the former French Mission (home to the Court of Final Appeal) and Government House, the official residence of the Chief Executive and, before 1997, the Governor. Battery Path, a pedestrian route, rises up the hill from Queen's Road and provides a connection between the main areas of Central and the office towers to the east, via a leafy walkway lined with greenery. It is also possible to reach the hill via elevated walkways that lead to nearby towers. Surrounded, as it is, by Hong Kong's CBD and lying at the foot of some of the most congested streets in the territory, the hill is also considered a historical precinct because its landscape has changed little since the territory was established. The park-like setting includes trees that are over 100 years old and landscaping that, while not "natural," has remained unchanged for decades. References to Government Hill date from as early as the years immediately following the creation of the colony and it was considered the real and symbolic centre of colonial power in the territory (Government Hill Concern Group, 2011a).

During my research I visited the Government Hill area several times, although not initially for research purposes. If I had a meeting in Central or if I planned to work in the public

library at City Hall I would arrive at the nearby MTR station. I would walk to its eastern-most end in the underground concourse to Exit K and emerge in Statue Square across from the LegCo building, seemingly half the city away from the station's western-most reaches. From here it was easy to catch a bus or tram heading east, or walk into the crowded streets of Central. I often proceeded on foot. One block south, I would come upon a plain-looking building on the corner of Queen's Road and Ice House Street, the north-west corner of Government Hill. This building's somewhat drab and homely appearance stands out in contrast to its sleek surroundings. It is older, its numerous windows are small and, on one side, shielded from the sun with fins. It seems well-suited to the often grey, dreary weather. Over the course of several visits to the area, I noticed that it appeared to be a site of perpetual, but ever-shifting protest. If it was not immediately clear to me that what I witnessed was an expression of dissent, it was because the action was often very subdued – perhaps just one or two people holding signs or the occasional chant in an amplified microphone. I knew this was a government building but I didn't pay much attention to it during the early months of my stay in Hong Kong. I only learned that this building was the West Wing of the Central Government Offices when it became the centre of a heritage conservation controversy (see Figure 6).

I didn't just pass by the corner where Government Hill meets the city below, I also ventured up its slopes, either by walking up the Battery Path or coming across on a pedestrian link from an upscale shopping complex, through which it is possible to gain access to other upscale shopping complexes, still others, and eventually the Star Ferry to Kowloon. I visited two of the monuments on the Hill: the Cathedral and the Court of Final Appeal. I also cut through on my way to destinations on the other side, including the Murray Building, another government office building – similarly unique in its modernity and now slated to be retrofitted for use as a

hotel – for meetings. I was struck by the contrast between Government Hill buildings, in their landscaped, park-like grounds, and the surrounding areas. It is a place of quiet, greenery, historic buildings, and light, sitting cheek by jowl with the tallest and most iconic finance and banking towers in the city. Office workers from these towers frequently cut through the park to travel from the area of the Cheung Kong Centre and Citibank in

Figure 6: West Wing, Central Government Offices

the East to the Landmark Building and other areas to the north and west. Their pace may slow during this walk, but few sit and enjoy the space. Domestic workers, on the other hand, can often be seen congregating amidst the lush foliage on the weekends. Cleaners and other low-wage service workers from the surrounding buildings also use the park during their breaks (Lai, 2011b). On the whole, however, the space is well-appreciated but under-utilized. It is also somewhat austere, appearing every bit the ceremonial space it is.

In addition to the declared monuments, the hill is the location of the former Central Government Offices (CGO), also known as the Government Secretariat, constructed between 1952 and 1959 and vacated in 2011. The CGO was a primary office location for the colonial administration. It continued to serve this function for the HKSAR government after 1997 until

the offices moved to the newly constructed complex at the Tamar[34] site on the waterfront nearby in Admiralty. This move is logistical – a move from smaller, aging buildings to a larger, newly constructed, more integrated and modern structure – but it is also symbolic; it may be interpreted as another example of the administration distancing itself from its colonial past and resituating itself in relation to the Central Government in Beijing. With the CGO buildings having served their purpose, questions emerged as to their future fate. In particular, questions would circulate around the future of the West Wing of the CGO which has an interface with the city streets on Queen's Road, and is hence set apart from the other elements of the precinct, but, in fact, is built into the side of the hill and, from a different view, is an integral piece of a whole.

7.1   Layout of the Chapter

This chapter considers the controversy over plans for the CGO complex, and more specifically its West Wing, as a case study through which to read the contentious politics of heritage through a relational lens. The chapter interprets the debate over the plan to redevelop the West Wing by asking what broader dynamics are at play. Specifically it considers the land market, the remembrance of the colonial governance from the vantage point of a post-colonial recolonization by the Mainland, and, following ideas introduced in previous chapters, the use of globally circulating heritage policy knowledge, conservation models and practices, in the Hong Kong setting. The first section provides an overview of the site and the background discussion, including the controversial new office complex at Tamar, that led the government to announce plans to redevelop the West Wing and build in its place a commercial high-rise building to create additional "Grade A" office space in Central. The second section examines some of the key

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[34] The Tamar site is so named because it was formerly the docking place of a ship with the same name.

features of the office market in Central and notes a shift to decentralization and the impact of this trend on the decision-making process related to the site. This section also discusses the importance of the office market for Hong Kong's image as a global centre of finance, but notes difficulty in balancing robust availability of office space in the CBD with heritage buildings and districts, which are also increasingly important for Hong Kong's global image. The third section follows the movements of a group of activists fighting to prevent the West Wing from being demolished. This section highlights the treatment of colonial history and engagements with global policy knowledge and networks, as well as local understandings of place. A key feature of the debate revolves around competing interpretations of the significance of Government Hill as a "cultural landscape." The chapter will end by considering the use of this concept in this setting. Although the government agents argued that they were enhancing the landscape by reserving the best of its built heritage, along with its Old and Valuable Trees (OVTs), while rebuilding and enlarging existing green spaces to create a "green lung" in Central, activists presented a more holistic understanding of the concept of landscape. They argued that the landscape in its entirety, and especially the relationship of the buildings to the site itself, is the key to its meaning and significance. The conclusion will consider the government's decision to reverse its plans for the site and discuss the importance of this reversal in the context of the reassessment of heritage planning in the city.

A word about how this case fits into the research project as a whole is in order. Since the debate over the future of the site only began in earnest several months into my fieldwork in 2010, I didn't initially plan to include any extensive analysis of it. However, as the controversy unfolded I realized that it was a fertile field for an analysis driven by some of the concepts animating the project. Unfortunately, due to timing, I was not able to include a discussion of

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Government Hill in the majority of the interviews; it just simply wasn't on the radar of the people I interviewed until I was preparing to make my way home. I began following news reports of the controversy, however, as it unfolded, and made the decision to include it in the project without a large amount of interview material directly related to Government Hill. It was broached in a few of the later interviews, in the fall of 2010, but few people had much to say about it at the time. After I left Hong Kong the issue exploded on the pages of the newspapers and for much of 2011 and 2012 government officials, heritage professionals and activists exchanged views in the public sphere. On a return visit in early 2012 I met with one of the central figures of an activist network, the Government Hill Concern Group, that formed to challenge the Government's plans, and she provided important insights. The chapter also draws on relevant material from other interviews, but not specifically in relation to the CGO controversy, and many newspaper articles and government documents in which plans for the site are presented, critiqued and debated, and in which newly uncovered historical information about Government Hill is shared.

Further to advancing the relational analysis of heritage, this is a particularly interesting case through which to consider the evolution of the treatment of heritage among government agents, especially in relation to strengthening heritage activism. As anyone who spends any time in Hong Kong will recognize, and perhaps this is more apparent to outsiders than Hong Kong residents, change is swift: the government organizational chart is restless; the landscape is an ever mutating form; the preoccupations of public discourse change with the wind (notwithstanding the constants of family, food, property and money). Having lived in Hong Kong for close to a year, and having followed media reporting on heritage for much longer, I witnessed the rise of the importance of this area on the public and political agenda. The question

of the government's reaction to civil society concerns has been a continuous preoccupation. The present case allows a close reading of the shift in the government's interaction with its critics. The interventions of the activists fighting to protect Government Hill are also more sophisticated than only a few years earlier in several respects. They are better organized, allowing a division of labour and strength of voice not previously possible. They have the past experience of negotiating the Town Planning Board application process for zoning amendments, they are connected to influential international networks, and they have the support of a sympathetic media and public. These conditions, along with an unprecedented distrust of the administration among the citizenry and a stated commitment to heritage conservation that the government is seeking to uphold, combine to create an unprecedented challenge to the state logic of the "land (re)development regime" (Tang, 2008).

7.2   The Central Government Offices

The CGO complex consists of three modern buildings constructed in the decade following WWII. The offices, previously spread out in disparate buildings around the district, were consolidated in three new buildings constructed with the latest technologies and amenities such as air conditioning, a dentist, and a canteen for staff lunches (AMO, 2009). The decades following the war saw the localization of the public service and high quality offices were important for the creation of a sense of cohesion among members of the work force. The buildings, known as the central, east and West Wings, were designed and built in phases, beginning in 1952 and ending in 1959. The central and east wings sit on top of the hill in a park-like setting adjacent to the Cathedral and accessible from Albert Road further south, uphill. The West Wing, the final addition to the trio is built into the hill, fronting on the corner of Queen's Road and Ice House Street. It is thus the only building with an immediate interface with the city,

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sharing a stretch of road bordering the financial district and the tony shops and hotels that

complement it. Its street-level entrance is kitty corner to the Landmark Building, home to the

Mandarin Oriental Hotel, one of the most expensive and best known luxury hotels in Hong

Kong.

The CGO buildings were designed by architects working in the Public Works

Department. The principal architect for the project, Michael Wright, indicated in a recent

interview (at age 99!) that this was a period of great autonomy and experimentation for architects

working in the public service in Hong Kong (Ng, 2012a). They were recruited from abroad,

provided with an assignment and left to do their work, unimpeded by bureaucracy. Their work,

ironically, consisted of designing modernist office towers similar to those being built during the

Fordist era in the West. Typical of modern offices, the buildings had extensive, unobstructed

floor plates to allow for flexible usage and easy adaptation to changing needs. They served their

purpose, while also becoming a focal point for public interaction with the colonial government.

The entrance to the West Wing on Queen's Road contained a kiosk, opened in 1961, designed as

an access point for members of the public seeking assistance or information from the

government. According to research conducted by the GHCG, this was the first service of its kind

in Asia. From the 1960s onwards Government Hill was frequently the stage upon which

grievances were aired, in the form of public demonstrations that would arrive at Government Hill

via Battery Path and terminate under an old Burmese Rosewood tree in the courtyard of the

buildings. This changed in 1997 when a security fence was erected on the site, a sign of the

changing government and changing agendas, and more broadly of the securitization of political

spaces globally which would become further heightened after 9/11. The Queen's Road doors,

however, have continued to act as a site of protest and engagement, as I learned while venturing

through Central on foot. Plans for the construction of a new Central Government Office complex on reclaimed land on the nearby waterfront began to take shape shortly after the handover.

7.3   The Move to Tamar

The question of the future of Government Hill is intricately bound up with the government's decision to relocate the CGO. It is important to consider the new office complex at Tamar in relation to Government Hill because its planning history is equally contentious and because it is related to the harbour reclamation activism which, as discussed in Chapter 3, is an important antecedent to the heritage conservation movement. The new CGO at Tamar, completed in 2011, sits on land reclaimed during the third phase of the Central Reclamation (CRIII). The CRIII is the final in a series of reclamations in the central district and was approved in 1999 after a successful court challenge of the government's reclamation schemes. It is the final reclamation permitted in this section of the harbour. The Tamar project is intended to be symbolic of the post-colonial era, free of the weighty associations with the colonial past in evidence at Government Hill. A brief account of the move to Tamar will underscore elements bound up with the controversy over the West Wing.

A shortage of government office space was identified as early as 1990 (Manville, 2006) but the planning framework for a new complex was not set in motion until after the handover. The Tamar project was announced by the Tung Chee Wha administration in 1998 and the necessary capital outlay was secured quickly. The project was put on hold during the SARS crisis in 2003, however, following on the heels of the Asian Financial Crisis and 9/11, when the global economic outlook appeared bleak and other priorities for spending took precedence. It was reinstated in 2005, when Donald Tsang was re-elected Chief Executive with a strong mandate after having served a short term on an interim basis. The Tamar project was justified

because it would create jobs and would provide a closer connection between the legislature and administration, somewhat lacking in the current arrangement. In Tsang's view, it was in the best interest of the public. Many disagreed; the project drew vociferous opposition from environmentalists, pro-democracy groups and detractors of the Tsang regime[35]. A major concern was the prominence of roads in the plans and hence not only the absence of benefits to the majority public but also damage to the environment (Lau, 2006). Critics were assured that an assessment would guarantee no serious damage to the environment and that the cost was necessary in order to create a new, high-quality office complex for Hong Kong's new government (Chong, 2007). An international design competition drew four proposals. The winning entry, selected in 2008, was by Gammon Hip-Hing Group and is called "The Door" (see Figure 7). Intended to incorporate concepts of openness, enjoyment, sustainability and togetherness, the design evokes a metaphorical connection between the public and government, the city and the environment. It features green technologies that are now *de rigueur* in well-funded construction projects in Asian cities, including ventilated facades, sea-water cooling, service-on-demand escalators and rain recycling (Building Journal of Hong Kong, 2008). The main building forms the shape of a door with an inverted L (the office block West Wing) joining a vertical building (the office block east wing) on its open side to create a large opening. The main building (the Central Government Complex office block) houses the Chief Executive's office, the Executive Council and its secretariat, and the policy bureau. Another building accommodates the LegCo complex, while the remainder of the site is comprised of open space.

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[35] There is an importance difference between activism around this time and more recent movements. According to an interviewee (personal interview 7 June, 2010), the early organizing around the harbour and Tamar site was done without the extensive use of the internet. It was only beginning around 2004-5 that activists began to make use of the internet in order to publicize their activities through email networks, alternative media outlets, blogs, facebook and other online platforms.

Figure 7: CGO Complex at Tamar "The Door"

The new CGO complex at Tamar is intended to be more accessible to the public than its predecessor, thus encouraging a greater understanding of and interest in the workings of government among Hong Kong residents. It includes features that its former incarnation lacked, including a viewing gallery, a garden and designated areas for protesters with a capacity of 2000 people. Critics have argued, however, that its location is not conducive to the same level of public access that was possible at Government Hill. Areas of Central, Admiralty and Wan Chai constructed on land reclaimed since WWII include above and below-grade infrastructure for pedestrians. In theory these links provide convenient connections to common destinations, such as office towers, shopping centres and transit facilities, but in reality they are much better suited for *commuting* by foot than for other forms of walking, such as marches (personal interview, 26 May, 2010). Moreover, like the "analogous cities" of raised and subterranean pedestrian realms

in North American cities such as Calgary and Minneapolis (Boddy, 1992), they are also subject

to greater levels of surveillance and control than the street. Since the Tamar site is on reclaimed

land, the relatively recently-constructed neighbourhoods immediately south are filled with

above-ground walkways. It is in this environment that many activists felt that marches and

demonstrations, a mainstay of Hong Kong progressive politics, an interface between government

and people, would be compromised (personal interview, 26 May, 2010). Furthermore, in the

former location, members of the press had direct contact with legislators and officials as they

exited the chamber, while in the new location, there is greater separation. It is for this reason that

pan-democratic lawmaker Cyd Ho feels that the building is friendlier for officials than for

dissenters or members of the public (Chong, 2011). The transparent and open access promised

through "The Door" at Tamar is thus metaphorically present in the high-level design philosophy

but simultaneously precluded by its spatial execution, perhaps an intentional double move

characteristic of recent global architectural practice highlighted by Mike Davis in Los Angeles

(1990).

At a public meeting in 2006 many questions about the Tamar complex were left

unanswered. Although nearly 5 billion HKD was earmarked for the project, the process chosen

by the government for the development of the site provided little information about several areas

of public concern, most importantly the design of the building. The financing was in place long

before detailed plans would be made available (Lai, 2011d). Questions were also raised at this

early juncture about the future of Government Hill. A research paper written for the NGO Civic

Exchange noted in 2006: "Some fear that it will be leased to developers for a substantial price,

thus altering the historic cityscape of Central to a large degree" (Manville, 2006, p. 4). When

plans to move the government offices to Tamar were solidified the question of what to do with

the surplus buildings on Government Hill became more urgent. In light of recent public concerns over heritage conservation the Government commissioned a professional heritage appraisal of the CGO complex. This document would be a key reference for subsequent government plans.

7.4   The Historic and Architectural Appraisal of the Central Government Offices

The appraisal (AMO, 2009) was conducted by Purcell Miller Tritton, a UK architectural firm with a Hong Kong office that specializes in heritage restoration and related work. The main output of the appraisal is a 155-page report that assesses the heritage value of the buildings and their site context and makes recommendations for future use. Though thorough, the report is limited by its emphasis on the architectural and historical considerations. In these respects it does a good job of interpreting the significance of the CGO complex as an example of post-war modern architecture in Hong Kong. Examples of buildings of this type are rare even in the UK, where similar designs exist for shopping complexes and residential buildings, but not for government buildings. This architecture is influenced by globally recognized architects such as Walter Gropius and Mies van der Rohe. Locally, in turn, the design of these buildings may have influenced others, including the Caritas College in the Mid-Levels. The report goes so far as to suggest that these buildings are the best preserved examples of architecture of this type in the Hong Kong region, owing to their upkeep for continued government use. Although they were well-maintained they are not without upgrades and updates that compromise their original form, but any changes and additions were in keeping with the original motifs.

The principal questions animating the appraisal relate to the future of the site after the relocation of the government secretariat offices. Should the buildings be conserved or demolished? If they are retained what kinds of uses should occupy them? A number of conclusions in the report would be important for future deliberations on directions for the usage

of the site. On the one hand, the report points to the potential to reuse the existing buildings: "There is little doubt that it is feasible to reuse the existing buildings. The buildings are generally in good condition and conversion to another use is a feasible and practical proposition that could be achieved relatively easily were the right use to be found" (AMO, 2009, p. 128). Potential appropriate uses are outlined, most in some way related to the original use of the buildings as a centre of government. The discussion about reuse is accompanied by the seemingly contradictory question as to whether any of the buildings may be demolished to allow for a redevelopment that would generate revenue, something which, the report suggests, the government has a responsibility to consider. The appraisal posits that the West Wing is of lower architectural quality and is hence of lesser heritage significance. Given this fact, it presents the possibility of a compromise: "A good case can be made for keeping the central and east wings but for the demolition of the West Wing" (AMO, 2009, p. 130). Furthermore, the report suggests, since the West Wing site is on the edge of the site, built into the hill, it would be possible to build a tall tower there without impeding the ecology of the trees and the park spaces on the hill.

With the expert appraisal in hand, the newly-formed Development Bureau set about elaborating plans for the reuse of the site. In 2009 the Chief Executive's Policy Address included the news that eight publicly owned buildings in Central had been earmarked for conservation and revitalization under the Conserving Central plan (HKSAR, 2009b). The justification for this plan is explained in the address by the concept of "progressive development" in which growth is enhanced through an awareness of and incorporation of principles of sustainability. In the text of the speech, new ways of planning the urban environment are explicitly linked to economic success in the post-industrial global economy: "Only by providing a diverse and dynamic cultural life and a quality living environment can we attract talent from around the world to build

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a career in Hong Kong" (HKSAR, 2009b, p. 51). It goes on to propose that there may be more to

Central's success as a centre of finance than office towers and the amenities that serve the firms

that occupy them:

> In the face of global competition, many governments are keen on developing new
> financial districts, building skyscrapers and creating business centres. While
> enhancing the hardware, we should not forget the software. Central is a distinctive
> business district endowed with rich cultural and historical heritage, which we will
> do our best to preserve. (HKSAR, 2009b, p. 53)

In order to balance growth with elements that enhance the sense of place the area evokes, the

Chief Executive explains, the government will commit to conserving eight important landmarks

in the district, including the Central Government Offices. The suggested plans for the Central

Government Offices, however, do not include all three buildings. The Address recommends that

the main and east wings be reserved for use by the Department of Justice, but that the West Wing

be demolished to allow the site to be redeveloped for commercial use. It appears that the

government had interpreted the appraisal to the letter, focusing on the sections that demonstrate

that the most recently constructed of the three buildings is of lesser value and that it could be

sacrificed in order to generate revenue through the land sale mechanism.

