

Heritage

Definitions,
Concepts and
Contemporary Issues

What is Heritage??

- Heritage is derived from the word - HERITER (French Word - meaning to inherit).
 - From the mid 1970's, the use of the term developed rapidly. *Wider use - linked to increased awareness of heritage / culture.*
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- i.e; associated with the increased importance of protecting our heritage.

Academic Definitions:

- *“Elements of society that we value and of which we wish to keep for future generations”*
(English Heritage).
- *“.....that which has been or may be inherited”*
(Oxford English Dictionary 1983).
- *“That which a past generation has preserved and handed on to the present and which a significant group of people / population wishes to hand on to the future”*
(Hewison 1989)

Heritage Examples:

- Landscapes, Music, Theatre, Literature, Art, Dance, Clothing, Food, Language, Architecture, ...
.....
- THEREFORE All elements that give a culture / region an identity.

HERITAGE + HISTORY - Same or Different??!!

- Certain theorists argue that even-though Heritage is associated with past traditions / practices, it is nevertheless NOT the same as History.
- This is a contentious point however.....!

- Heritage is history processed through mythology, ideology, nationalism, local pride, romantic ideas.....”

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- “History is about the study of the past using evidence: landscapes, historic buildings, etc - - Heritage is NOT the past itself” Herbert (1995)

Tourism and Heritage Links

- Heritage very much links to tourism - both formal and informal types.



- As heritage has the potential to interest and entertain the population - predominantly for its educational value
- - - - *learning about others' cultures / pasts from visitations.*

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- “Tourism is not just an aggregate of merely commercial activities, it is also an ideological framing of history, nature and tradition” (MacCannel, 1992).
 - Since the 1970’s, more and more tourists travel for educational reasons (eg; learning about other cultures / traditions...)
 - Today, heritage is a significant part of the tourism industry.

- Increasingly so, heritage sites / attractions have become an extensive part of the tourism industry.
- Prior to the 1970's, the role of heritage places / attractions were principally for conservation means. However with time, heritage places / attractions have become increasingly popular and are pursued and visited for a number of other reasons rather than just for conservational aims.

- “Heritage, variously defined, is the most important single resource for international tourism” (Graham et al 2000).



- Definition Complexes:
- Unfortunately, due to the growth of heritage tourism and ultimately heritage attractions, many people associate and identify heritage with a particular type of tourism attraction - - -which may or may not be an accurate portrayal of an area's heritage. AUTHENTICITY CHALLENGES!