

Heritage and hospitality links in hotels in  
Siwa, Egypt: Towards the provision of  
authentic experiences

by  
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## **AUTHOR'S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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# ABSTRACT

The link between heritage and hospitality dates back hundreds of years. However, there are no firm rules that manage this old relationship. The research tackles the concept of ‘heritage hospitality’ as a new concept; which represents a managed heritage-hospitality link through the application of traditional heritage and traditional hospitality in hotels.

This study addresses the relationship between heritage and hospitality at selected hotels in Siwa oasis in Egypt. Relationships between indigenous peoples and hotels, heritage and hospitality, hotels and heritage tourism, the possibility of applying the ‘heritage hospitality’ concept and the present status of heritage application in Siwan hotels were explored to achieve the research goal of providing a balance between commercialization and authenticity in hospitality. Field observations, a questionnaire survey, key informant interviews, and a focus group discussion were conducted in Siwa from October 2, 2010 to October 21, 2010.

The present status of heritage application in Siwan hotels has been documented in this study. Although Siwa oasis is rich in both cultural and natural heritage, Siwan hotels utilize only one aspect of the cultural heritage: tangible cultural heritage. Thus, Siwan hotel operators may invest more in quality heritage presentation in order to contribute to the preservation of Siwan heritage and to earn more money. Authenticity is important to the enhancement of the link between heritage and hospitality. However, it is necessary to combine both old and modern practices in a balanced approach. This research contributes to practice and to conceptual and empirical understanding of heritage-hospitality nexus and, hopefully, will inspire more research on balancing authenticity and commercialization in hotels, particularly in developing countries like Egypt.

**Key Words:** Heritage, hospitality, authenticity, commercialization, local people

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 An overview**

The word hospitality is derived from the word ‘hospice’, meaning a house of rest for pilgrims during medieval periods (Grottola cited in Mill, 2008; Powers, 1988). Numerous studies have explained that the essence of hospitality is the supplying of food, refreshments and lodging for those who are away from home (Ingram, 1999; Lashley, 2007; Brotherton, Wood, 2001). Few hospitality academics have considered hospitality and hospitableness from historical, cultural or anthropological perspectives (Lashley, Morrison, 2001). As a result, the word “hospitality” itself is commonly replaced by ‘hospitality industry’ or ‘hospitality management’. Hospitality needs to be studied in private/domestic and social/cultural, as well as the commercial domains. For example, small hotels are instances of micro-businesses which engage in transactions between host and guest as both private and commercial activities. A key issue for the commercial sector has been the degree to which commercial hospitality represents authentic hospitality, driven as it is by hidden motives and the intent to extract money for the provision of hospitality to guests (Lashley, 2007).

Hotels, as an example of hospitality provision, are usually an important part of tourists’ experiences and satisfaction. They can differentiate their destinations through cultural and architectural expressions. They provide the primary encounter with another culture through the food on the menu and the language of the waiter (Marin, Jafari, 2002; Robinson, Picard, 2006; Guerrier, Adib, 2001). Historically, they were also community centres where people went to eat and socialize (Presbury et al., 2005; Gunter, 2005). They now often offer facilities for meetings and entertainment. It is essential for commercial accommodation to be located tactically within

the tourism sector. Especially, researchers agree that heritage tourism is quickly developing as one of the key growth segments of the tourism industry (Poater, 2009; Hollinshead cited in Chandler, Costello, 2002; Timothy, Boyd, 2003). There are different causes for this growth; for example, tourists want more cultural and heritage experiences. This may result in keeping as much as possible from the past and calling it heritage (Chandler, Costello, 2002; Timothy, Boyd, 2003).

The word 'heritage' caught worldwide attention particularly in the mid-1980s in association with the UNESCO World Heritage Convention (Cheung, 1999). Heritage is usually connected to the past and linked to a legacy that is passed from one generation to another. It can be classified into cultural and natural heritage (Nuryanti, 1996; Prentice, 1993; Butler, Boyd, 2000; Richards, 1996). Experiencing heritage has become one of the priorities in the cultural stimulus to travel (Waite, 2000). Cultural heritage, in particular its tangible features, has received great attention in numerous countries. However, other features, specifically intangible heritage, which reflects the vibrant dimensions of heritage, have not received an equal amount of attention and care and, hence, conservation and protection. In peripheral areas (e.g. the "oases" that will be examined in this study), especially in developing countries, heritage includes not only the built heritage but also the oral and the living traditions, so that relationships between heritage and local communities include much more than merely built structures and matters of employment and income (UNWTO, 2006).

Heritage managers, governments and academics are beginning to value the preservation and interpretation of sites connected to the lives of ordinary people. This can help to lessen the commodification of places and temper the damage that can occur to cultures through tourism (Timothy, Boyd, 2006; Teo, Yeoh, 1997). The same change is occurring in hotels. Many tourists

and hospitality academics are beginning to appreciate the value of small hotels or bed and breakfasts in simple homes. Peripheral areas which become increasingly important destinations supply heritage attractions and tourism support services such as hotels. Additionally, they may become more urbanized and lose their original structures and atmosphere (O’Gorman, 2007; Prideaux, Kininmont 1999; Timothy, 2001; Grenville, 1999; Holdsworth cited in Timothy, Boyd, 2001).