Over the years following the announcement in 2009 the government pressed ahead with a

plan to sell the West Wing site to a developer and allow a thirty-two storey office tower to be

constructed on its site. It justified this plan by selectively citing the architectural appraisal and by

highlighting the need for additional Grade A office space in Central. By presenting the

redevelopment of only a portion of the site within the much larger Conserving Central initiative,

the government also insisted that it was taking a balanced approach following the idea of

"progressive development," not only blindly following public opinion, but also recognizing the

potential for heritage to add value to a globally recognized CBD, while also emphasizing the

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integral purpose of the district. As we will see, the plan was contested by the Government Hill Concern Group, a civil society alliance composed of a number of non-governmental organizations, political groups and others (Ng, 2011a), that used sophisticated methods to challenge the government's logic.

7.5   The Tycoon Connection

Long before the details of the proposed plan for the West Wing site were announced, it was widely speculated that the government had initiated behind the scenes conversations with Li Ka-shing on the topic of the redevelopment. Although it is difficult to confirm the veracity of such speculation, it is understood by observers that property development in Hong Kong operates in the manner of a cartel, with a small number of tycoons carving out their niches in different parts of the territory, rarely competing with one another, and at times cooperating. A development critic that I met with put it thus: "The whole of Hong Kong has been mapped out by the developers, and they do not step on each other" (personal interview, 7 June, 2013). A map of Central would show Cheung Kong Centre, the flagship building of Li's empire, at the northern tip of Government Hill, its parking facility and requisite public open space abutting the area directly adjacent to St. John's Cathedral. In this tower, the eighth tallest in Hong Kong, it is said that Li's personal office occupies a penthouse area with a private pool. A stone's throw from this throne, a building at the foot of Ice House Street would be a highly visible expression of his power and influence in the city.

At a LegCo meeting in 2006, member Fred Li tabled a motion to conserve Government Hill in its entirety in spite of suggestions by others that such a move was far too premature (Suen, 2006). The motion was related to the plans to move the CGO to Tamar, several years prior to the architectural appraisal of the site and the announcement of Conserving Central. A

long discussion ensued in which another member, Mr. Leung Kwok-hung, made reference to the possibility of Li Ka-shing purchasing part or all of Government Hill.

> I can stake my head on the bet that Li Ka-shing will buy the "Government Hill" once the Government Secretariat has been relocated to Tamar. Not only will he buy it, he will also buy from No. 1 to No. 11, even up to where our offices are now situated. I can tell you, by then, the people will plead to Mr. Li, "It is not possible to protect the "Government Hill," then please protect the *Pterocarpus indicus*. (Legco Hansard, 2006, 9262)

With a tone of resignation, Leung suggested that the public may be prepared to accept the redevelopment of the historic area, but not at the expense of the Burmese Rosewood, perhaps the most significant element of the landscape. While the scale of the project announced in 2009 was smaller than this member imagined it might be just three years earlier, dissent was much stronger. The idea that Li Ka-shing was involved continued to circulate as the activists began to work towards saving the West Wing. Although they lacked evidence, they referenced an event from the mid-90s that was an important precedent. The sale of a portion of Government Hill to Li Ka-shing for the Cheung Kong Centre development was not discussed by the LegCo and only became public knowledge after it was approved. Katty Law, one of the principal members of the concern group, commented in the local media: "A lot of us have a feeling that the same kind of thing has taken place with the West Wing. Why else would the government be so eager to redevelop it unless they have already promised a developer that they would?" (Dewolfe, 2011).

7.6   The Government's Position

The plan for the West Wing site was not residential development like at the former Police Married Quarters site on Hollywood Road and so many other sites across the territory. Instead it was to be a commercial office tower, befitting of its surroundings. The buildings to the north, east and west of Government Hill create a landscape of global finance. They are the largest, most

expensive and elite office towers in Hong Kong and command the highest – and ever increasing – rents. The HK2030 Study (HKSAR, n.d.), a long-term strategic plan building on the Territorial Development Strategy initiated in the early 1980s, highlighted the need for more Grade A office space in Hong Kong in the early 2000s. The proposed projected increase was of 2.7 million square meters, from 4.1 million sq m in 2003 to 6.8 in 2030 (Hong Kong Planning Department, 2007). After a decline in 2008, demand for high quality office space in Central appeared poised to continue its rise, reflected in 2012 and early 2013, in prices on the verge of overtaking London as the most expensive office market in the world. Central is, of course, not the only finance district in Hong Kong, but it is the largest and best established. One of the reasons for the continued high demand is the growing number of well-heeled mainland Chinese firms setting up offices in Hong Kong which are able to pay the exorbitant leasing rates (SCMP, 2011). A survey of "occupiers" in a report on Grade A office space in Hong Kong by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors found that "prestige" associated with location is the number one deciding factor influencing office space uptake (Farrelly, Li, & James, 2011)[36]. But the prestigious address comes at a significant and ever-increasing cost. An article in the SCMP (Li, 2011) reports practices adopted by firms with a shortage of space. It is not uncommon for a firm to remain in the same space to cut costs even as its staff expands beyond the envisaged capacity. In such cases, desk space may replace pantries or storerooms and a phenomenon known as "hotdesking" is becoming commonplace. This practice involves maintaining a smaller number of

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[36] I was privy to first hand evidence of the importance of location for a foreign firm operating an office in Hong Kong. An acquaintance who worked for an American cosmetics company that had recently opened an office in Hong Kong as its Asian hub was forced to choose between a Central address and a moderately more affordable office further afield. It was explained to me that the Central location was desired because it was more accessible for clients and associates, more cosmopolitan, and carried a greater level of prestige. In the end a compromise was met: the firm relocated to an area east of Central that was seen to be gentrifying and internationalizing but that was more affordable.

desks than employees, counting on a number of people being off-site for meetings and travel at any given time. For others, even those image-conscious companies eager to locate in Hong Kong's most prestigious business district, the market is too expensive, forcing them to nearby Wan Chai or further afield to North Point or Taikoo. Another office tower on the West Wing site would add 42,000 square metres to the market, thus increasing supply and potentially tapering the rapidly increasing leasing rates.

A working paper developed as part of the HK2030 planning strategy entitled "A Planning Strategy for CBD Grade A Offices" focused on the necessity of a strong office market in the CBD (Hong Kong Planning Department, 2007). As the Hong Kong territory's main business district, Central has all of the features of a successful CBD. Its concentration of firms creates agglomeration effects whereby linkages between firms are facilitated and enhanced by the short distance between them. It also has excellent transportation links to many destinations, including rail linkages which are preferred in the finance sector. Finally, it has high quality office spaces on large sites, offering buildings with large floor plates. The Working Paper points out that between 1998 and 2006 there were 15 office developments in Central. These developments were either government led, carried out with the assistance of the URA or the MTR corporation (on sites above rail projects), or private. The office towers spearheaded by the private market are mainly the result of further intensification of pre-existing commercial buildings, or the redevelopment of hotels. As fewer opportunity sites exist in the densely packed district, options for private developments are diminished. A research report produced by a real estate consultant also showed that Central's office stock, while housed in quality buildings, is rapidly aging. With 57.5% of office space in Central over 25 years old, much of it would be renovated in the coming years, forcing a temporary reduction in availability (Knight Frank, 2013). In this context the

redevelopment of government-owned land is one of the few remaining options for increasing supply.

The working paper is categorical in its prognosis for Central as CBD and the need for more high quality office space there: "HK needs a steady supply of CBD Grade A offices to strengthen its role as an international financial and business centre as well as to maintain as a choice location for corporate headquarters/ regional headquarters" (Hong Kong Planning Department, 2007). This is clearly not only an exercise in ensuring that supply meets demand, but also that Hong Kong will maintain its status on the global scale. But the same document proposes that decentralization may alleviate pressure in the core while developing high quality secondary CBDs, a trend well underway in the decade after the Handover (Nissim, 2011). The north shore of Hong Kong Island has long been home to secondary and tertiary office districts on either side of the hub in Central, in Sheung Wan and Wan Chai, and more recently further east. Tsim Sha Tsui has also long had extensive office space adjacent to Ocean Terminal. A thus far underutilized supply of land, however, exists slightly further afield, in the areas surrounding the old Kai Tak airport, and on the former air strip itself. Kwun Tong, especially, with its many vacant and underutilized industrial buildings is an emergent CBD. Encouraging office development in this district will not only ease market pressure thereby lowering prices (at least in this area), it will also provide opportunities for employment closer to the New Territories, where large numbers of working Hong Kongers reside. The Working Paper hints at these possibilities but a serious discussion about a new office district in Kowloon East only comes later. For the time being, in 2009 and 2010, the government is focused on demonstrating the need for the redevelopment of the West Wing site.

7.7   The Shifting Fortunes of the West Wing Redevelopment Proposal

Details of the plan for the West Wing were revealed at a meeting of the Town Planning

Board on November 5th, 2010. The information presented to the Board at this meeting would be

considered alongside a later proposal to amend the zoning of the site. The specifications would

also be refined after a public consultation phase. In the main, it was explained that there are two

components to the plan (Town Planning Board, 2010). The eastern two-thirds of the site would

be used to enhance and enlarge the already-existing park-like setting, while the one third fronting

the corner of Ice House Street and Queen's Road would be redeveloped for an office/commercial

building. Although the park was only part of the plan, and arguably would be overshadowed by

the tower, the theme of the project was presented as "Restoring Green Central," and it was

suggested that the park would reinstate the open access to Government Hill as it existed prior to

1997. The project would increase pedestrian access between surrounding buildings, add greenery

and preserve historical features. Pedestrian access would be enhanced with the creation of a

direct link between Queen's Road and Lower Albert Road at the top of the hill. This link had

disappeared with the construction of the security fence after the handover. A connection to The

Galleria shopping centre across Queen's Road would also be enhanced with landscaping. The

presenter from the Planning Department also indicated that the historical precinct would be

enhanced because the historical trees would be retained. Connectivity would also allow the new

park to be an important destination on the Central and Western Heritage Trail.

The "notional development scheme" for the building explained its components. A 32-

storey office would contain a gross floor area of 42,000m2 of which 13,500m2 would be an

underground shopping centre. Keeping with the "green" theme, the tower's podium would

feature a street level façade with plants, in order to allow a form of "visual relief at the busy road

junction and provide a new icon" (Town Planning Board, 2010, p. 25). The presentation included a suggestion that any deleterious effects of the height of the building would be mitigated by its orientation on Ice House Street. It was also pointed out that it would be comparable to surrounding buildings. The plans underwent a series of modifications (table 2) after the initial specifications proved controversial among not only planning activists, but also professional organizations that were approached for feedback.

The specifications for the project underwent a number of changes. An initial revision of the plans, announced in mid-November, 2011, included additional recreational space, a reduction of the underground shopping mall component, and an enlargement of Government, Institutional and Community Uses (Y. Lai, 2011). A second revision removed the shopping mall altogether (Ng, 2011f). A third, announced June, 2012, did not reduce the size of the building, but instead offered a different development model (Zimmerman, 2012). Rather than sell the plot, zoned as a "Comprehensive Redevelopment District" to a developer, the new plan was to retain its original zoning as for "Government, Institutional and Community" uses and adopt a build-operate-transfer model. This would allow the government to retain ownership of the site while offering a public tender for the design, construction and operation of the building, and then draw income from its lease for the course of a set duration. The Secretary for Development's announcement appeared to suggest that these changes would finally satisfy detractors: "This final plan… has fully taken into account views expressed in the community on the future of the former CGO in the past two years." Members of the GHCG, in contrast, disagreed.

Table 2 Revisions to specifications of West Wing redevelopment proposal

Element	Initial Proposal	Revision (Nov, 2011)	Revision (June, 2012)
Height	32 storeys	32 storeys	32 storeys
Offices	28,500 sqm	28,500 sqm	28,500 sqm
Shopping Mall	13,500 sqm	None	None
Government Institutional and Community Uses	None	11,800 sqm	11,800 sqm
Public Open Space	6,800 sqm	7,600 sqm	7,600 sqm
Development Mechanism	Sale of land zoned Comprehensive Revelopment Area	Sale of land zoned Comprehensive Revelopment Area	Build-operate-transfer maintaining zoning for "Government, Institution or Community"

The Government Hill Concern Group

The argument that the West Wing, the less significant and important of the three buildings in the Central Government Complex, should be sacrificed in order to meet the needs of additional office space in Central was contested in various ways by the GHCG. The Concern Group, which coalesced in order to create a powerful voice of opposition, is a network of 21 groups and individuals that came together to launch a legislative challenge to rezone Government Hill. It took shape at the end of 2010, around the date of my return to Canada. The group employed a variety of tactics to draw attention to the issue and to encourage a reversal of the plan for the West Wing site. The first and most direct method – a legislative challenge through the Town Planning Board to have the site rezoned as a heritage precinct – was not successful. Not accepting defeat, the group focused its efforts in other areas. The emphasis here will be to understand how three tactics – historical research, geomantic assessments and garnering the support of international heritage organizations – succeeded in generating knowledge and understanding and in influencing the government's eventual decision to abandon

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the plan entirely. A relational dimension is apparent in all of these tactics. In the first instance, historical research develops a temporal relationality between past and present, identifying taken for granted or overlooked historical facts and events that may be reflected upon in the present to gain new perspectives on place and identity. The geomantic interpretation, otherwise known as a reading of the *feng shui* of the site, allows for a culturally-situated understanding of the spatial relations between the elements of the landscape and their context. Finally, and of greatest interest here, networking and garnering support from international heritage organizations develops a territorial relationality in which the decisions of the government of Hong Kong are publicized through the networks of international professional networks and scrutinized by experts in other parts of the world.

7.8   Temporal Relationality: Historical Research

In the summer of 2012 activists unearthed three new pieces of historical information about the CGO complex and the West Wing that had not been taken into account in the appraisal. By bringing this information to light, they hoped to encourage a review of the redevelopment scheme. The first piece of information linked the building to an important episode in the modern history of Hong Kong (Ng, 2012c). On February 1st, 1969, Hong Kong's first "trendy dance party" was held in the cafeteria of the building. Organized by the Urban Council, the "Mod Pop-In" dances were intended to redirect the energies of youth who had participated in anti-colonial riots in 1967. They featured nightclub lighting and other attractions that were inaccessible to most in Hong Kong at that time. It was significant that the dance was held inside the building that served as a tangible centre for the power the youth had attempted to challenge. Though it may be interpreted as a symbolic gesture, the dance is nonetheless an interesting moment in the political history of colonial Hong Kong and its location is an existing manifestation of this

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history. Members of the GHCG organized a dance outside the Court of Final Appeal as the AAB met inside in May, 2012 (Ng, 2012c). Their intent was to invoke the historical dance, thereby highlighting its significance in relation to the neglected heritage meanings of the site. Further historical research revealed a second point of note – that Government Hill was the location of the first underground public car parking facility in the territory. Members of the Concern Group identified a newspaper clipping at the Public Records Office that announced its opening. The car park, located between the wings of the CGO, had capacity for 100 vehicles and was entered via Albert Road. A third taken-for-granted historical point related to the construction materials. The interview with Michael Wright, the chief architect of the CGO site, revealed that the Public Works department had taken great care in finding local, inexpensive, high quality granite to use in the façade of the buildings. Granite from different locations was tested by a laboratory at Hong Kong University and a quarry at Diamond Hill was selected. A statement prepared by the activists indicates that the careful choice of materials "reflects the government's taste and philosophy at that time and the attempt to win the hearts of the people through the means of good architecture." (RM25-3).

7.9   Spatial Relationality: A Geomantic Reading of Government Hill

The Government Hill Concern Group also investigated the geomancy of the West Wing in relation to the rest of Government Hill. To do so they sought the advice of Michael Chiang Hong-man, a Western-trained architect and *feng shui* expert. They asked Chiang for an assessment of the impact of the proposed tower on the *feng shui* of the area (Ip, 2011). The outlook was not positive. In the geomantic reading, the city of Hong Kong is a dragon. Government House, the official residence of the Chief Executive, is the dragon's intellect. Water, which represents money, flows into Hong Kong from the north, aided by the wisdom of

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the dragon. In this reading, the construction of a tower at the base of the hill would block the flow of water, potentially damaging the Hong Kong economy. Chiang also suggested that the building would create an imbalance between the government buildings which protect the city from typhoons, thus exposing the city to further risks. In Hong Kong, *feng shui* holds the status of an environmental science and is taken very seriously. Others corroborated Chiang's reading and it was recognized by members of the LegCo. Although no action was taken directly as a result of the assessment, it is significant that it was used as a piece of evidence.

7.10   Territorial Relationality: International Pressure

At a special meeting of the LegCo's Panel on Development on 23 November, 2010, the Executive Secretary referred to international charters to affirm the government's case for the redevelopment of the West Wing. Specifically, he argued that international charters did not necessarily preclude the modification of heritage sites through the addition of new elements. He went on to cite article 5.2 of the Burra Charter (Australia ICOMOS, 1999) which states that "relative degrees of cultural significance may lead to different conservation actions at that place…" and article 22, which states: "new work such as additions to the place may be acceptable where it does not distort or obscure the cultural significance of the place, or detract from its interpretation and appreciation." Based on his reading of these points, along with elements from the China Principles and the Venice Charter, he went on to affirm, with reference to the CGO complex, that "sites with cultural and historic value should incorporate new elements, where appropriate, to cater for new social purposes" (LegCo, 2010).

Another reference to the same articles of the Burra Charter appeared in 2011. It appeared after members of the Concern Group contacted "Forum UNESCO: University and Heritage" with the hopes of garnering international awareness of the issue. The Forum, which is an

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international network of scholars, sent an email outlining the issue to its members on 9

September, 2011. The Development Bureau in Hong Kong became aware of this communication

and wrote a letter in response, in which it again cited articles from the Burra Charter in order to

support the redevelopment proposal. Although this letter was sent to Forum UNESCO members,

Australia ICOMOS learned of it and asked one of its members to respond in turn. That member

is Hilary du Cros, an archaeologist and tourism expert who helped draft the document and is now

based at the Hong Kong Institute of Education. Du Cros wrote a statement entitled "Use/Misuse

of the Burra Charter" (du Cros, 2011) which was circulated to the relevant government

departments and the media. The statement elaborates on two main points. The first is that the use

of the Burra Charter by the Development Bureau is inappropriate because its clauses are not

meant to be referenced in isolation. She cites a passage from the Charter that iterates this view:

"The Charter should be read as a whole. Many articles are interdependent. Articles in the

Conservation Principles section are often further developed in the Conservation Processes and

Conservation Practice sections." The second point, related to but perhaps of greater consequence

than the first, is that Hong Kong lacks the policy and legislation to properly assess the

significance of heritage places, as the Burra Charter demands. Du Cros points out that the Burra

Charter has been used in Hong Kong for years but only so far as the policy allows it to be. Thus,

the absence of references to international Charters in the 2009 appraisal of the site is, she writes,

> largely because the AMO (overseen by the Antiquities Advisory Board)
> implements the definition of cultural significance in the Antiquities and
> Monuments Ordinance, 1976, which only looks at buildings in terms of their
> historical or architectural value (a position now considered outdated by
> international best practices for assessing cultural or heritage significance).

If the definition of cultural significance as presented in the Burra Charter had been employed, du

Cros argues, the appraisal would have been conducted by an interdisciplinary research team, not,

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as was the case, by conservation architects. The statement goes on to elaborate on what an ideal assessment would have included. In particular, du Cros emphasises the need for consideration of options through public consultation and, in cases such as this where an intervention in the fabric of a heritage place is considered, an overall "cautious approach."

As discussed in Chapter 4, the Burra Charter is widely regarded as a model for best practices in heritage conservation, especially with respect to the recognition of cultural significance, and is regularly referenced in Hong Kong and elsewhere. The fact that the Hong Kong government's use of the Charter was criticized by an expert who played a part in its elaboration was likely somewhat jarring. The emphasis on producing and reproducing a particular image – of strong, logical and calculated, but fair, decision-making – on the international stage is an important ongoing state project and this episode caused a small but not insignificant blemish.

A further challenge on the international stage came soon after. Members of the GHCG attended the 17th ICOMOS General Assembly in Paris, 27 November to 2 December, 2011. There they were urged to make a formal submission to the ICOMOS Scientific Committee on 20th Century Heritage (ICOMOS-ISC20C, n.d.) which would form the basis for an international heritage alert. Upon their return to Hong Kong the members of the Concern Group set about developing the materials necessary for such a submission. The proposal was submitted in June, 2012 and included descriptions of the history of the site, its architects, its social and cultural value, among other points. It concluded with a recommendation that ICOMOS issue an alert for international distribution and send a letter to the HKSAR Chief Executive. The ICOMOS Scientific Committee acted swiftly. A review of the submission and additional evidence was carried out by members from Scandinavia, South Africa, the United States and Australia. The

members concluded that an alert was warranted and issued it, as per the recommendation, on 12 June, 2012. The alert, consisting principally of the text submitted by the GHCG, was sent through the networks of ICOMOS, Docomomo[37], and the International Union of Architects, and, with a covering letter, to the HKSAR Chief Executive. The letter urges the government to reconsider its plan to redevelop the West Wing site in light of professional commentaries and research that have appeared since the plan was announced. In particular, it argues for the need to update the 2009 appraisal and extend a heritage impact assessment of the East and Central wings to the entire site. The letter also makes reference to the question of image:

> The world looks to China for inspiration in modern architecture and excellence in conservation practice, and especially for adherence to *The Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Site in China* 2002… Beside the potential architectural and heritage loss, the demolition of the West Wing would be seen as a sign of departure from the widely acknowledged commitment of China to the protection and long-term conservation of its cultural heritage and historic sites of all periods, be they ancient or modern.

Although the *China Principles* have no direct application in Hong Kong, the point that redeveloping the West Wing may reflect poorly on the territory's government, and more broadly on China as a whole, is forcefully stated.

This was a busy time in Hong Kong, with the change of administration and the inauguration of a new Chief Executive just around the corner on 1 July, 2012. Nevertheless, a response from the administration came swiftly. It begins, after a gracious note of thanks, on a tone of skepticism:

> We are deeply concerned that your organisation's assessment might not have taken into full consideration Hong Kong's heritage conservation policy, the associated statutory and administrative systems at work, and the details of the

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[37] Docomomo is the International Working Party for Documentation and Conservation of Buildings, Sites and Neighbourhoods of the Modern Movement.

former CGO site and the three buildings on it, based on which our current conservation cum redevelopment has been drawn up. We hope you will agree that heritage matters, as in the case of other policy matters, have to be seen in each country or city's social, political and economic context. (Li, 2012)

Context is important when considering heritage matters in Hong Kong but, as this thesis shows, the latest trends and innovations in this area in other parts of the world are also important. In eight pages the letter goes on to justify its position by outlining Hong Kong's conservation policy, the place of the policy within the framework of "progressive development," recent heritage initiatives and other information relevant to the CGO plan. Four annexes containing a presentation by the Secretary for Development, a report on the results of public consultations, and detailed responses to the arguments contained in the Heritage Alert, further to the case presented. The arguments by the Development Bureau in response to the Heritage Alert attempt to construct a definitive position of certainty that the plan falls within the scope of policy, is well-thought out, and enhances, rather than damages, the Government Hill landscape. Carrie Lam continued to insist that the government's position was in line with the mainstream view (Lee, 2012). However, the very fact that the response came so quickly and took the form of a lengthy letter with supporting documentation is indicative of the seriousness of the intervention by international organizations on behalf of a local concern group.

7.11 The "Old and Valuable" Burmese Rosewood

On top of Government Hill sits an old Burmese Rosewood tree (*Pterocarpus indicus*). Mature trees in urban Hong Kong carry a special significance due to their scarcity. Few have survived the relentless development of the past several decades, either because the land on which they sat was needed for construction, or because development projects required complex slope

engineering that is disruptive to root systems. It is, of course, an entirely different situation in

Hong Kong's many extensive country parks, but the trees in the urban setting have grown to

receive special treatment, and measures are taken to monitor and protect their well-being. A

"Register of Old and Valuable Trees" (OVT) was established in 2004 in an effort to protect

Hong Kong's best urban trees. The register, managed by the Leisure and Cultural Services

Department in conjunction with the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department and the

Housing Department, records information about trees on non-leased government-owned lands in

built up areas and tourist sites. Criteria for inclusion include rarity, size, age and, of interest here,

"cultural, historical or memorable significance." The latter category includes "trees with

historical significance that is supported with evidential records," and cites as an example the

Burmese Rosewood on Government Hill (Department of Leisure and Cultural Services, n.d.).

The tree has characteristics that qualify it as an OVT in size, age and form, in addition to

historical significance.

The Burmese Redwood is located in the courtyard of the Central Wing of the CGO

complex and, due to its visibility and uniqueness, it became a local landmark. As mentioned

earlier, marches destined to Government Hill would terminate at the tree. For a woman who I

interviewed who is a member of the GHCG, the Rosewood is significant because it has long

been a gathering place for the vocalization of dissent (personal interview, 22 February, 2012) .

Its meaning is thus tied up with its visibility and location and its function as the place where

people assembled to protest for decades. It is especially significant that it was the power and

decision-making of the colonial administration that were the focus of these expressions.

Furthermore, prior to the construction of the security fence, the tree and the space surrounding it

were accessible to the general public at all times and it was therefore also the setting for more mundane daily activities such as exercise, relaxation and walking.

The plan for Government Hill unveiled by the government took into account the retention of a total of 11 trees as well as greenery along the Battery Path. This would appear to be a logical response: the trees are significant, five of them, including the Rosewood, are listed on the register of historic trees, hence they will not be disturbed by construction. In fact, the government argued, the trees would not only be left intact, they would be enhanced by the creation of a "green lung" with a much greater level of access to the public from Queen's Road than before. The recreation space would thus use elements of the existing landscape to enhance access, provide greater environmental benefits and an aesthetically pleasing green feature. The plan for the trees mirrored the plan for the CGO buildings – the most interesting and best-designed (the east and central wings) would be retained, and by replacing the West Wing with a modern high rise building, the landscape as a whole would be enhanced.

A contrasting point of view was presented by the GHCG: individual buildings and elements of the landscape are meaningful individually, but their meaning is partially dependent on the relationship with their surroundings, when considered as a landscape. Thus it is not enough to retain the tree if the surrounding landscape, including the buildings, are so drastically changed that the significance of the tree is compromised (Lai, 2011c; Law, 2011). The differing perspectives on landscape in the debate reflect some of the nuances present in recent advances in heritage conservation practice that, in turn, echo earlier scholarly work on landscape among human geographers (Cosgrove & Daniels 1988; Duncan, 1990; Mitchell, 1996). If, in the parlance of heritage conservation professionals, a cultural landscape reflects human values developed in relation to a past event, use, personal association or other historical traits, it is also

more than this when the question of power is considered. Studying landscape does not just tell us about the history of the human use of the land, it also tells us about the relations of power that attended and are worked into the landscape's production (Duncan & Duncan, 2004). Although the Concern Group did not express the meaning of landscape in these exact terms, its unease about the redevelopment of the West Wing was precisely rooted in a worry of losing elements of the landscape that reveal its meaning in the history of Hong Kong: as a site of colonial power, of political power, and a place of engagement and confrontation with the colonial administration, and more recently, with a new Hong Kong government whose decisions do not always appear to be motivated with the best interests of the territory's residents in mind. To retain the Burmese Rosewood and the other valuable trees is not enough; to retain the east and central wings is not enough, especially when the West Wing would be sacrificed for a paean, a monument, to finance.

7.12 Conclusion

This chapter ends happily, unlike most recent episodes of contestation in Hong Kong's urban development, for the network of activists that challenged the government's plans for the West Wing. In the spring of 2012, following months of pressure from the GHCG and abroad leading to the resignation of the AAB Chair, Bernard Chan (Y. Lai, 2012b), the AAB decided to take the unusual step of grading the ensemble of the CGO complex as a whole in addition to providing grades for the buildings individually (Wong & Ng, 2011). The grading of the buildings was a necessary hurdle that had been sidestepped by the Development Bureau in its eagerness to set the plans in motion. The decision to provide a grading for the three Secretariat buildings as an ensemble was a significant departure from the normal practice of considering buildings and places in isolation, and allowed for the significance of the landscape to be considered. An expert

panel met in May, 2012 and awarded the complex grade I, the highest possible grade, opening

the door for it to be considered for monument status which would provide statutory protection.

The West Wing structure was given Grade II while the other two wings, individually, were

awarded Grade I. In spite of the weight carried by these recommendations, the plan to demolish

the West Wing was kept alive through the months immediately following the transition to the

new government on July 1, 2012. In early December, however, Chief Executive Leung made a

surprise announcement (Y. Lai, 2012b). The redevelopment plan was abandoned and the West

Wing would be retained for other government uses (Yiu, 2012).

What are we to make of this change of heart? The new administration had different

priorities, embroiled as it was in controversy, its leader facing calls to step down in the months

after taking office. But it is too easy to explain the decision as a gift to the Hong Kong people or

an attempt to curry favour. By re-reading the media reporting of the controversy, the research on

its history and the raft of government documents that report on the meetings where it was

discussed, a very potent challenge to the *status quo* becomes visible. The strength of the activist

network's efforts, which no doubt played a role in the final reversal, came from its ability to see

beyond the sealed fate of another commercial tower, another handshake with a developer, to

provoke the shift to a different vision for the future of a site with an important history and unique

spatial attributes.

Chapter 8: An Oasis in a Sea of Towers: *Standing in* at the Central Market

The study of place contestation is a long-standing project of cultural geography (Ley, 1996; Jacobs, 1996). An omnipresent feature of city-building is the disagreement about the meaning of places that accompanies decisions about growth and change (Barber, 2013). Geographers, especially, have revealed that the terms of debate may be unequal and that the structures that are developed to manage instances of contestation may be shot through with contradictions that favour powerful interests (Shaw, 2007; Pow, 2009). This chapter presents as a case study of place contestation the Central Market, one of a number of sites that the Hong Kong government has reserved for conservation and revitalization purposes. The analysis begins by situating wet markets in Hong Kong's modern food retail landscape, leading to an explanation of the reason for the market's closure. Many elements in the story are familiar, shared with other government-owned structures undergoing similar re-evaluation processes. The focus here is to argue that much more is at stake than the brick and mortar (reinforced concrete in this case) structure. The chapter demonstrates that the site is used by the government to advance an agenda that is not principally about heritage. City branding, symbolic architecture, and environmental objectives are very much at stake. On the other hand, the non-state actors that have participated in the process of deciding the future of the market, in the limited channels permitted, are interested in elements of the building's heritage value – both material and social – but they are equally committed to identifying and exposing problems with the way the government approaches public participation in projects that are intricately tied to the public domain. These deliberations serve to foreground a set of dynamics around regional integration and unchecked power, provoking anxiety, anger and, ultimately hope, about the future.

8.1 Placing "the Market" in Hong Kong

The market is a realm of commercial transactions. Markets increasingly exist on an abstract plane, lacking mooring to physical places. The market*place*, however, persists as a material forum for the purchase of food and other goods. This persistence – the continued liveliness and informality of traditional markets – alongside the modernization and homogenization of other spaces where money is exchanged for goods, is noteworthy. There is a significant body of literature on the interactions, practices and dispositions made possible by markets, as outlined by Pottie-Sherman (2011). Most of these insights are beyond the scope of present concerns but it is worth noting the seemingly mundane functionality of many markets belies a rich cultural and social significance. Although the actually-existing market is our focus here, it will become evident that it is very much subject to forces generated by less tangible capitalist markets that are manifest in concrete ways in Hong Kong but extend beyond the territory.

Hong Kong's markets, like those in cities across East and South-East Asia, vary from informal, unsanctioned sales of second hand or counterfeit goods, to daily bargain-oriented affairs crowded with tourists, to indoor wet or cooked food markets, to small, serene selections of locally grown organic produce sold principally to the urban elite. The present discussion, with a focus on indoor food markets, recognizes the effect of competition created by the introduction and growth of Western-style supermarkets which hold an ever-increasing share of the food retail business. While the earliest purpose-built indoor markets on Hong Kong Island, which date from the first half of the twentieth century, are no longer in operation, the traditional wet market format still thrives across the territory. Of interest here is the fate of the market buildings which are no longer used for the purpose for which they were constructed and hold heritage

significance, both for their architecture and less tangible historical and social importance. In the case of the Central Market, which forms the main case study for this chapter, the low-rise profile of the building is, moreover, valued for its positive environmental impact on air circulation. As we will see, although the plan is to conserve the building as a heritage site, the concept of "heritage" isn't a central focus in the decision-making.

Hong Kong's earliest markets emerged from the tradition of periodic markets in which peasants who lived mainly on subsistence farming would travel to a point of exchange to access products that they could not grow (Bromley et al., 1975). Pre-colonial communities across the Hong Kong territory shared this South China practice (Lui, 2008). As the colonial settlement grew, street hawker markets emerged in populated areas and quickly became subject to colonial governance and racialized health and hygiene regulations. Indoor markets – envisaged as more orderly, hygienic, and aesthetically palatable – appeared in purpose-built structures developed by the Public Works Department beginning in the late-1800s. Some of these markets continued to operate through the twentieth century. From the 1980s onwards a new and Hong Kong-specific space-saving format, which includes markets in buildings housing other municipal services, has become the norm. It, along with the impact of the arrival of modern supermarkets, will briefly be considered.

Municipal services buildings appeared as a result of work by urban planners seeking to offer the efficient and cost-effective delivery of public services in the rapidly developing, and increasingly crowded, city in the 1970s and 80s. Some house garbage tips, homeless shelters, libraries, community centres, or offices, and many house markets and sections where independent stalls offer cooked meals in a food court atmosphere. The space for markets in such buildings is usually located at ground level and allows vendors a space with minimal overhead.

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At the market near my apartment in Yau Ma Tei I regularly purchased eggs from the same woman at the entrance. I would order five for 10 HKD and she would take them from flats and place them gently together in a plastic bag. Although it was sometimes busy, it was often fairly quiet and I noticed that the prices for most items, apart from the eggs, were not much different than elsewhere. The "cooked food centres" are usually located on an upper floor and draw a wide-ranging crowd, from families to young people, white collar to blue collar, but few foreigners. When I was in Hong Kong some food stalls were quite famous, garnering write-ups in magazines and a fair amount of buzz. One night I went to eat at the Java Road cooked food centre and it was crowded with dragon boat teams that had just completed a race. In a large room with many stalls, almost all the occupied tables were there for the same two or three dishes. Although Municipal Services Buildings, at three to five stories, are far from the height of most neighbouring buildings, they are a much more efficient use of space than earlier purpose-built markets.

Slightly predating the unique local form of the municipal services building, the globally-ubiquitous supermarket appeared in Hong Kong in the mid-1960s. The first, The Dairy Farm, was located on the site of the present day Landmark tower in Central. The sector experienced rapid expansion and increased competition in the 1970s and 80s. As more Hong Kongers entered the middle classes, the time required to prepare and cook fresh market foods became scarce. The popularity of supermarkets also grew with changing shopping preferences. One of my interviewees explained that in recent years "less and less people want to get their fingers and feet dirty by going to an open market" (personal interview, 17 May, 2010). Supermarkets offered more prepared food options for those who wished to eat at home and, of course, eating out also became extremely popular with increases in disposable income. The largest chains, which have

expanded significantly since their appearance in the 1970s, are owned by Hong Kong's most established property tycoons who also own other companies in the grocery supply chain (Poon, 2005). They thus benefit from the availability of capital for expansion and economies of scope involving regional distribution networks. In spite of the modern shift to supermarkets, many Hong Kong consumers still prefer fresh foods that may be purchased at wet markets. Working people who are too busy to visit markets or cook now employ a domestic helper to complete these tasks. However, there is a sense that supermarkets are better for some products and may be more hygienic and convenient (Goldman et al., 1999). In recent years there has been a further increase in the market share of supermarkets due to infectious disease outbreaks, including SARS and avian flu, associated with market foods (Webster, 2004). This trend has been accompanied, in line with global middle class trends, by an increased awareness of food production and a growing demand for organic and sustainably grown foods (Lui, 2008), products not typically associated with large scale supermarket chains. Hong Kong's supermarkets are also known for their availability of popular overseas products which are preferred by some for their taste, perceived health and safety advantages, as well as cultural cachet[38].

The predecessors of supermarkets and markets housed in municipal buildings are the purpose-built, freestanding markets, such as the Central Market, Wan Chai Market, Bridges Street Market, Western Market, Tsim Sha Tsui wet market and others that no longer exist. Each of the markets still standing on Hong Kong Island has been subject to redevelopment pressure.

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[38] While in Hong Kong in 2010 I noticed that most supermarkets indicated the flag of the country of origin of products next to their price. Flags were on display for products from other east and South East Asian countries and further afield, with those from Japan and the West significantly pricier. Mainland Chinese products were not signaled in the same fashion.

Before an in depth discussion of the Central Market, the Bridges Street Market and the Wan Chai Market will briefly be outlined.

8.1.1 Central Market contemporaries I: Bridges Street Market

The Bridges Street Market is located in the H-19 urban renewal district which borders on the former Police Married Quarters block, discussed in Chapter 6. The market's architecture exhibits elements of the Bauhaus style and it was the first public market constructed in Hong Kong after WWII. By the time I visited, only two vendors remained in operation and the upper floor of the market, with access from Wing Lee Street, parallel to Bridges Street up the hill, had been transformed for community use with play equipment for children. The surrounding landscape is a mixture of low-rise Chinese tenement buildings and newly constructed high-rise towers, the result of earlier renewal initiatives in which the image of the H-19 project is modeled. Some of the low-rise buildings have been renovated and upgraded, while others are in poor condition. The initial renewal plans called for the market and neighbourhood buildings, including the Wing Lee Street terrace, to be replaced with high-rise residential towers. The Central and Western Concern Group conducted research on the site and argued that the foundations required for high-rise construction would unsettle the slope and compromise the structural integrity of surrounding buildings (personal interview, June 7, 2010). In 2008, after these findings were made known, the URA reversed its plans for the market building. From my informant's perspective, the government was influenced by, but refused to acknowledge, the arguments put forward by the community group. Instead, he suggested, their response could be summarized as follows: "We've now decided to be good corporate citizens and the Bridges Street Market is actually quite historic" (personal interview, 7 June, 2010).

An architect that I interviewed who had worked for a company engaged by the URA to conduct a historic assessment of the H-19 area emphasized the market-oriented focus of the plans:

> We came up with one proposal where we keep the Wing Lee Street and also the Bridges Street Market… And we rebuilt some residential towers at the back of it and transferred the gross floor area to some developments next to it. Basically we also had to see from the developer's point of view, how to maximize the GFA, but while we take that into account we try to keep these buildings that are on the site already. (personal interview, 2 October, 2010)

Following great controversy, the plans changed in line with the assessment to allow for the conservation of Wing Lee Street. The adjacent market was included in this scheme and was among a handful of historic buildings offered by the government in the Revitalisation of Historic Buildings through Partnership Scheme (Cheung & Chan, 2013). If not for the concern expressed over Wing Lee Street, it is likely that this site would have been redeveloped.

8.1.2 Central Market contemporaries II: Wan Chai Market

To the east of Central sits another historic market building that has been subject to similar pressure and interest, with a slightly different outcome. In its original form, the Wan Chai market was one of the few examples of Streamline Moderne architecture in Hong Kong, and the only market reflecting this design vocabulary in the territory (Lee & DiStefano, 2010). The possibility of conserving the market was first raised in 1990 when the building was awarded Grade III historical status by the AAB. A year later the AAB qualified its position, clarifying that the building as a whole is not highly significant and that if its interior materials were salvaged, it could be demolished (AAB, 2008). In 1995 the URA's predecessor, the Land Development Corporation, initiated the H-9 renewal project involving three sites in Wan Chai, one of which was the market. It is a familiar story; the intention was to demolish the market and replace it with

residential towers. The URA entered an agreement with a developer called Dollars Union Limited and redevelopment proceeded at the two other sites in the scheme. In 2001 the URA took over the plans. Permission to demolish the old market was granted in 2004 since space for a replacement market had been included in the construction on one of the other sites. This new space would rehouse the vendors from the original Wan Chai market as well as hawkers from nearby street markets.

Wan Chai is one of the oldest neighbourhoods in Hong Kong. As explained in Chapter 6, its landscape and social makeup exhibit tremendous diversity. It has both one of the highest average incomes in the territory and is home to a large number of residents living in poverty. The landscape pays testament to successive land reclamations. Nearest the shoreline the buildings are tallest, the streets widest and the least welcoming to pedestrians. Inland, the passages grow narrower, the rectilinear grid goes off kilter, the buildings become more varied and colourful. Close to the point at which the slope begins a steep rise sits one of the most intact collections of Chinese-style tenement buildings on Hong Kong Island. This area has been subject to intense state and market-led redevelopment and gentrification since the 1990s, the LDC H-9 project being an early example. In part in response to these changes, the neighbourhood became a site of foment in the early 2000s. New non-governmental organizations became concerned with the rapid pace of change in the district and partnered with residents and local groups to contest government plans. Wedding Card Street (Lee Tung Street), lined with traditional wedding shops, was redeveloped against the wishes of residents. Nearby a cluster of historic buildings around Stone Nullah Lane became the focus of an urban renewal experiment in which a revitalized tenement building would house both the original residents and new tenants paying markedly

higher rents. Had the market been in a different neighbourhood it may not have been subject to the same level of interest.

The development of a new discourse celebrating community-based heritage pressured the government and the URA to amend the plans for the market. The Wan Chai Heritage Task Force (2004), an alliance composed of architectural organizations and other interested parties conducted planning and engagement exercises to develop other options. According to the URA, various constraints, including contractual obligations, the technical and structural feasibility of conservation, cost-benefit concerns, and the organization's mandate, prevented the wholesale *in situ* preservation of the market. However, a compromise was in store. The new plans reflected an agreement based on the core elements of conservation and involved retaining elements of the structure, including the exterior façade and the main interior architectural elements, including the floors. The residential tower, rather than replacing the building, would be built on top of it, supported by piles installed away from the main façade. A revised Master Layout Plan reflecting the changes was approved in 2008. A government report trumpeted the plan as an innovative product of sensitive planning and creative thinking: "The proposed scheme presents an innovative approach to balance development rights, contractual obligations, community aspirations, heritage conservation, technical feasibility and other considerations" (AAB, 2008, p. 4).

Although the approved plans involved the retention of the main architectural elements, they did not include the retention of the market use itself. Vendors were relocated to the new

building nearby. This space is bright and clean, and easily accessible from the street.[39] The old

building would be occupied by new commercial tenants. When I visited in 2010, its facade was

encased in bamboo scaffolding and covered in green mesh. Since then a 39-storey residential

tower has risen above it, and the façade has been restored. Touring the surrounding streets,

taking in completed renewal sites, historic buildings, and street markets which were permitted to

continue operating as part of the negotiated agreement I was struck by the proximity of the old

market to other heritage places, including the Blue House Cluster, Lee Tung Street, temples and

many old tenement buildings, shops and restaurants. The plans changed in part due to this

proximity and a recognition of the extension of the historic character beyond a single building

and across the neighbourhood, strengthened in its ensemble.

8.2 The Central Market

Like its two contemporaries, the Central Market only narrowly avoided demolition.

Unlike these briefly considered examples, the decision to conserve the Central Market was not

based on its proximity to other important sites. Quite the opposite, it is somewhat isolated from

buildings of similar vintage and scale. Furthermore, it will be seen that an otherwise similar

decision to retain the Central Market has little to do with the heritage value of the building and

more to do with image and branding. As such, the case of this market provides a telling example

of the ways in which heritage is made to "stand in" for other concerns. It will further be shown

that activism related to the site is also not principally focused on heritage and is instead oriented

towards applying pressure on the government to enhance the transparency of the planning

process and maintain the public interest.

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[39] This arrangement is similar to the LDC's first true heritage conservation project in the 1980s, in which the Western Market in Sheung Wan was retained and the vendors were relocated to a modern municipal market building nearby.

The current Central Market building is located on the same site as a number of earlier markets serving the Central district and environs. It was constructed in the late 1930s, in the context of continuing, but somewhat muted, racialized city planning premised on the objective of creating a hygienic city. It replaced an earlier Western-style building on the same site, which itself served as a replacement for Hong Kong's first permanent market, the Canton Bazaar, which began in 1842 (Evans, 1972). By the 1930s the intent was to provide a modern and sanitary food shopping facility to serve the diverse needs of residents in surrounding areas. This was accomplished with the creation of a large, landmark facility, using the latest construction technology: reinforced concrete. A location near both the commerce of Central (earlier a European residential district), and the Chinese quarters of Sheung Wan and Tai Ping Shan to the west, and not far from the wealthier areas up the hill, made it well situated to cater to the growing populations in these districts.

A product of the Public Works Department's British architects and designers (following London County Council by-laws), it features Bauhaus-influenced design[40]. The early appearance of this architectural style in Hong Kong, so far from its German origins, may be conjectured but not explained in detail. The Bauhaus design school was founded by Walter Gropius in 1919 in Dessau, Germany. Its students were taught a method in which technology and innovation were expressed in understated, functional designs. Numerous architects and designers that trained at the school left Germany in advance of WWII and worked on projects all over the world. Unfortunately, in this case it is not possible to trace the connections that brought a German-trained (or influenced) architect to Hong Kong via Britain because government architects were

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[40] The influence of Bauhaus design spread around the world in the late 1930s as German-trained architects traveled abroad in advance of WWII.

somewhat anonymous at the time, working under the names of their directors who acted as project managers. The PWD Director for the Central Market, as well as for the Wan Chai Market, was Richard McNeil Henderson (HKIA Journal, n.d., p. 51). More can be said about the building than its architects; the functional Bauhaus design vocabulary is complemented by streamline modern elements, including curved corners. The building's airy interiors and large windows allowed cool air to circulate while window overhangs protected from direct sunlight. Its waterfront location (until later harbour reclamations) and large bays allowed for easy loading and unloading. Inside, purpose-built stalls provided access to water and facilitated management and cleaning. Its 14,000 sq metres of floor space provided ample room for service needs while also ensuring the safety and comfort of shoppers. When the market was opened, the Hong Kong Weekly Press (1939) celebrated its modern features, such as its polished terrazzo tiles, and declared that, "Hong Kong should have every reason to be proud of its latest public building," which was built for a century of service.

Remarkably few accounts of the Market's several decades of operation exist in the media and popular writing. A handful of mentions reveal important associations. In 2011, for instance, a centenary exhibition on the 1911 revolution revealed that Li Ki-tong, a revolutionary who set up a base at Castle Peak Farm, opened a shop at the Central Market where he sold farm products (Ng, 2011d). Additional noteworthy historical facts were revealed by architects who conducted research on the site (HKIA, 2005). From 1896 to 1903 a space at the site of the Central Market was used as a public outdoor cinema for the screening of foreign films. During the Japanese occupation in the 1940s, the newly-constructed Central Market was renamed and signs written in Japanese characters were installed. These remained in place until the 1990s, providing a rare tangible reminder of WWII. In 1967, Hong Kong's Governor, Sir David Trench, declared that

the Central Market offered the widest meat selection of any market in Asia. That the history of the market is not well-recorded beyond these tidbits speaks to its unremarkable taken-for-grantedness. For the most part, like other markets in the city and abroad, it became a place of routine movements and actions: of browsing, exchanging pleasantries and technicalities with vendors (How are you today? Which is freshest? How much are these? That is too expensive!). As high-rise commercial towers grew up around it, the market remained with only minor alterations, including a toilet block, a rooftop addition and, in 1994, a link to the commuter escalator.

Due to a location which lived up to its name, the Central Market was, and continues to be, a space of passage in addition to a destination in its own right. Before the construction of the escalator link pedestrians could pass by the market along the surrounding streets, including Queen's Road West, a major thoroughfare. They could also pass through the market, although this would not result in any time savings. One interviewee recalled frequently walking through the market on his way to a job in a bookstore on the other side. His impressions of these passages were of a routinized experience, unremarkable in its normalcy. Although a somewhat average market in Hong Kong in the perspective of this man's lived experience, he also pointed, upon further reflection, to the uniqueness of the air and light in the building, and the fact that it is built into a hill, requiring a person entering on foot at the north side of the building to climb stairs in order to exit at street level on the south side. Together, these characteristics gave the building a "human feeling" (personal interview, 17 May, 2010).

The escalator was the one part of the building that remained in continuous use and which thrived after the market ceased to operate. The link runs along the upper section of the west side of the building, making possible an above-grade pedestrian link all the way to the IFC mall and

ferry terminals in one direction, and Conduit Road at the upper reaches of the Central-Mid-levels

escalators in the other. During my stay in Hong Kong the link was lively throughout the day and

into the evening with pedestrians, including office workers, tourists, and local residents passing

through, but not lingering. It is lined with shops on one side, all of which appeared to be

independently-owned small businesses. While the link itself bustled with pedestrians every time

I visited it, I noticed that several shops had relocated or planned to do so soon in advance of the

coming revitalization.

It was described to me by a community activist as "the last hole" in Central, one of the

rare places where you can still see sky unobstructed by high rises (personal interview, 3 May,

2010). The impact of the surrounding towers is significant given the design of the building. An

informant at the URA indicated that the natural ventilation that the building was designed to

provide was rendered null over the years by its neighbours (personal interview, May 17, 2010).

Furthermore, the open harbour water, originally at the building's doorstep, was now blocks away

as a result of infill. In 2003, with a dwindling number of vendors, the market closed its doors.

Changing demographics related to the gentrification of nearby residential quarters, the growth in

popularity of Western-style supermarkets, and, ironically, concern over hygiene, had conspired

against it. Furthermore, a transition to commercial land use in Central meant fewer residents in

the immediate neighbourhood[41]. Like the West Wing of the Central Government Offices

Complex, the Central Market was placed on the land sales list in 2005 and earmarked for a Grade

A office space development. As a very large plot of land near the heart of Central, the market is

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[41] Nearby street markets on the slopes of Central, closer to densely populated residential areas, continued to thrive under threat of renewal.

an extremely desirable property, the "jewel in the crown" among the government sites for sale, and was expected to fetch approximately 5.36 billion HKD (Sito et al., 2005).

The redevelopment plan would require rezoning the site and thus the sale was not possible before February 2006. Nonetheless, commentators began to think about bringing attention to its historical and architectural significance in the hopes that it might be retained. The Hong Kong Institute of Architects hosted the creation of the Central Market Concern Group which compiled historical architectural information in a report (HKIA, 2005). Although brief, the report introduces several important points about the building's architecture and history. It was submitted to the Planning and Lands Bureau, along with evidence from a survey suggesting that a majority of members of the public wished to see the Market conserved in some fashion (HKIA, 2005). Such efforts had little impact; nevertheless, a shift in direction lay in store.

8.3 "Breathing Space" in Central

When the Conserving Central plan was announced in 2009, the Market was among the eight publicly owned sites on the list of buildings that would be revitalized. In the context of the heady pressure placed on the government after the protests at the Star Ferry Pier and Queen's Piers, the decision to sell the market was reversed. According to interview informants, a major figure behind the Conserving Central plan was Carrie Lam, who envisioned the creation of a cluster (somewhat spread out) of revitalized historic buildings in Central, similar to that which had formed through a less formal process in Wan Chai (personal interview, 7 June, 2010). This building in particular, due to its visibility and size, stood out on the list as a major undertaking and an advisory and consultation process for its adaptive reuse was quickly developed. The market also stood out due to the foregone potential to generate revenue; it was included in the scheme in spite of pressure to the contrary from the powerful Treasury and Lands Department.

Before any consultation took place, the site was rebranded. The market would be re-gifted to the Hong Kong people not as a market but as the Central Oasis. The justification presented for the creation of the Central Oasis included environmental objectives, separate from but complementary to the usual cultural, architectural and historical explanations tied to heritage projects. The announcement was made in the 2009 policy address of the Chief Executive:

> We will remove the Central Market from the Application List and hand it over to the Urban Renewal Authority for conservation and revitalisation. This will improve the air quality in the district and provide an additional leisure place rarely found in this busy area. The revitalised market will become an "urban oasis" for white collar workers in the daytime and a new hang-out for locals and tourists in the evenings and on the weekends. (HKSAR 2009, p. 23)

While the details had yet to be worked out, the Oasis would include food and beverage outlets, sitting areas, as well as bookstores and other spaces blurring the boundaries between leisure and consumption.

8.4 The "Central Oasis" Brand

A hastily developed website hinted at what was in store for the structure (www.centraloasis.org.hk). On a background of multiple shades of green, imagery includes an enormous tree under which a silhouetted couple embrace, a child swings and other people sit on benches. Birds soar overhead, stars twinkle in the distance and a cascade of sunlight brightens the scene. These images were replicated on a plastic sheet wrapped around the entire building in March, 2010. In order to affix the wrap, screws were drilled into the concrete walls of the building. This was justified as a "reversible" treatment that covers up stains caused by car exhaust and missing tiles. At this stage none of the details of the design had been decided; the brand was meant to express the future vision for the site, a signifier simultaneously open and

limiting. A central feature of the Central Oasis brand is the positive environmental impact of the reversal of an earlier decision to allow the construction of another tower in Central.

Heritage conservation has recently been practically and discursively linked to the advancement of environmental causes in North America and Europe. There is a growing interest in quantifying the embodied energy of old and new buildings (Jackson, 2004). While older structures may not be energy efficient, heritage advocates and environmentalists argue that adaptive reuse and energy upgrades are more sustainable options than new construction. Carl Elefante's (2007) phrase "The greenest building is the one that is already built" has become a common refrain. While the environmental justifications for conservation are based in science, they may serve to bolster a more generalized interest in architectural, emotional or historical dimensions of heritage. In Hong Kong the situation is a bit different in two ways. First, the Central Market is presented primarily as a civic environmental project. The environmental cause is not bolstering heritage; instead, heritage is a convenient addition to the main objective. Second, the environmental benefits relate less to the building itself than its urban context. The focus is on improving air quality and circulation. By reserving air space and introducing greenery to the building, the government hopes to improve air quality and alleviate the effects of an increasingly uncomfortable and unhealthy urban micro-climate. The actual impact of a single project is minimal but decision-makers are wagering that its symbolic effect is striking.

Various sources have contributed to the worsening of Hong Kong's air quality, as measured in concentrations of toxic pollutants, over the last decade (Leverett et al, 2007) [42]. The rapid expansion of industry in the Pearl River Delta since the early 1980s and poorly enforced or

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[42] The situation is similar but acutely more serious in some cities in the interior of the Mainland. Areas with the highest numbers of foreign residents, particularly Beijing, are most frequently cited in the media.

absent emissions standards over which Hong Kong has little control are a significant factor.

Within the territory, aging commercial and transit vehicles, many of which run on diesel, emit

high levels of pollutants measured at roadside stations and reported continuously in the media.

The government has been reluctant to introduce new standards to existing contractual

relationships with privately-owned service providers. The densely packed high-rises affect air

circulation leading to the busiest and densest areas, such as Nathan Road in Kowloon, Central

and Causeway Bay, which have the poorest air quality. The problem is so localized that moving

away from a street where buses travel can result in a noticeable improvement.

In recent years it has become difficult for the government to continue to postpone policy

changes affecting air quality. In March 2010, shortly before I arrived for an extended field work

visit, Hong Kong experienced its worst period of prolonged poor air quality on record, with local

pollution compounded by particulate matter carried in a dust plume from the north (Chow,

2010). The impacts of such events, in the context of the worsening long term trends, are wide

reaching. A survey by the NGO Civic Exchange (2010) found that a significant number of

university graduates consider emigrating as a result of air pollution. Earlier research by Ley and

Kobayashi (2005) also revealed environmental quality as an important factor considered by

trans-migrants. A crisis appeared imminent when the media and environmental groups began to

talk about how pollution was affecting Hong Kong's economic competitiveness, and more

specifically the ability for firms to attract and retain "foreign talent". In the 2005-6 Policy

Address Tsang had already made the connection between environment and economy, stating "As

Asia's World City, Hong Kong cannot tolerate foul air and a poor environment," however this

statement was directly contradicted by others made by the Chief Executive (Leverett, Hopkinson,

Loh, & Trumbull, 2007, p. 79). Singapore, a major regional competitor with substantially better

air quality, was viewed as far more favourable in this regard. Newspapers began running stories of expat families relocating to enclaves on Lantau Island and elsewhere specifically to avoid exposure to pollution. Hong Kongers became more vocal critics of environmental policies than ever before.

Much of the discussion around the environmental impact of conserving the Central Market has referenced the circulation of air rather than its quality. In contrast to the causes of pollution, which may be distant and uncontrollable, air circulation, and related effects on temperature and, indeed, air quality, are determined by the local built environment. In Hong Kong the study of the urban heat island effect in relation to urban planning processes proceeded rapidly in the early 2000s. Following the SARS outbreak in 2003, the study of a possible Air Ventilation Assessment (AVA) system was proposed by Team Clean, a commission led by then Chief Secretary of Administration, Donald Tsang, to improve "environmental hygiene" in the city (Wong, 2009). With concern about the environmental and health impacts of increasing building heights and densities, the AVA was envisaged as a tool for planners to create better and healthier living environments. This led, in 2010, to an Urban Climatic Map (UC-Map) and Standards for Wind Environment Study, created for the Planning Department by researchers at CUHK (CUHK, 2010). The sprawling 512-page report clearly states the importance of translating data analysis into concrete recommendations that are reflected in planning decisions. It revolves around the idea of urban thermal comfort and the basic facts that more Hong Kongers report feeling too hot in the summer than too cool in the winter, and that the urban structure exacerbates feelings of discomfort. Using a series of indicators including building mass, openness, green space, topography, and distance from the water, the UC-Map methodology delineates urban climatic classes that have either net positive or negative effects on thermal

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comfort. It then maps the urban areas of Hong Kong according to these classes to demonstrate areas that require mitigation because they create a warming trend, or that should be maintained because they allow air circulation. The UC-Map clearly shows many of the northern districts of Hong Kong Island and Kowloon in red, indicating the need for mitigation. Although the Central Market site is not specifically referenced in the study, there is clearly a link between the type of thinking motivating the integration of urban climatology in planning procedures and the decision to reserve this site to allow better air circulation, rather than build upon it. The report also draws a clear connection between the quality of the urban environment and urban climatological indicators such as thermal comfort: "There is a need to optimise the planning and design of our city to facilitate more wind penetration through the city fabric, and to attain a higher quality urban living environment with thermal relief and reduction of heat stress, especially in the public realm" (CUHK 2010, p. 23).

The relationship between measurable environmental indicators and a single building project is tenuous at best. However, Edward Ng, the main author of Hong Kong UC-Map study commented that the location of the Central Market is ideal for enabling ventilation in Central. He further noted, however, its effect could be enhanced by linkages to the waterfront and other crowded areas (Wong & Cheung, 2009). Perhaps a more important measure of the impact of the creation of the Central Oasis than temperature, air quality and wind circulation is the perception, both in Hong Kong and abroad, that the government is committed to enhancing the urban environment for public health, if only because the economy, as demonstrated by events in recent memory, depends upon it.

8.5   Revitalising Consensus

If the rebranding of the Central Market was based on decisions made behind closed doors, the execution of the project would be an exercise in consensus-making. The Central Oasis Community Advisory Committee (COCAC) was appointed to assist the URA in the planning stages. Specifically, the COCAC was tasked with defining the scope of public engagement, potential uses and tenants for the revitalized building, overseeing management and operational processes, and the extent of the design and renovation. These tasks would proceed alongside expert studies on the building's structural condition and heritage characteristics. The membership of the COCAC included appointees from the local District Council, representatives of relevant government departments as well as stakeholders from the community and development experts. The committee's first meeting took place in December, 2009 and its tenure was completed, after twelve gatherings, nearly three years later. In response to growing pressure since the late 1990s the Hong Kong government has attempted to render its decision making processes more transparent (Chu, 2010). Representative bodies such as the COCAC are designed to appear highly visible and accessible. The Committee's records are available on the Central Oasis website, the button for each individual bullet represented by a green leaf. However, the fact that the committee was struck in advance is indicative of what several interviewees alluded to as the typical futility of public engagement exercises in which the outcome is decided before the outset.

Supplementing the brand imagery and the positive ecological impact of maintaining the low-rise profile of the building for air circulation and the urban heat island effect, the URA, through the COCAC, attempted to make the planning process a socially sustainable exercise. Efforts included extensive public consultations, a survey of 6000 residents and visitors, design charrettes and public workshops. The survey findings revealed an overwhelming desire for the

revitalized building to include green space and local flavour, not expensive luxury shops. While the consultation process was in progress, the URA introduced temporary changes inside the accessible interior spaces of the structure. To begin to encourage people to think of the market as a space of leisure and relaxation rather than of passage and movement, "beautification works," including the introduction of greenery and seating, were undertaken in the Central Escalator Link (LegCo, 2010). This space was then used for events, including a coffee and tea brewing competition, and exhibitions of student work from design and art programmes at local universities.

An aspect of the materiality of the Central Market that was not given much attention until the COCAC process began is that the building is an early example of reinforced concrete construction. A member of COCAC that I interviewed explained that this is significant because early large scale concrete structures required a range of technologies that were new in Hong Kong at the time. The committee researched the processes through which the load bearing capacities were calculated and translated into design. In January, 2011, the COCAC organized the "International forum on Conservation and Adaptive Reuse of Reinforced Concrete Buildings in Hong Kong." This event, featuring international keynote speakers from the Association for Preservation Technology, attracted 250 attendees, including professionals, heritage experts and members of the public. In his welcome address, Barry Cheung, the Chairman of the URA, explained the reason for holding the event (URA). He noted that most of Hong Kong's recognized built heritage is made of other materials, such as brick, stone or wood. Concrete structures were built for everyday use and most were expected to have a lifespan of not more than half a century. As more and more modern concrete buildings in Hong Kong come of age

and are recognized as heritage structures, the need to develop applicable conservation standards and methods becomes more acute.

The culmination of the COCAC consultation process was the selection of a private sector partner that would oversee the revitalization of the Central Market, and its management and operation, during the remainder of the period of the URA's lease of the property from the Hong Kong government. A design competition yielded four finalists announced on April 1st, 2011. All four companies presented plans that responded to public desires for the uses included in the building, such as open space, inexpensive and independent retail and food outlets, and leisure facilities. They differed, however, in their visions of the extent to which the building should be modified. Barry Ho Architecture and AGC's proposals envisioned bold changes to the structure; the former would remove most of the interior, while the latter would build an additional storey to house a swimming pool. FTP Farrells, the only overseas company among the finalists, proposed a more conservative plan which included the reinstatement of the market on one level, while the proposal from Aedas emphasized the Bauhaus architectural elements and enhanced connectivity to the Central Escalator. The terms emphasized that the winning design would still be a work in progress and that that the work with the public and community stakeholders would continue. AGC's proposal, Urban Floating Oasis, was selected, retaining the theme of Oasis that had been decided behind closed doors, but adding the whimsical reference to water and swimming that would be introduced to the building.

8.6 Unbranding the Central Market

A group of urban activists challenged the Central Oasis place brand by interrupting some of the assumptions guiding the URA's treatment of the site. They were motivated by a concern about the intricate meanings of the heritage values of the building but especially about the

openness of the planning process. According to one planning commentator, interviewed on the RTHK programme *Backchat*, the fact that the Central Oasis brand was unveiled without any public consultation indicated a lack of care on the part of the government and URA (RTHK, 2011). He and other critics were also quick to point out the URA's poor record of heritage conservation projects, which include buildings transformed beyond recognition for elite and commercial uses. Members of the Central and Western Concern group worried "that since the URA is operating with a very commercial mindset, it's very convenient for it just to erase everything inside and to turn it into a shopping mall… Another shopping mall" (personal interview, 3 May, 2010).

A group of architects and heritage experts was given a tour of the interior of the Central Market shortly after it was removed from the land sales list. Inside they found an untouched seventy year old market, "a forgotten place." Although it had only been closed for a few years, these visitors now regarded it in a new light. It was the details that interested them the most, including the curving staircases, the concrete market stalls, and it is these features they were concerned about losing (personal interview, 3 May, 2010). These groups submitted an application to the Town Planning Board to rezone the building with controls that better reflect its heritage status. Initially they had hoped the space would be returned to its original use; since it was designed as a market, they emphasized that this is where its functional importance lies. In their view, the market is an unearthed "time capsule", an unusual resource in Hong Kong, and its treatment requires care. The metaphor of the time capsule was also evoked by an informant at the URA, but with pejorative connotations quite opposite from those intended by the other interviewee. Precious it may be, or in need of updating, however, given the Central Market's decline leading up to its closure in 2003, the critics recognize that a market use is no longer

viable. By exerting pressure in the media and through the official channels of the planning process, their ultimate goal was not to preserve the market in its entirety, but to limit its commercialization and maintain some of its historical elements (Nip, 2011).

The statutory planning process in Hong Kong requires plans (Outline Zoning Plans or OZPs) for new areas and changes to existing OZPs to be approved by a Town Planning Board, composed of a handful of government appointees and a larger number of professional and community representatives. Most of the Board's hearings, open to public comment, relate to work initiated by the government through the Planning Department. Since 2005 the Town Planning Ordinance has also allowed applications by interested individuals and community groups for amendments to OZPs. An earlier amendment that was put forward by the government to rezone the site to allow the revitalization was approved (TPB, 2010, p. 131). The new zoning identified the Central Market as a heritage asset and permitted a range of options for adaptive reuse, including the possibility of commercial uses, and alterations. The community groups were unsatisfied with this direction because they felt that it would not allow adequate public consultation and oversight on future steps in the plan. They applied to the Board to modify the zoning to "OU" annotated "Historical Building Preserved for Cultural, Community and Commercial Uses". This zoning would have required further decisions regarding the extent of alteration and specific uses inside the revitalized building to be approved by the Board, steps which would not be required in the broad categorization of the extant OZP originating from within the government.

One of the experts engaged by the planning activists to assist with the zoning amendment was a Hong Kong-based retail development consultant named Dick Groves. Based in Hong Kong, he has worked globally on projects involving the adaptive reuse of historic buildings. His

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speech before the Town Planning Board laid out the process that he hoped to see for the market.

In his view, one of the most important considerations is ensuring that the function of such a site

is appropriate for its physical form and geographical context. He went on to give examples of

markets that had successfully been transformed after their intended use was no longer viable. His

advice for the Board encouraged a perspective oscillating between the global and local:

> If you look at Central Market and you've seen projects around the world, you
> think there's a great opportunity here for Hong Kong to create a landmark project,
> and you think of very famous projects, landmark projects like Faneuil Hall in
> Boston, an extremely famous project that took things that were four hundred years
> old and converted them to F and B and retail use… There are a lot of projects out
> there that point the way for what Central Market could become. Something that
> actually stands for Hong Kong, something that gives credence to this notion that
> Hong Kong is a world city. (observed at Town Planning Board hearing, May 7,
> 2010)

The fact that a voice representing the pressure groups employed this language to argue in support

of a more prudent process and less bold architectural interventions to the fabric of the building is

striking. There was a palpable feeling that, in the hands of the URA, the market would be

transformed beyond recognition into a space of luxury consumption. By evoking global

precedents in which historic structures were given new uses without the loss of their original

features – uses that are accessible to a wide range of visitors – Groves attempted to present the

OZP amendment in a sympathetic light for the Board and the URA.

Ultimately the Town Planning Board declined the proposed amendment because it was

deemed to "impose inappropriate restriction on the use of the site as well as undue constraints

over minor addition and alteration works" (TPB, 2010). After a hold up related to a court

challenge pertaining to the Cheung Kong Centre parkade (Lai, 2011a), the Town Planning Board

approved a "minor relaxation" in height restrictions to allow the construction of a glass addition

atop the market (Lee, 2013). The addition would not contain a swimming pool, as originally

envisaged, but was nonetheless maintained in the AGC design. Under normal circumstances a modification to the height of a building with clear restrictions requires two public consultations, but a "minor" change only requires one. With final approvals in place, work on the first phase of the project has commenced.

8.7   Conclusion

The distinctive ring tone of Skype kicked in as I reshuffled my notes and readied myself for a first time experience. I had agreed to give a guest lecture to an urban geography class at UBC. I was across the country in Halifax. I had had meetings using Skype, and used this technology many times to connect with friends and family in distant places, but this was to be my first teaching experience. I had sent powerpoint slides to the instructor in advance, and he displayed them on the screen in front of about 40 students. I talked about my research but, constrained by time, I sketched the conceptual framework fairly briefly, followed by the empirical findings presented in one chapter of the dissertation. The talk went smoothly and there was time at the end for discussion. A few straightforward questions allowed me to enter into more detail in areas that the students flagged as interesting. A final question came from a woman in the centre of the front row who, as I could see in the view of the class generated by a small camera, had been listening intently. Her question was very different than the others. She began by stating that she had experienced a very strong and emotional reaction to my presentation. She continued by explaining that she had been involved in one of the protests I had mentioned and that its meaning, for her, was very different than my reading of it. From her perspective, the Queen's Pier protest was not about local identity or heritage, but rather a critique of the growing power of the Beijing government in Hong Kong. She also presented a different interpretation of some information about the travels of the Secretary for Development that I had presented. I had

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suggested that Lam's travels to 20 different countries to learn about heritage conservation efforts during her term as Secretary for Development illustrated global learning on heritage policy and the effort to translate ideas from other places into directions suitable for Hong Kong. The student said instead that the itinerary suggested the Lam was lost, searching in vain for something to hold on to. I managed to respond to the questions but was left with the feeling that perhaps I had missed some very important pieces of the puzzle that young people, not experts, might have been able to help me identify.

After overcoming this initial sense of surprise, and considering what I could have done differently had I known that there would be someone with personal experience related to my research sitting in the front row, I came to understand that the student's comments were not incommensurable with the story I had told. Essentially the suggestion was that heritage was not the primary concern of either government agents, such as Carrie Lam, or activists, such as those that had gathered on the waterfront to voice their discontent about the loss of the piers. In both instances heritage presented itself as a convenient device to gather interest and attention around other concerns. The foregoing discussion of the revitalization of the Central Market appears to support this idea. The removal of the site from the land sales list and inclusion in the "Conserving Central" scheme is a strategic move in the direction of integrating measures of urban climate and air quality with development decisions. It is also, of course, a heritage conservation project, but it is one with a hidden politicized history of concern about the effect of steadily worsening urban environmental indicators on Hong Kong's competitiveness. The loss of the promise of over five billion dollars is a hard pill to swallow, but it is sweetened with the brightening of Hong Kong's beacon for mobile capital through clearer air. Furthermore, by sacrificing one of its own buildings, the government took a first step down a path that will likely

introduce new restrictions to development, and unsettle cozy relationships with developers, in years to come, all in the name of sustaining growth. Likewise, the community groups who had been so keen on the material history of the market were content to settle for the continued application of pressure in the planning process. Although they would have liked to see the function of the market continue to fit its form, they were more interested in countering the hidden influence that would see a familiar, everyday space succumb to rarefied commerce. Heritage stands in and for other concerns, as it did for the student at the pier, and it is present to a greater extent depending on one's position and interpretation.

Chapter 9: Walking Against the Grain: Encounters with Living Heritage on Foot

By this point the reader may have the sense of having gained knowledge of aspects of Hong Kong that he or she did not previously hold or, to the contrary, may have had his or her understanding of the city and the issues it is currently facing reinforced. A number of threads have appeared repeatedly in the weave, especially those concerned with connections between Hong Kong and elsewhere, the relationship between Hong Kong residents and their city, and various forms of mobility within the territory and outside of it that inform the way heritage is framed by policy actors, experts and the general public. Perhaps the reader will have noticed elements of the research in Hong Kong that have become recurrent motifs; in this vein we may include not only ideas and language, but also more embodied acts: the practices and logistics of the research. Here, I would like to emphasize an element that the reader may now realize has appeared in every chapter, but appears so mundane, such an everyday occurrence, so as to not warrant a second thought. This is the act of walking.

The thesis began with a visitor to the city entering it for the first time on foot, and presented a perspective on its rhythms, and an encounter with the principal paradox of this research, occasioned by this experience. It later recalled a hiking excursion to Lion's Rock with a group of young people eager to talk about heritage debates that receive almost daily coverage in the media. It continued with mentions, at different moments, of insurgent walking tours that serve to introduce residents and visitors to neighbourhoods with stories about architecture, businesses, traditions and social networks. It included a description of a walking excursion with an interview participant on the hills just south of the Central district. It also highlighted the

importance of walking as a feature of political contestation in Hong Kong. Here, walking takes the form of a march, a demonstration, a movement through space that may be routinized – delineated at a certain time and place, contained to certain streets, heavily scrutinized by police – but may nonetheless open new forms of political engagement and city-making.

This chapter picks up these threads and considers their significance within the broader thematic of heritage in Hong Kong. Specifically, it considers the heritage trail as a space where ideas and feelings about the city, framed through the rubrics of memory and heritage, are developed and reworked. A trail, as a format for engaging with heritage, may at first glance appear inconsequential; however, it has implications for visitor experiences, interpretation and broader understandings of significance. In contrast to the models of traditional museums and heritage sites, the trail allows, perhaps even encourages, the visitor to engage in the exhibition of heritage instead of merely observing it. It encourages the visitor to divert from scripted interpretations and actively participate in meaning-making. It does so because it requires an engagement of the viewer and his or her surroundings that is active, rather than passive. Because life continues on the trail, which in most cases is not set apart from the realm of the "real," the visitor is forced or allowed to connect the trail to its city surroundings in ways that are not as easily achieved in a museum or conventional heritage site. In other words, the heritage trail is more than a route linking historically significant buildings and sites; it is a space where the boundaries between display and life blur, enabling the practice of everyday heritage and an engagement with emergent social values of living heritage. A handful of scholars have written about heritage trails, focusing on the politics of meaning inherent in their development (Crang, 1994; Jacobs, 1997; Cheung, 1999). Here I attempt to build upon their insights by focusing on the experiential aspects of walking on heritage trails in Hong Kong.

Lest it appear as though the heritage trail is presented as a panacea for the common ills of heritage, such as elitism and commodification, it is acknowledged that the form has limitations. It is proscriptive; it provides a mapped route and a suggested itinerary of places to visit. It suggests a temporal horizon for completion based on the normal experience of a visitor reading plaques, entering structures that provide public access, and perhaps even taking breaks. It tells visitors how they may arrive at the starting place via public transport, where they may find public toilets, and even that they should start before a certain hour so as to be sure to complete their excursion in daylight. As a mapped experience, it may also omit information about various other kinds of attractions and amenities, such as shops, restaurants and contemporary attractions. The heritage trail thus limits the visitor experience to a set of activities that unfold in a set time-space frame. However, since trails unfold not only at cultural sites, but also between them, they create possibilities for engaging the city in unanticipated ways. Fundamentally, the heritage trail encourages the visitor to understand the ways in which heritage places are dynamic and embedded in city space. There are heritage places not included in trails that encourage the same types of engagements. These are buildings, streets, and districts of living heritage which, as discussed in Chapter 3, present heritage not as something past, but rather as something continually in the making in the present. The argument here is that heritage trails, in particular, encourage the active participation of the visitor in the process of re-making heritage in the present. This idea lies at the heart of much of recent critical heritage scholarship that, in different ways, attempts to undermine the inherited authorial voice, Eurocentric in origin, through which heritage is monumentalized and set apart from lived experience (Smith, 2006).

The chapter will proceed as follows. I begin by developing a perspective on the relationship between walking and heritage, presenting a tentative theorization of the socio-spatial

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politics of the heritage trail. Next, I turn to an examination of Hong Kong's heritage tours and trails, beginning with a discussion of the unique character of walking in the city which highlights why this everyday activity is profoundly political in this context. I go on to note differences between government-organized trails that began to appear in the 1990s, and more recent trails created by cultural and heritage NGOs. While the former are tourism-oriented and are intended to be depoliticized, I note that the newer trails help visitors learn about the urban environment and inspire civic engagement. These trails, which have appeared in different urban neighbourhoods across Hong Kong, have become a popular and accessible forum for engaging local communities in urban issues, in particular the effects of redevelopment on older neighbourhoods and social networks embedded in place. I suggest that, considered as a format for presenting heritage in the city, all trails involve participants in a very different type of walking than is the usual practice in Hong Kong. Finally, the chapter concludes with brief reflections on my experiences during excursions on two trails. The first is a government trail in Fan Ling that I visited during the Mid-Autumn Festival. The second is a community-based trail created by Our Bus Terminal, a group of activists seeking to prevent the relocation of the Tsim Sha Tsui ferry bus terminal. Although the principal focus here is on urban walking, the inclusion of the trail in Fan Ling, in the New Territories, is no accident. As revealed by the movement of activists networks into Hong Kong's urban hinterland to work with villagers opposing the Express Rail Link, the rural – its landscapes, history, and politics – are intimately tied up with what goes on in Hong Kong's urban core.

9.1 Heritage on Foot

New walking studies, with the mobilities research agenda as a backdrop, have developed a case for paying more attention to the seemingly mundane act of moving about on foot

(Macaulay, 2000; Middleton, 2009; Edensor, 2010). Walking is, of course, a form of mobility. Interest in it here comes about through sensitivity to everyday experiences that at first glance appear somewhat removed from the time-space economies of larger scale movements of policy and policy agents considered in earlier chapters. Cues are taken from recent research that has sought to fill out the form and content of this everyday activity by considering why and how people walk, and what kinds of dispositions walking provokes (Wylie, 2005; Middleton, 2011). The social, political and cultural importance of walking has various orientations. Walking, previously a taken-for-granted necessity of life, is not as easy to do as it once was. Researchers working on the technical aspects of how people move around have developed a health planning focus, asking how social and individual outcomes are affected by the ability to walk (Frank, Engelke, & Schmid, 2003). The primary mode of transportation for people in many parts of the world has recently become the automobile, and in many places in the West, the use of cars has become so engrained as to become the locus of a culture of automobility (Urry, 2004). On a different tack, urban and literary scholars have been more interested in walking as means to aesthetic production and have written on the dream worlds of our own minds that may be reached through walking (Benjamin, 1999). Nineteenth century French philosophers and poets presented the quintessential modern urban dweller as a *flaneur* who finds freedom and excitement in his -- for such experiences were only available to men in this era -- ambulatory explorations. This is an artistic figure; beyond the aesthetic, does there exist a politics? A point of engagement on this score is de Certeau (1984), for whom walking in the city is form of resistance, a tactic that undermines the coherence of regulated urbanism. While some have cautioned against romanticizing walking as a political act, others have emphasized the

multiplicity of ways of walking (Morris, 2004), which evidently must include both banal and more productive forms.

When walking is productive it may inspire affective entanglements of body, mind and environment that shape our relationships with the places we call home. Rebecca Solnit (2001, p. 176) has written that "walking is only the beginning of citizenship but through it the citizen knows his or her city and fellow citizens and truly inhabits the city rather than a small part thereof." It is in view of such a position, of people inhabiting their city, and not merely maximizing a time-space budget, that I consider how people might walk against the grain of the capitalist metropolis. Considering a politics of walking doesn't only tell us about the act itself, but it also generates questions about urban space: "By understanding the dynamic and democratic dimensions of walking, we can also begin to interrogate and critically contest the opaque and authoritarian features of urban architecture, private property, and public space" (Macaulay, 2000, p. 194). The heritage trail is a space that encourages an exploration of the meanings of the landscape through walking. As such it is a rich ground for developing the relationship between micro-scale mobility and a progressive politics of place.

Considering the experiences of visitors to heritage trails resonates with a burgeoning area of research and writing on affect and heritage. Inspired by an understanding that many visitors to heritage places are motivated by a desire to have emotional experiences, new writing in critical heritage studies traces the embodied reactions of visitors at monuments and sites (Crang & Tolia-Kelly, 2010; Smith, 2011). It highlights both the direct emotive responses to the content of the heritage – its significance and the histories it evokes – as well as the physical experiences of visiting crowded places, walking long distances, interacting with others, among other dimensions of visits to heritage places. Waterton and Watson (2013, p. 555) write,

> Different people will inevitably respond differently to a particular heritage site –
> some may feel pride, connected, pleasure, others exclusion and rejection, and
> others still boredom – but these feelings, their affects, may in part be framed by
> the way that site is conjured and evoked discursively, visually or popularly.
> Bodies moving through interactions with heritage area changed, and some
> (though not all) of the felt affordances generated hold significance.

The present interest in heritage trails resonates with some of these concerns, but it goes beyond

individualized, perhaps atomized affective responses of visitors to consider the political

orientations to which the experiences of walking on heritage trails may contribute.

Heritage trails offer the possibility of challenging authorial interpretations of the material

past by linking heritage with everyday life. Although progressive curatorial practices are

developing new narratives of belonging within museums, and extending beyond their walls

(Munro, 2013), the potential of the existing urban landscape to function like the museum is not

often considered. As theorists and practitioners move away from celebrations of monumental

heritage in part in response to geographical critiques of class, ethnic and gender biases (Duncan

& Duncan, 2004; Jacobs, 1997), the street becomes a space of living heritage and the trail a place

in which to encounter it. Here, the taken-for-granted aesthetic and historic values of heritage

places are denaturalized and revised. As discussed in earlier chapters, living heritage hinges on

continuities between past and present and community participation. It includes intangible forms,

such as traditional practices and ways of life, and is often imbricated with the material objects,

places and landscapes in which life unfolds. This direction has been especially pronounced in

Hong Kong in the past five years. Elite commercial and cultural uses alike are now viewed with

a critical eye. A malaise has emerged around museums, especially, and heritage trails are

presented as an alternative. A heritage consultant I interviewed stated:

> In the past conservation is about monuments, presidential palaces and it's always
> top down. And then when it's turned into a new use, it's always an elite use. Even

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a museum is an elite use. Your museum user is a passive participant with things just set out... But now we are starting to realize that ordinary buildings for ordinary people like what we have in Hong Kong mostly, you know, are more important for conservation as well because they reflect the life of the people and social value. (personal interview, 15 April, 2010)

Here, a museum viewer, suggesting a privileging of vision over the other senses, is positioned in a static space, "with things set out." In contrast, when the space of exhibition is not limited to a display, but instead unfolds in the street, the visitor may become an active participant in the production of its social value and meaning. The heritage trails are not simply a different format for presenting the same historical narratives, but rather offer a way of *doing* heritage that recognizes and even celebrates the slipperiness between present and past, everyday and exhibition. In recognition that the significance of heritage trails in Hong Kong is tied in part to the importance of walking as productive, everyday activity, we begin with a consideration of what it means to walk in this city. It is not the intent to romanticize walking, to imbue it with an innate radicalism. However, the act of walking is important here because it involves intentionality and is productive in various ways[43].

9.2   Walking in Hong Kong

Designing Hong Kong is a Hong Kong non-profit organization that advocates for public involvement in urban planning and for enhancing the built environment. In 2010 it held a series of panel discussions on a range of urban topics at the Fringe Club, an alternative performance space in Central. The issues covered ranged from environmental challenges, such as pollution

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[43] The intent is not to assume universal ambulation, the ability for all visitors to experience heritage trails on foot. Though many people cannot walk due to differing levels of ability, age, feelings of insecurity, and various medical conditions, the same experiences may be available to them through slightly different modes, for instance by using a wheel chair or traveling with assistance.

and water security, to urban design and heritage. One talk focused on a topic of special interest to the founder of the organization, Paul Zimmerman: walking. This area continued to be a priority of the organization over the following years. In 2013 Designing Hong Kong launched a campaign to draw attention to inadequacies in the city's pedestrian infrastructure. The organization created a series of Youtube videos to demonstrate the effects of the inconvenient pedestrian linkages that are ubiquitous in the territory. The videos, which share a similar format, are catchily titled "Lost in Tsim Sha Shui", "Lost in Hang Hau", etc. Zimmerman appears on screen, explaining the location and the destination to which he will walk on foot. The videos focus on intersections where pedestrians are prohibited from crossing the street at grade and are instead forced to walk on over- or underpasses. Zimmerman compares the length of time required to cross the street illegally, often by hopping a guardrail, with the time spent to follow the sanctioned route. In the case of the Salisbury Road crossing in Tsim Sha Tsui crossing illegally took 30 seconds, while following the subway under the road required almost 5 minutes to reach the same destination.

Throughout Hong Kong, the colonial past permeates the present in ways that are both highly visible and indiscernible. The urban landscape is a very concrete manifestation of colonialism and elements within it may reveal the influence of long-past but ever-present forms of governance. Walking infrastructure is one such element. The standardized design of intersections, subways, overpasses, protective guardrails, and numerous other features have colonial origins but are now considered proper to Hong Kong's urban fabric. The content of the Transport Planning and Design Manual (TPDM) which guides the activities of the Transport Department is heavily influenced by technical papers, policy notes and other material from the United Kingdom (Transport Department, 1984). The manual's contents serve a specific purpose.

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The Hong Kong government is responsible for ensuring the rapid movement of large numbers of people seeking to reach innumerable destinations using a variety of transport modes. As such, the territory's transportation planning is oriented towards efficiency (Transport Department, 2008). Seemingly, and perhaps of necessity, the efficient movement of trains, cars and buses is afforded priority over the needs of pedestrians. More so than in any other city, urban transport appears as a problem of logistics with a set of questions: Where do trips originate? Where do they end? What are the volume, speed and direction of the flow of trips? How can congestion be minimized and speed and efficiency be maximized? Scholarly studies of walking in Hong Kong have focused on walkers as an engineering problem (Lam & Cheung, 2000). Middleton (2009) has noted a similar emphasis on efficient walking movements in Great Britain. Research on transportation mobilities at larger scales has suggested that such seemingly neutral questions about logistics are conditioned by a neoliberal politics in which the securitization of movement, and spaces of mobility, is vital for the operation of global markets (Cowen, 2010). Given the logistical importance of the efficiency of movement at various scales to Hong Kong's economy, a similar dynamic may be observed here. While the most immediate evidence of this is the administration's devotion to large scale infrastructure projects, including Chek Lap Kok airport, the rail link to Guangzhou, the Central-Wan Chai by-pass and new P2 collector road on the Hong Kong Island harbourfront, and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macau bridge, it is also in evidence at the pedestrian scale. Pedestrian flows are conditioned by barriers, the timing of transit, signals and infrastructure, housing and employment densities (Lam & Cheung, 2000). The subjects of walking studies are assumed to move principally between home and work along well-worn routes (Lee, Lam & Wong, 2001). There are certain places where Hong Kong people are assumed to walk for pleasure, and the street, in most areas, isn't among them. Trails in country

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parks, pedestrianized shopping streets and indoor shopping centres are the spaces where walking

for leisure and pleasure is meant to occur (Civic Exchange, 2013). Here I suggest that the

heritage trail introduces residents to new relationships with their city that cannot be reduced to

the routinized flows that may be subject to engineering models.

A trio of architects published a book that highlights some of the unique features of

walking in Hong Kong. *Cities Without Ground* (Frampton et al., 2013), begins from the premise

that Hong Kong is a city[44] lacking a tangible and conceptual "ground". On the most literal level,

its mountainous physical topography and harbour waters lack plane surfaces. The only flat land

is reclaimed from the harbour and South China Sea and such areas, created for roads, industry

and transport infrastructure foremost, are generally unfriendly to pedestrians. Hong Kong also

lacks "ground" due to the nature of the extensive pedestrian infrastructures linking living, work

and leisure spaces. The authors highlight the importance of the introduction of the first walkway

providing access to above-ground shops. The success of this innovation, and the fact that

pedestrians were willing to use it, had the effect of increasing leasing rates for above-ground

retail spaces. The street, in many areas, was too polluted and noisy to appeal to the whims of

wanderers. The proliferation of elevated walkways had the effect of redefining public-private

spatial relationships. A review of the book in the Wall Street Journal (Chen, 2013) introduces

this feature as "a quirk of Hong Kong's urban landscape." To view it as such, however, is to

suggest that Hong Kong's spatial form is accidental, or merely a necessary response to land

shortage and density. A critical interpretation would instead underscore the central role of capital

in the process of building the city without ground, and in habituating its residents to movements

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[44] The "cities" in the title is misleading because the book focuses solely on Hong Kong, although other hyper-dense cities may these features and Hong Kong may a harbinger of walking futures.

that do not require solid footing. Recalling from Chapter 4 the thoughts shared by an interviewee activist who grew up in a new town housing estate in the 1980s and 90s and eventually grew wary of the movements from apartment through the shopping centre to work and school and home again through the shopping centre, the structure of the urban form, and especially the ways in which people are meant to experience it on foot, are deeply reflective of landscapes of urban capitalism and consumption.

Huang (2004) deals more explicitly with the politics of walking in Hong Kong in relation to the landscapes of globalization that characterize its urban form. Her book examines depictions of walking in film and fiction narratives based in Hong Kong, as well as Tokyo and Shanghai. The Hong Kong chapters, using Wong Kar-Wai's famous Chungking Express as a case study, highlight what she refers to as a dual compression to which Hong Kong residents are exposed. On the one hand, the global forces of economic globalization have collapsed the time-space distance between Hong Kong and other places. On the other hand, a local compression is manifest in the landscape and affects the everyday lives of people living in the city. Huang writes: "Flaneurs in Hong Kong have been subscribing to the image of their city produced by the official and the multinational consortia as the land of free opportunities. Is their knowledge of Hong Kong a reasonable speculation or an inflated myth?" (p. 8). This phrase is suggestive of the experience of the post-80s generation. Opportunities present themselves in the present, with a view to future realization. Property and consumer culture are part and parcel with success in the city, but the myth begins to lose its sparkle because its promises go unrealized. The flaneur in Hong Kong, seeking a *détournement*, may walk on hiking trails, pedestrianized streets and in shopping malls, but everywhere will confront the realities of a landscape without ground. The

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characteristics of these three spaces for walking are briefly explored before the consideration of heritage trails.

9.3   Walking in the Hills, in the Streets and in the Shopping Malls

Trails snake through the many country parks in Hong Kong's hilly, remote and less populated areas. As hiking trails, they are intended mainly for recreational purposes, although some provide access to heritage sites or pass through or alongside historic villages. Furthermore, in many cases the trails themselves are historic, reflecting mountain passes predating roads or providing connections to colonial military infrastructure or fortifications. One of the best known modern trails in Hong Kong is named after Governor MacLehose. Created in 1972, it winds across the varied landscapes of the New Territories, from the eastern stretches of the Sai Kung area, across the mountains for which Kowloon (*gau lung* – nine dragons) is named, towards Tuen Mun in the west. MacLehose was a frequent visitor to these trails, enjoying the fresh air, exercise and access to flora and fauna they provided. Today, the trail, in addition to year round hikers, is also the location of the yearly Trailwalker race which is a fundraiser for Oxfam. The close proximity of some trails on Hong Kong Island to densely populated areas, literally at the doorstep of the Mid-Levels and the upper reaches of the Hong Kong University campus, has resulted in their popularity among the well-heeled residents and visitors to these areas. But, as Owen and Shaw (2001) note that most visitors and residents rarely venture outside of the built up urban areas of the city. Hiking is an activity that attracts a relatively small number of leisure participants and others who have a strong connection to and knowledge of the landscape.

Back down in the city, Sai Yeung Choi Street in Mong Kok became so popular and crowded that the government closed the street to motorized traffic from noon until late at night[45]. Throughout the afternoon and into the evening it noisily overflows with shoppers from the New Territories and a substantial number from the Mainland. Many young people that live in the New Territories rarely visit Hong Kong Island due to the comparatively higher price of riding the MTR across the harbour. Instead, they come here to eat street food, seek entertainment, shop in the large range of malls and street markets, and socialize in cafes and restaurants. But even in the pedestrianized street, one has the feeling that boundaries are transgressed. Dancers and musicians perform for the crowds; promotions for businesses are set up in the middle of the pavement; competing sounds overwhelm the senses. In the area's side streets, small shops sell the latest snack food and drink trends, many imported from cutting-edge Taiwan. Pedestrians overflow from these sidewalks, competing with cars, permitted here, that slowly inch along back to Nathan Road. Many pedestrians end up on the wrong side of the guard rail, and still compete for limited space. Walking in this environment is transgressive because one has the sense that the shopping mall is where this activity should unfold.

Most of the large shopping centres are connected to MTR stations and other transit facilities. The MTR is a quasi-government corporation that participates in the development of airspace above its stations. From a logistical point of view, it makes sense to raise funds to build and maintain a high-tech, state of the art, efficient transit network in this manner. This dense city could make do with nothing less. But the consequences of including private shopping spaces in the everyday spaces that people traverse in order to move from their homes to work and school

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[45] More recently, due to noise complaints from residents of the area, the government has decided to cut back the hours that the street is closed to car traffic. Remarkably, the noises of traffic are preferable to the sounds of the pedestrian activity and lively street life for area residents (Wei & Kao, 2014).

has been significant and unaccounted for. To give one example: most MTR stations allow the option of exiting directly into a mall. Many malls provide access to office towers, hotels and apartment complexes along elevated footpaths. Perhaps the best example of the ubiquity of shopping spaces is to be found at the West Kowloon station. Set apart from the nearest residential neighbouhoods of Jordan, TST and Yau Ma Tei, the station and the land uses which sit atop it have the appearance of a layered cake topped with candles. There is the train station, the "Elements" mall above it, the premium luxury shops up one level, topped by restaurants and a park on the roof. Rising above the park and outdoor dining spaces are a set of towers which include residences, the ICC tower (now the tallest building in the territory), and two of the most highly-regarded luxury hotels in Hong Kong: the Ritz-Carlton and the W Hotel. For those living and working in these buildings, and for those just visiting or passing through, there is no "outside" to the commercial spaces of Elements. The park atop of the cake offers a large landscaped area. Upon closer inspection, signs forbidding access dot the lawns, and security guards keep a close eye open for any missteps. Leisure takes place in the mall below.

There are a number of different ways to walk in Hong Kong, as in any city, but by far the most common are the patterns of necessity of working people and students. One of my interview respondents stated: "the ways of commuting are determined by the government or their New Town urban planning, so now people so get used to going through the Metro, going to trains, and then work until late evening and then come back to the bedroom society" (personal interview, 26 May, 2010). It is important to reiterate that planning regimes were established by the colonial government and standards for pedestrian infrastructure were transferred directly from the UK. These plans orchestrate the movements of the seven million residents, 90 per cent of whom do not own a private automobile and hence rely on a combination of walking and transit for most

trips. An urban activist I spoke with suggested that Hong Kong would score well on walking indexes, with "toilet paper for sale within three minutes of everybody's bedroom available 24 hours a day almost. Getting into an MTR and getting to work… the transport system works extremely well. It's all available right there…" In such an environment, the casual walks of the flaneur are not possible: "for the wandering about, we give up" (personal interview, 26 May, 2010). Another interviewee went so far as to suggest that Hong Kong people would sooner walk for pleasure in other places: "they are so bored by their way of living so they escape from Hong Kong and go to Japan and Taiwan to enjoy city life there, to enjoy small stores, eating outdoors, that kind of life activities. I mean, they don't have time to look at their own place" (personal interview, 21 October, 2010).

9.4   Heritage Trails in Hong Kong

In spite of obstacles to wandering, walking the city became an integral part of my research methodology, especially so when I began to think about the significance of the heritage trails and tours across the city. I became aware of heritage trails early during my stay. They may be categorized broadly as products of either state or civil society. Government-sponsored trails in Central Hong Kong and in New Territories are well-established and showcase ancient Chinese architecture, colonial buildings and sites marking the historical entanglements of East and West. The government trails share in common a celebration of officially recognized heritage. Recently a number of community organizations have developed walking excursions which aim to introduce residents and visitors to areas that they might not otherwise visit, including markets, working class residential districts, and areas of traditional shops. While the community-organized excursions are, for the most part, more overtly political than the government-sponsored trails, and there are also differences between self-guided and guided tours, I will focus

here less on these differences than the exhibitionary spaces that are encountered by people experiencing the city on foot. I begin by examining trails created by the government, primarily for tourist purposes.

9.5   Government-Sponsored Heritage Trails

Hong Kong's first heritage trails were created in the New Territories in the mid-1990s. They were intended to promote tourism in villages where graded historical buildings and monuments are located. Cultural attractions would widen the scope of Hong Kong's tourism products and would inject money into the local economy. As the trails are located in less densely populated areas, with access to natural surroundings, they were also seen to provide a counterpoint to the urban experiences typical of visits to Hong Kong. Trails at Ping Shan, Yuen Long, and Leung Yeuk Tau, Fan Ling are the showcases of traditional Chinese heritage in Hong Kong's rural hinterland. Despite the promise of funds for the restoration and maintenance, and continued use of village buildings, there were differing views of the trail plans amongst local residents from the outset. Some were wary of relinquishing control of their sacred spaces to the government for the purpose of restoration because they feared this would upset or anger their ancestors, who departed with good faith that these places would be passed down to future generations (Kwok, 1992). This view was especially held among village elders; younger residents took a more pragmatic approach, recognizing the potential benefits of restoration and the increased numbers of visitors that the trails would attract. Nevertheless, in some cases conflict was serious and prolonged. Cheung (1999) provides an ethnographic study of competing interpretations of the meaning of the trail at Ping Shan. In this case, villagers objected to the removal of graves from a burial ground to add additional space to a landfill. Their removal, they argued, would damage the settlement's *feng shui*. The trail was leverage in the dispute; the

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villagers closed access to it in order to draw attention to the issue. An offer of compensation was rejected by the villagers, who instead came back with a counter-offer. They proposed that an appropriate exchange would trade like with like; the negative effects of the removal of the graves could be balanced with the demolition of a colonial-era police station which, in the *feng shui* reading, had long-standing negative effects on the village (Lee, 1995).[46] Over time, Cheung (2003, p. 18) writes,

> … whenever problems arose in the village, their misfortune was attributed to the destruction of Ping Shan's *fung-shui* by the police station. As part of the village's history passed down from generation to generation, the people likened the situation to a large stone crushing a crab to death (the police station being the large stone, signifying the colonial authority, and the lifestyles of the villagers being the crab).

This episode indicates a certain level of ambiguity in the villagers' relationship with the trail. The trail ultimately did not have deleterious effects on the area and the more serious concern was that the burial ground would be unsettled to make space for additional waste.

The first urban heritage trail was created in the Central and Western District beginning in 1997. Tourism was a central focus here as well, but the central role played by the Home Affairs Bureau signals the importance for locals as well as visitors. Furthermore, the timing suggests a relationship with the handover: the transition sparked movements to articulate local cultural identity as a part of the Chinese nation, but simultaneously not to deny Hong Kong's cosmopolitan singularity (Mathews et al., 2007). The trail is composed of three sections and features a total of 50 significant sites. The first phase, created in 1997, is located in the Central district and articulates the theme "The Coming of the British." The second, formalized in 1999

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[46] When colonial authority was extended over the New Territories in 1899, a police station was established in Tai Po. Villagers from across the area launched an armed resistance, but failed against the well-organized and well-equipped British.

and located further west in Sheung Wan, tells the story of the "Chinese Community", which was centred here, outside of the British heart of the city. The third, covering sites in the Western District and the Peak, focuses on a narrative of "East meets West". Shortly after the initiation of the first phase of the trail, the SCMP reported on the responses of visitors to the trail who were surprised to find that a third of the sites do not mark existing buildings or places, but rather the locations of structures that have been demolished (Fraser, 1997). Here, the plaques developed by the Antiquities and Monuments Office as a first order of business in the 1970s, did not sate the hunger of visitors for real experiences of still-existing heritage.

The success of these trails in generating tourist visits and promoting local educational opportunities led to the expansion of heritage trails as a government tourism product. Investment involved was minimal: funding for research, publicity, docent tours, pamphlets, and signage was easily justified. Furthermore, the location of the trails in proximity to graded historical buildings and monuments is strategic. These structures may have received government funding for conservation and maintenance and trails permit the government to receive recognition for its work. A number of other trails were introduced by the Antiquities and Monuments Office (see table 3).

Table 3 Government-sponsored heritage trails

Heritage Trail Name	Date	Location
Ping Shan	1993	Yuen Long, New Territories
Sun Yat-sen	1996	Central, Hong Kong Island
Central and Western Heritage Trail Central Route	1997	Central, Hong Kong Island
Lung Yeuk Tau	1999	Fan Ling, New Territories
Central and Western Heritage Trail Sheung Wan Route	1999	Sheung Wan, Hong Kong Island
Central and Western Heritage Trail Western District and the Peak Route	2000	Western District and the Peak, Hong Kong Island
Wan Chai Heritage Trail		Wan Chai, Hong Kong Island

Heritage Trail Name	Date	Location
St. Stephen's College Heritage Trail	2009	Stanley, Hong Kong Island
Tai Tam Waterworks	2009	Wong Nei Chung, Hong Kong Island

Interpretation materials on government trails, which may include signs, pamphlets, plaques, and other materials, present a curated version of heritage to visitors. Visitors may selectively absorb these cues, relating them to the sites they visit along the way. They may also generate their own experiences on the trail, incorporating questions about the places visited, straying from the recommended path, and visiting not only the heritage places but also spending time in the spaces between them.

9.6 Civil Society Heritage Trails

Outside of government, NGOs and citizen groups have begun to organize walking tours and trails with a different orientation than those the government has created. The interest is not in generating tourist visits, but rather is in creating new experiences in the city and inspiring new forms of understanding of urban issues. Often these trails are guided by a volunteer docent whereas the government trails are often self-guided. As such, they may be more accurately called tours as opposed to trails. But perhaps this distinction is overstated. While the latter are intended to isolate heritage from the city, and to formalize the experience of it for visitors, the community-based trails have a more modest purpose: to provide fleeting glimpses of the city most do not take the time to experience. There is also a logistical explanation: community organizations may not have the funding to map a trail route and hence rely on volunteer efforts to guide visitors, something not required when a brochure is available. These trails are neighbourhood-focused, often developed by a volunteer organization based in the community. Furthermore, the neighbourhoods in question are often the locus of this form of intervention because they are undergoing change – threatened with small or large scale gentrification and redevelopment.

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Central, Wan Chai, Sheung Wan, Sham Shui Po, the TST waterfront, Kwun Tong, Kowloon City, Yau Ma Tei are just a few of the places where I became aware of community-based heritage-focused trails. Conversations with community organizers yielded interesting insights.

A young activist leader told me that the heritage tours organized by his group were an active strategy for engaging citizens in discussions about city spaces and histories. His group has set up excursions to old neighbourhoods in Hong Kong as a way of resisting urban conditioning. "What I always think… we are exposing something. We are exposing history of Hong Kong, we are exposing places in Hong Kong, even these real places. We are exposing things that people are not allowed or not assumed to know about" (personal interview, 21 October, 2010). While a walking tour may seem innocent enough, it is part of a number of tactics his group is using to challenge neoliberal planning regimes and the primacy of property development they uphold. His group had worked closely with partners in Wan Chai but more recently had turned their focus to villages in the New Territories that would be relocated in order to clear a right of way for the X-Rail link. The move to activism rural communities from an urban milieu may be interpreted as a strategic move to a new frontier to address concerns about cross-border integration by standing in solidarity with the people experiencing its effects most directly: villagers dispossessed from their land. It is also inspired by a recognition that Hong Kong has very rapidly given up local agricultural production, which was still extensive until the 1990s, at a time when interest in this area is surging.

A cultural organization based in Yau Ma Tei organizes walking tours in older neighbourhoods of Kowloon. Unlike some of its counterparts, the organization does not have an explicitly political outlook, but instead aims to promote local culture in a "soft" or "neutral" way. Whether or not it is possible to parse politics from the scenario is a lingering question. I visited

the offices, located a short walk from my apartment. Unexpectedly, I found the building in which

it is located newer and taller than the blocks immediately to the east and I realized that it sits on

reclaimed land. In the front room three young people in their twenties worked on laptops in a

sparsely furnished space. I was ushered to a separate room where the project director would

share with me some of his thoughts on walking tours. The orientation, following on the heels of

the handover and coming at a time when there is a strong interest in the meaning of Hong Kong

culture, is to use experiences in the present to understand continuities with the past.

> Right now is quite a good moment for us to take action to promote the local
> culture because I think, especially in the last few years when so many buildings
> have been torn down by the government, there is a tangible concern about… what
> is the identification of the Hong Kong people. (personal interview, 29 April,
> 2010).

Some of the tours are offered in the streets below the office. "In Yau Ma Tei you can still see the

old people, old shops and so much old street culture around here." One is designed around

visiting traditional shops, another focuses on food. The interviewee noted that the latter is quite

popular. He mentioned that the vast majority of the participants are Hong Kong residents and

that the shopkeepers are shocked by this: "They say: 'where are you from? Taiwan? Singapore?

Malaysia?' 'No, we're all from Hong Kong…' 'You! Hong Kong people came to Hong Kong to

do a tour? Why? What interests you? What made you interested?' 'It's old shops!'"

Another interviewee provided insight into the possibilities opened by exploring the city

on foot. He grew up in a public housing estate in the New Territories. "I find that when I grow

up, the life is so dull, and this is like the suburbs in the United States. It's so boring." (personal

interview, 30 April, 2010). What he described was typical of so many youth of the 80s and 90s.

"I want to think about what is Hong Kong, because when I grow up I always see Hong Kong is

like tall buildings… because in the New Territories, there are tall buildings and shopping malls."

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This questioning of what more might be revealed in relation to identity in the city drives Hong Kong people, like this informant, to seek answers. When he entered university and had more freedom, he began to explore older neighbourhoods. One of the areas he was drawn to was Kwun Tong. Conversations with his relatives revealed a short period during his infancy when his family, having recently migrated from Guangzhou, lived in Kwun Tong. He became interested in the area, especially due to its impending redevelopment. As explained in the previous chapter, Kwun Tong was an industrial manufacturing area and is now subject to large-scale speculative redevelopment. He conducted research on the area, wrote about its history, and offered guided walking tours to the public.

In the remainder of the chapter I will give a brief account of two experiences on walking trails, attempting to bring to light the practice of everyday heritage. The first case is a government heritage trail focused around traditional villages in the New Territories. The second is an urban trail highlighting the importance of transportation infrastructure and connections in the city. My discussion highlights the engagements with the landscape and encounters – with heritage sites and with the meaning of the city – on these two trails.

9.7   Lung Yeuk Tau Heritage Trail

On a rainy day in October I took the train to Fan Ling, a community in the New Territories near the border. There I met my friend Amy and her brother John for a walk on the Lung Yeuk Tau heritage trail. Our plan was to begin with a vegetarian lunch at a community centre, explore the trail for the afternoon, and then return to the village in time for dinner at their parents' apartment. We set out with a map and some idea of what we would see. Thanks to guidebook descriptions we knew that the sites along the trail include a number of graded historical buildings and monuments in five walled villages (*wai*) and six villages (*tsuen*).

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Background reading had also informed us that the trail had opened in 1999 was initiated by the Antiquities Advisory Board in partnership with residents, the district council and various other agencies. The trail's name refers to a "leaping dragon" that once inhabited the surrounding hill. The area is the ancestral homeland of the Tang clan, members of which still inhabit the area and practice traditional customs. The guidebooks remind visitors to respect the privacy of residents and that many structures are not open to the public (AMO website).

As we set out, it became apparent that the heritage sites marked on the map are inseparable from more recently built structures and what was obviously a living community. Our experience was not unlike that exposed in the South China Morning Post almost a decade earlier. Button (2002) visited the trail and wrote a scathing critique of its lack of upkeep, the challenges posed by construction, and the lack of care by tourism authorities to ensure that the trail will provide a worthwhile and enjoyable visit to those tourists that make the trip to visit it. Her missive, titled "Ramshackle trail of the unexpected" mentions rat bait, garbage, fire-damaged heritage structures, the lack of interpretive signage and pamphlets, amidst other aspects of her visit worthy of demerit. Button's observations led her to suggest that the trail does not warrant the title of "star district attraction", given to it by the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB). From a different perspective, these faults could be seen to provide a more authentic experience for the visitor. The fact that the trail has not been overly sanitized may appeal to some. We, for instance, were not put off by the lack of polish on the trail, instead finding the blurry lines between life and display stimulating.

Arriving at one walled village we encountered a sign forbidding entry. We could see through the doorway to a shrine and a woman inside heard us. She appeared around a corner and said that the sign was posted because a dog was sometimes unfriendly to visitors. We were

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welcome to have a look if we were careful. Gingerly stepping in, we saw clothes drying on a line and an old dog sleeping in a corner. Inside the shrine incense burned and fresh fruit offerings were laid out with care for ancestor worship. We could smell lunch cooking. Later on we lost our way. The path was poorly marked and we had missed a turn. Stopping to gather our bearings, we noticed the several newer structures, beside and in some cases literally on top of older ones. Coming to the end of the trail we could see Fan Ling Centre, our destination, approximately 500 meters across a field of tall grass. A man emerged from a nearby house and told us of plans to develop high rises on the land. We considered traversing it but we were advised not to, again due to the possibility of encountering dogs. We opted instead for a bus. We arrived back in the village centre just as the sun was setting. It was the Mid-Autumn Festival and children had gathered to light candles in the courtyard of the estate where my friend Amy's parents life.

9.8 "Our Bus Terminal" Walking Tour

A week later I joined a walking tour organized by "Our Bus Terminal," a collective advocating for the retention of the transport interchange on the Kowloon waterfront. They are attempting to draw attention to the importance of the terminal within Hong Kong's historical transportation infrastructure and they are also concerned that its relocation will make the ferry services less accessible. The TST peninsula has long played an important role as a transport hub, with the KCR terminus and Ocean Terminal adjacent to ferry and bus access. With the development of underground transport and the relocation of the rail line in the 1970s, the importance of the hub has diminished, and would see further erosion under the proposed plan. The government proposal would see the bus terminal moved 700 meters away, to TST East. In the place where the buses currently load and unload their passengers, the Hong Kong Tourism Commission has proposed a "piazza". Currently the bus terminal is perfectly situated in relation

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to the Star Ferry Terminal. The connection time between arriving on a bus and departing on a ferry may be as little as two minutes, making it ideal for commuting, and an alternative to the MTR. The ferry, of course, is popular with tourists, and the activists worry that moving the bus terminal will only render the link increasingly impractical for Hong Kong residents. A pamphlet produced by Our Bus Terminal (2010) asks "When Star Ferry becomes a pure tourist facility like Peak Tram, how can the visitors feel the city's living culture from it?"

The idea of the "piazza" makes their worries plausible. *Piazza* is, of course, the Italian word for a public square. In Hong Kong its usage evokes a global tourism discourse in which Hong Kong distinguishes itself through the dual impulses of highlighting its Asian specificity and reinforcing its colonial origins. The renovated Marine Police Headquarters across the street provide a tangible example of the type of public space that could result from the remaking of the terminal in the likeness of a piazza. This complex, renamed Heritage 1881, includes a luxury boutique hotel, expensive restaurants and global deluxe brands such as Vivienne Tam, Rolex and Tiffany & Co. According to media reports, planning regulations would permit the construction of a building up to 15 meters tall, with a floor area of 10,000 square feet in the piazza space, suggesting that it could include shopping facilities in addition to open space.

The bus terminal heritage tour began on the other side of the harbour, in Hong Kong's Central district. The reason for its extensive coverage was twofold. It was intended to both highlight the continuity between historical and present-day connections between this piece of infrastructure and other parts of the city; it also served to place the plans for the terminal within the broader context of urban development in Hong Kong and reveal the central role played by the government in the reproduction of the neoliberal landscape. We assembled in Central where, in the shadow of the giants of financial services, fish are weighed with a handheld balance scale. It

was rush hour as we gathered and suited office workers flew by, their curious glances lingering as their legs pressed on. We walked up the hill to a street market which is undergoing renewal. Shopkeepers told us about their negotiations with the Renewal Authority; they fear that when the market is moved indoors to a new structure it will miss out on foot traffic. The tour facilitator spoke about the steel-reinforced concrete tenements that would soon be replaced. They are better-built than new buildings, she told us, but poorly maintained because banks are reluctant to loan money for old buildings. Further up the hill we stopped for a cup of sugar cane juice and bumped into an artist working in the street. She talked about the neighbourhood as the site of her practice and told us about the hawker market that takes place each morning at dawn. As the light faded we walked back down the hill to catch the ferry to Kowloon. Successive land reclamations have increased the distance between the ferry and Central streets on this side of the harbour, making this inexpensive form of transportation less accessible. The development that has happened along the new shoreline has also favoured the model of above-grade pedestrian links, to the extent that it is difficult to access the waterfront by walking at street level.

After a short wait in a holding area, the ferry arrived and disgorged the passengers it had carried from the other side. We boarded, stepping gingerly upon the unpredictably shifting gang plank. It was clear, watching people rush to situate themselves in order to catch a view, avoid others, or to be in the enclosed air-conditioned section, that some seats are preferred above others. The ferry is omni-directional, traveling back and forth without adjusting to follow its bow. As a result, the wooden seat backs of the benches move back and forth to allow passengers to face forward or backward as they choose. They clacked distinctly as they were readjusted just once, or several times by children. The ferry listed in the waves as it chugged swiftly across the harbour. Passengers took photos, mainly of the Hong Kong island side. On its approach to

Kowloon it slowed to allow for a finely tuned arrival. We walked through the terminal and out into the crowded open air. Lining the exterior of the ferry terminal we saw a number of vendor stalls and small businesses. Newspaper vendors who have worked at the terminal for decades told us about the regulations governing the height and width of their displays and we learned about protests that have taken place here in the past. People passing around us stopped to listen to the stories. We moved on, and at the agreed upon time we mounted the steps of a double decker bus idling in one of the many bays. Its doors closed swiftly, shutting out the humid air, and it took off in the direction of Nathan Road.The plea of Our Bus Terminal is "Let's keep our culture and history in motion!" The reference to motion is important because the group is attempting to articulate the importance of transport infrastructure that provides links for people moving around on foot in the city.

9.9   Conclusion

Heritage trails and tours are increasingly popular in post-handover Hong Kong because they serve as a counterpoint to the frantic patterns of residents traveling within the strictures of the work-a-day, capitalist metropolis. They encourage Hong Kongers to inhabit their city in new ways, and participate in its production. The meanings of "walking heritage" are thus entangled with those of life in the city. One interviewee put it succinctly, saying "I think there was a shift there [in recent years] that historic buildings are now not just like a museum piece. It's now, you know, kind of very much part of our lives" (personal interview, 25 June, 2010). The historic buildings she referred to are not ancient monuments or colonial buildings, but rather everyday places best experienced on foot. So, while the government has championed heritage through flagship initiatives, as seen in the previous chapters, the greatest challenge comes from the impulse to hold on to streets, markets, and entire districts.

Chapter 10: Concluding Reflections: Learning from Hong Kong

While I was in Hong Kong, contacts at HKU introduced me to Andrew, a Canadian who had recently graduated from the Architectural Conservation Programme and subsequently returned home to pursue a career as a heritage planner. I managed to meet with him when he was on his way to Guangdong for a visit with his partner's family. I was curious to learn how he ended up studying in Hong Kong. As a planning student in Ontario he had developed an interest in historical buildings and landscapes but was wary of the established discourse around heritage and development in Canada, calling it "stale", and decided to pursue further study overseas. He chose Hong Kong when he looked into the ACP programme and because Hong Kong was "different… but not too different." I was particularly interested to talk to Andrew because he had lived in Hong Kong during the explosion of heritage as a popular and political concern and, because he had been a student of heritage conservation during these years, I thought he might have some interesting views. Furthermore, since he had returned to Canada to pursue a career in heritage planning, I wanted to ask him how the approaches he learned in Hong Kong applied in this very different context.

Andrew contrasted the rapid change of the discourse on heritage in Hong Kong with the rather slow evolution in Canada. He pointed out that when he arrived in Hong Kong, the government had not yet reacted to the growing protests at the Piers, and that over a few short years it developed capacity, launched initiatives and managed to more or less "stabilize" this particular area of conflict. As he was studying in one of the very spaces of policy learning, as explained in Chapter 5, he had a front line perspective on some of the processes described in this thesis. Even he himself became a source of comparative information as he was asked by his professors and classmates about how things are done in Toronto. When he returned to Canada he

was somewhat concerned that his Hong Kong credential might be considered "exotic" or unsuitable, and that it might be difficult to find work. Ironically, his first job upon his return was with a Vancouver-based consultant working on a contract in Hong Kong. He moved back to Toronto shortly thereafter and began working as a heritage planner with an architectural firm that specializes in heritage conservation. In this job he found that there is an "old established model" of administering and talking about heritage that he came to see as "simplistic and out-of-date" and that doesn't really respond to the living cultures of the city. In contrast, in Hong Kong he recalled talking to people who bemoan the lack of history and heritage in their city but, from his perspective "Hong Kong is doing pretty well…. The public understanding of history is pretty sophisticated." Specifically, what Andrew found exciting and interesting about the discourse on heritage in Hong Kong is its reflection of the living city.

It is a widespread social phenomenon in Hong Kong to look abroad for innovative and better ways of doing things. This tendency is manifest in myriad ways, from the harmless but rampant consumption of pop culture and food from other Asian countries, especially Taiwan, Japan and Korea, to the fashion phenomenon of English text on casual attire, to the celebration of foreign approaches among consultants and bureaucrats attempting to find fixes for the various issues dogging the government. A large part of this thesis, especially Chapter 4 and 5, has examined, through a relational lens, the ways in which mobility, especially human mobility, have influenced the trajectories of heritage policy. In these discussions, Hong Kong has always appeared to have a deficit of knowledge, understanding, and capacity in this area, and those chapters attempted to show the work involved in correcting this deficit. In the process of my research, in particular through conversations with key informants, I came to see the dynamic of deficit and surplus in a slightly different light. One of the reasons that such an extensive

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extrospective reassessment of heritage was carried out is that there are many constraints in Hong Kong that prevent the easy transferal or even adaptation of globally circulating policies and best practices. In the context of these constraints, and given unique conditions relating to density, property rights and ownership, cultural layering, inequality and difference that exist in some of Hong Kong's oldest areas, it has proved difficult or impossible to begin to conceive of the application of what is enshrined as "universal" expert knowledge. In this context, Hong Kong has acted as the catalyst for creative approaches to heritage and, as such, may be the innovator, not the follower. Andrew's experience is a clear indication of this. This insight is important for people in Hong Kong to recognize, especially activists working on these issues. In the context of global policy making, where some are positioned as leaders and others followers, it is unexpected for Hong Kong to emerge a forerunner in this area that appears antithetical to the achievements for which the city is better known: transport and logistics, free trade, and development. This contributes to Jenny Robinson's (2006) ideas about cities being recognized on the basis of the work and life that they contain and inspire, rather than for their economic performance.

The fact that heritage emerged as both a problem and an opportunity for the government simultaneously meant that work in this area was very high on the government agenda beginning in 2006 and 2007. This provides an interesting example for the study of policy mobilities. A clear gap was identified and policy actors went about attempting to fill it through a process of policy learning, the introduction of initiatives and administrative reforms. Most of the work done on policy mobilities to date concerns the circulation of best practices – cities following, interpreting, and re-making a policy model developed in another city. There are other examples where a gap is caused by a crisis and then filled by outside agents. In Hong Kong there is a gap

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but it is not easily filled; the government recognizes the importance of heritage both for the image of the city and because it is important for the city's residents. However, it will not alter its policy. Thus, if Hong Kong is a leader in "heritage", it is not so much in policy as in practice and non-expert approaches. We have seen numerous cases of innovative work on heritage, encompassing research, activism, artistic expression, and theory. The previous chapter investigated the simple act of walking as a way of engaging with the city in ways that may be transgressive. Activists used research methods to reveal the importance of sites such as the Central Married Police Quarters and the West Wing of the Central Government Offices. These approaches have mainly been developed and presented by non-state actors – civil society activists working individually and collectively to contest the established methods of planning and development and their impact on places, communities and landscapes. These approaches have yet to be integrated into the policy framework in Hong Kong and it is not clear that they will be meaningfully. However, they have become part of a discourse on "living heritage" in which Hong Kong has clearly been a place of innovation. On a broader level, the oppositional politics represented by much of the heritage activism, is vitally significant at this moment in Hong Kong. As an expression of the desire to democratize planning processes, within a broader democratization movement that is increasingly under threat in Hong Kong, heritage activism cannot be subsumed by government attempts to incorporate it.

10.1 Why Lessons Learned from Hong Kong are Important

In 2014 Kevin Lau Chun-to was attacked with a chopper knife near a restaurant he frequents daily for breakfast. Lau was the chief editor of *Ming Pao*, Hong Kong's best known independent daily newspaper. A few months before the attack he was moved from his editorial position to a less important, less powerful post working on web content. Shortly before the attack

Lau had led a group of *Ming Pao* staff in a march for press freedoms, in "resisting pressure from the invisible hands who try to meddle in the newsroom" (The Economist, 2014). In interviews after the attack, Shirley Yam, vice-chair of the Hong Kong Journalists Association and a close friend of Lau, emphasized that this horrific incident, and Lau's career shift before it, should be understood as a threat directed towards Hong Kong's press freedoms. She similarly referred to pressure that is felt but not seen: "On the one hand we have those invisible interferences, the substance shift that is increasing, on the other we are facing increasing violence" (Off, 2014). When the interviewer asked her why the freedom of the press is under such tremendous threat, Yam responded with a list of events and experiences: the firing of other columnists and commentators, the blacklisting of liberal academics, and the watering down of news content. When pressed further to identify the source of these events, she could only say that, "it is all done behind the scenes, it is all done by invisible hands. We cannot pinpoint on who has given the instructions… all we can say is that it happens at the same time that Beijing is tightening its control on Hong Kong."

It is clear that Hong Kong's experience of increasing influence from Beijing and the Mainland has a variety of manifestations, from overt political reforms, such as the failed proposal for Article 23 in 2003 and national curriculum proposal in 2012, to less visible forms of control and coercion to which Yam alluded. The ubiquity yet invisibility of power of the Central Government in the HKSAR was a recurrent theme in this research. A number of people I spoke with, ranging from professionals to activists, hinted at concerns but did not state them outright. One interviewee (24 February, 2012) asked me, "how do you cook a live frog?" She then answered: "You increase the temperature of the water so gradually that the frog doesn't know it is being cooked. This is how things are in Hong Kong." Other interviewees were quite explicit

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that Hong Kong is being colonized a second time, by China. This experience provokes a

nostalgia for colonial Hong Kong that appears self-assured: protesters have taken to waving the

colonial-era Hong Kong flag, with its Union Jack in the corner, in defense of Hong Kong's

interests. Occasions where this flag has appeared range from marches calling for universal

suffrage, to protests over the effects of increasing numbers of mainland tourists and day traders

in the SAR. Whether or not mainland influence is direct or indefinite, its consequences are very

real and many people in Hong Kong, as part of "new politics", are not taking the changes lightly.

As one activist I spoke with put it:

> In a very general level we were witnessing something like mainland government
> trying to input something into Hong Kong or trying to come in on different levels,
> on education or political system or business or ways of living. And we just have
> the feeling that it may be time to do something. But not evade, but not to escape
> from it. (personal interview, 21 October, 2010).

The contemporary political landscape in Hong Kong is important to the foregoing

discussion of heritage in two ways. First, as I suggested very early on in the thesis, heritage is

often celebrated as a defense of place against exterior forces that are perceived as threatening. In

most cases it is an extremely conservative and exclusionary impulse that would lead to the

celebration of historical roots in the face of an encounter with difference and change. Is Hong

Kong's growing interest in heritage an example of this type of impulse? It would be a stretch to

go so far as to suggest that the celebration of heritage is linked directly the kinds of nationalistic

(though lacking the "nation") displays of xenophobia noted above. However, there is another

sense in which the sentiments driving the impulse to contest development that destroys heritage

is very much a response against Beijing's influence in Hong Kong, but a very specific kind of

influence. When protestors marched outside the luxury shops in Tsim Sha Tsui that are popular

with wealthy mainland visitors claiming that they were ruining Hong Kong, the first response

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was a fear of the economic repercussions of such a direct message. The shopkeepers noticed a short-lived decline in sales, but the government thought the bad publicity might hurt Hong Kong's reputation which, in turn, would hurt its economy. Hong Kong's current political trajectory is inextricably linked to the its regional and trans-border economy with China to such an extent that any challenge to the invisible high-level direction of the government – whether blatantly discriminatory anti-Mainlander campaigns (which this thesis does not broach) or attempts, such as some of the heritage campaigns examined in this thesis, to stem the effects of the never ending flows of investment capital into the territory – is construed as a threat to Hong Kong's future by those with power and money. Thus, from Hong Kong we learn that heritage is much more than material places and cultural processes, it stands for a hopeful way of inhabiting the city and engaging in the collective and agonistic production and reproduction of urban places and their social values.

10.2 Revisiting the Contribution of the Thesis

This thesis has attempted to employ geographical concepts in order to advance critical heritage studies. Among critical scholars of heritage, Smith's (2006) concept that there exists an "Authorized Heritage Discourse" has been much lauded and pursued in research with fruitful results (for example, Waterton, Smith, & Campbell, 2006). The argument advanced in Smith's book is that this discourse, supported by charters and expertise, legitimizes approaches to heritage that are founded on concepts of antiquity, monumentality and consensus-building. If its origins lie in a specific moment of European history, of the articulation of nationalism through an understanding of historical continuity, it has taken on a universal appearance through institutional and administrative structures that influence policy. Smith states that alongside the authorial approach there exists a range of popular discourses and practices that may succeed in

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subverting the official narrative. This is a compelling argument that opens the door for place-based studies that reveal the operation of these complex processes. This thesis has attempted to present such an account. It has done so in a way that suggests that geography is intrinsically important to the global operation of heritage discourses, their instantiation in charters and policies, their contestation and negotiation, and ultimately the material manifestations of these processes in urban places, such as Hong Kong. An understanding of the production and intersection of different scales, engagements with mobility, and especially an understanding of relationality, is vital to this task. Such a project has not yet been undertaken in the geographical study of heritage. As such, this thesis serves to advance a geographical contribution to the critical global study of heritage.

Jacobs (2012, p. 414) has called policy teaching and learning a "richly suggestive aspect" of the work on policy mobilities. This thesis has contributed to the understanding of how such processes of teaching and learning play out in and beyond a place in a specific area of policy that is both strategic and problematic for a diverse set of policy actors. These processes are not limited to specific events, such as conferences or visits, or research reports, but rather encompass a much wide range of interrelated and mutually reinforcing relationships, places, texts, and experiences. Furthermore, the fact that non-state policy actors closely monitor, contest and contribute to these processes signals further complexity to which McCann (2008; 2011) and others have called attention. The thesis has also highlighted the challenging dynamic of policy change given the constraints of existing neoliberal urban-spatial ideologies that propose that a strengthening of heritage policy is both needed in Hong Kong, but impossible to achieve. This dynamic serves as a counterpoint to many studies of policy mobilities that emphasize the rapid reconstitution of policy knowledge and ideas from elsewhere as easily-achieved solutions to

problems or "fixes" for gaps in technologies of neoliberal governance (Peck & Theodore, 2001).

Despite the reality that substantive policy change hasn't occurred, the process has been

enormously productive with institutional and administrative results, mutations of the heritage

discourse both in government and among the public, and material changes to the landscape in the

form of flagship projects that, as I have documented, have also been subject to much

contestation. As a study, in part, of the urban governance of an issue intricately related to and

reflective of cultural, political and economic process, the thesis has also demonstrated the

importance of giving serious attention to the material processes of cultural policy.

10.3 A Final Word: On Ambiguity

As I worked on this project I confronted the reality that I was positioned within a

paradigmatic frame from which it was challenging to gain an outside perspective. I was working

with a concept, "heritage" that represented a certain strategic direction in Hong Kong – it was

critical, local, and appeared to engage a wide public around a kind of consensus that was slightly

threatening to those who hold the most power in Hong Kong. I occasionally encountered other

views of heritage. When I visited Wing Lee Street, the row of *tong lau* buildings on a quiet

terrace not far from Central, I noticed hand-painted signs posted by residents along street level.

Unfortunately I couldn't read the signs myself but without giving them much thought I assumed

that they likely contained criticisms of the renewal plans for the area. I later learned, when I

visited with a friend who translated the messages, that they were messages demanding fair

housing and compensation. They were written by residents who were not concerned about the

authenticity of the street, as the heritage advocates and the many photographers who visited

were, but rather who were seeking the best possible outcome of their inevitable relocation. When

I learned this I was struck by the seeming incommensurability of the perspective that views *tong*

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lau buildings nostalgically, from the safe distance of the present, with the experiences of who do not have the luxury of this distance. But for some of the activists I became acquainted with, there is a middle ground between the prospect of the rupture of relocation and upward mobility, and the status quo. They advocate for the participation of residents in processes of conservation and upgrading that improve their lives and allow them to remain in their homes. This, unsurprisingly, is a prospect that the government and the URA have resisted because it is a vision of Hong Kong, the city as "home," that interrupts the operation of the market and the ceaseless reinvention of the city as "skyline image."

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Appendices

Appendix A Interviews

	DATE	CAPACITY	LOCATION OF INTERVIEW
1	15 Apr., 2010	Heritage professional (academic)	Hong Kong
2	21 Apr., 2010	Elected official	Hong Kong
3	27 Apr., 2010	Urban planner	Hong Kong
4	29 Apr., 2010	Heritage professional (designer)	Hong Kong
5	29 Apr., 2010	Heritage professional (educator)	Hong Kong
6	30 Apr., 2010	Civil society (activist)	Hong Kong
7	3 May, 2010	Civil society (activist)	Hong Kong
8	4 May, 2010	Civil society (activist)	Hong Kong
9	6 May, 2010	Civil society (activist)	Hong Kong
10	14 May, 2010	Heritage professional (writer)	Hong Kong
11	15 May, 2010	Civil society (NGO)	Hong Kong
12	17 May, 2010	Employee of quasi-public body (URA)	Hong Kong
13	17 May, 2010	Heritage professional (academic)	Hong Kong
14	18 May, 2010	Civil society leader	Hong Kong
15	19 May, 2010	Urban planner	Hong Kong
16	19 May, 2010	Heritage professional (private sector)	Hong Kong
17	20 May, 2010	Civil society leader	Hong Kong
18	24 May, 2010	Developer	Hong Kong
19	26 May, 2010	Civil society (NGO)	Hong Kong
20	2 June, 2010	Employee of quasi-public body (URA)	Hong Kong
21	3 June, 2010	Employee of quasi-public body (URA)	Hong Kong
22	4 June, 2010	Public servant (AMO)	Hong Kong
23	7 June, 2010	Civil society (activist)	Hong Kong
24	11 June, 2010	Heritage expert	Hong Kong
25	11 June, 2010	Politician	Hong Kong
26	15 June, 2010	Public servant (AMO)	Hong Kong
27	16 June, 2010	Heritage professional (writer)	Hong Kong
28	25 June, 2010	Public servant (Development Bureau)	Hong Kong
29	25 June, 2010	Public servant (Development Bureau)	Hong Kong
30	27 June, 2010	Heritage professional	Hong Kong
31	20 July, 2010	Heritage professional (private sector)	Sydney, Australia
32	19 July, 2010	Heritage professional (non-profit sector)	Sydney, Australia
33	20 July, 2010	Public servant (culture and arts)	Sydney, Australia
34	22 July, 2010	Public servant (architect)	Sydney, Australia
35	31 July, 2010	Public servant	Hong Kong

	DATE	CAPACITY	LOCATION OF INTERVIEW
36	31 July, 2010	Retired engineer (private sector)	Hong Kong
37	16 Sept., 2010	Other (community leader)	Hong Kong
38	16 Sept., 2010	Other (shop owner)	Hong Kong
39	16 Sept., 2010	Other (shop owner)	Hong Kong
40	16 Sept., 2010	Other (shop owner)	Hong Kong
41	17 Sept., 2010	Heritage professional (photographer)	Hong Kong
42	24 Sept., 2010	Heritage professional (designer)	Hong Kong
43	27 Sept., 2010	Heritage professional (academic)	Hong Kong
44	2 Oct., 2010	Architect (private sector)	Hong Kong
45	4 Oct., 2010	Architect (private sector)	Hong Kong
46	4 Oct., 2010	Heritage professional (academic)	Hong Kong
47	5 Oct., 2010	Public servant (AMO)	Hong Kong (by telephone)
48	7 Oct., 2010	Urban planner	Hong Kong
49	8 Oct., 2010	Built environment professional	Hong Kong
50	15 Oct., 2010	Heritage professional (academic)	Hong Kong
51	21 Oct., 2010	Civil society (activist)	Hong Kong
52	26 Oct., 2010	Elected official	Hong Kong
53	2 Nov., 2010	Other (heritage property owner)	Hong Kong
54	7 Nov.., 2010	Civil society (activist)	Hong Kong
55	8 Nov., 2010	Real estate industry	Hong Kong
56	10 Nov., 2010	Architect (private sector)	Hong Kong
57	12 Apr., 2011	Heritage professional (academic)	Vancouver, Canada
58	11 May, 2011	Heritage professional (private sector)	Vancouver, Canada
59	24 Feb., 2012	Civil society (activist)	Hong Kong
60	24 Feb., 2012	Heritage professional (academic)	Hong Kong

Appendix B Sample Contact Letter and Consent Form

B.1   Sample contact letter

Department of Geography
#217 – 1984 West Mall
Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6T 1Z2
Tel: (604) 822-2663   Fax: (604) 822-6150
http://www.geog.ubc.ca

Dear ,

My name is Lachlan Barber and I am a PhD student in urban and cultural geography at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. I am currently conducting research on the evolution of heritage policies in Hong Kong. Specifically, I am interested in understanding why so much attention has been paid to this topic as an object of urban policy and cultural fascination over the past five years, and how Hong Kong's links with other cities inform its treatment of built heritage.

I would be very interested in meeting you for an informal interview to gather information for my research. The meeting will last under one hour and will take place at a time and in a location that is convenient for you. If you would prefer to speak in Cantonese or Mandarin, please let me know.

The information gathered will be used to develop a greater understanding of the relationship between heritage and politics in Hong Kong. It will be included in my doctoral dissertation and publications in journals.

If you choose to participate, your identity will not be disclosed to anyone. Your participation is voluntary and you may skip over questions or withdraw from the meeting at any time.

If you are willing to meet, please let me know by calling me (xxx-xxx-xxx) or sending an email to xxx-xxx-xxx. I will send you a consent form which contains further details about the project and we can arrange a time to meet.

If you have any questions about the project and your involvement, please don't hesitate to contact me at the coordinates below. You will also find the contact information for my academic supervisor, Dr. David Ley.

Researcher: Principal Investigator:
Mr. Lachlan Barber (primary contact)   Dr. David Ley (faculty supervisor)
Email: Email:
Hong Kong Cell Phone: Phone:

Sincerely,

Lachlan Barber

B.2   Sample consent form

Department of Geography
#217 – 1984 West Mall
Vancouver, B.C., Canada V6T 1Z2
Tel: (604) 822-2663   Fax: (604) 822-6150
http://www.geog.ubc.ca

CONSENT FORM

Project Title: Pathways to Hong Kong's Past: The Politics of Heritage in the Asia-Pacific Metropolis

Introduction: This research study is conceived and conducted by Lachlan Barber, a PhD student in Geography at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. The research is undertaken for a doctoral thesis supervised by Dr. David Ley and is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Participation: You are invited to participate in this research because of your involvement in heritage issues in Hong Kong. We invite you to meet with the researcher for an interview of one hour. The interview will be recorded and later transcribed. If you would like the interview to be conducted in Cantonese, please let us know. You may decline to participate, skip questions, or withdraw from the interview at any time without consequences. There are no risks associated with your participation in the research.

Purpose of the Research: This research examines the transformation of heritage policies in Hong Kong that has accompanied growing public interest in this matter. The researcher is conducting interviews with civil servants, cultural professionals, NGOs and other people involved in heritage management and conservation in Hong Kong. The information gathered may be included in the researcher's doctoral thesis and publications.

Confidentiality: Your identity will not be disclosed to anyone during the research process or writing. You will not be named or otherwise identified at any time, to anyone. In addition, all of the data gathered (e.g. interview transcripts and notes) will be securely stored. The only people who will have access to this material are the researcher (Lachlan Barber) and principal investigator (David Ley).

Consent: Your signature below indicates that you consent to participate in the study and that you have received a copy of this form for your records.

Participant Signature: _____ (DATE: __/__/__)

Printed Name: _____

Contact Information: The researcher will happily answer any questions about the project and your involvement.

Researcher:	**Principal Investigator:**
Mr. Lachlan Barber (primary contact)	Dr. David Ley (faculty supervisor)
Hong Kong Phone: xxx-xxx-xxx	Phone: xxx-xxx-xxx

Concerns: If you have any concerns about your rights or treatment as a research subject, you may contact telephone the Research Subject Information Line in the Office of Research Services at the University of British Columbia. The phone number is 1-604-822-8598.