Egypt is one of the wealthiest countries in the world in terms of the amount of heritage it possesses. Egypt, however, does not have a distinguished image as a tourism destination (Baloglu, McCleary, 1999). Tourism in Egypt faces two major problems: (1) the enormous number of cultural heritage sites and the lack of finance to support them (Hang, Kong, 2001), and (2) the narrow focus on cultural heritage as only monuments and the obvious neglect of tourism development in the Egyptian Saharan oases (Baharia, Farafra, Dakhla, Kharga and Siwa), particularly the cultural traditions, habits and customs. Additionally, hotels in Egypt focus on the international coastal-resort market and neglect the market for the Saharan oases (Hosni, 2002).

Siwa oasis is the only authentic oasis in Egypt where people live as their ancestors did (Al-Hamarneh, 2005). Tourism in Siwa provides travelers with a chance to experience the unique qualities of the desert and its human activities and lifestyles (Boumedine, 2008). Although Siwa has rich of tourism resources, there are hardly any studies of heritage tourism there. The priority is given to projects using other resources. However, investment and development projects may preserve Siwa's unique heritage. For example, Siwan hotels (24 hotels) which could mirror Siwan heritage through, for example, involving indigenous peoples who, so far, have been largely neglected. Such initiatives could provide new products and

enhance the attractiveness of Egypt to tourists. They could also be based on and result in new relationship between heritage and hospitality. Siwa possesses the attributes where such links can be explored (isolation, unique peoples and inimitable heritage).

This study will bridge this knowledge gap by addressing issues of the heritage-hospitality nexus in hotels in Siwa oasis through studying the hotels in Siwa and their use of expressions of local heritage. The findings will contribute to an enhanced understanding of the heritage-hospitality nexus as a new concept, provide an approach to the provision of hospitality that incorporates a heritage perspective and draws upon the historical origins of the concept, respects local culture and provides a cultural experience (and not simply a place to stay) for the interested visitor. Problems in the planning and management of Siwan heritage will be identified and suggestions will be made to address these deficiencies, particularly in the Siwan context.

## **1.2 Research Goals and Research Question**

The goal that informs this research is the creation of a synergistic link between commercial success and the provision of authenticity experiences (authentic people in authentic places) in hotels through application of a new concept: ‘heritage-hospitality’. The aim is to explore the possibility of using local heritage in hotels in order to create a mutually supportive links between heritage and hospitality in hotels. There are no firm rules that manage this link. There is a large literature on the hospitality industry, including many papers on service quality, but there is much less discourse about hospitality itself, heritage characteristics and the relationship between indigenous peoples and their culture, and how these may be incorporated into the offerings of hotels. Thus, this thesis is concerned with management of the heritage-hospitality link through, for example, the application of traditional heritage and traditional

hospitality in hotels, particularly in developing countries. It is argued that this is an area that deserves more academic attention.

The outcome of the research, if applied, would be the creation of a synergistic relationship between commercialization and authenticity in hotels. The current status of Siwan hotels, the possibility of applying the ‘heritage hospitality’ concept, their role in the supply and demand of heritage tourism in Siwa, the relationship between them and indigenous peoples, and management of the relationship between heritage and hospitality in Siwan hotels are identified as the five research objectives. Specific research question relating to such research objectives is proposed and explored through field studies at all hotels that reflect some aspects of Siwan heritage (10 hotels) as follows:

Thus, a research question is formulated as follows: What links, if any, exist between heritage and hospitality in hotels and how can these links be enhanced through hotel management?

Answering this research question involves exploring heritage applications as they exist at present, possible heritage characteristics that may be applied in hotels, the role of hotels in overcoming the threat of losing cultural heritage, the importance from the tourists’ point of view of experiencing heritage inside hotels, the relationships between indigenous peoples and hotels, ways of applying heritage hospitality concept in hotels, and the flexible and inflexible relationships between heritage and hospitality in such hotels. This research question is important because increased use of heritage applications in hotels may result in greater heritage preservation, the increased tourist visitation and increased hotel profits.

### **1.3 Thesis Outline**

The thesis is composed of six chapters. Chapter One has briefly stated the issue of concern, the research goal and specific research question to be answered. Chapter Two critically reviews previous studies on peripheral areas and tourism development, the concept of hospitality, heritage, authenticity and considerations to heighten understanding of the relationships between heritage and hospitality. Gaps in the literature are identified that are addressed through observation of all Siwan hotels and a more focused examination of all hotels which reflect Siwan heritage. Chapter Three provides an outline of the research methodology used to undertake a detailed study of Siwan hotels, the context of heritage, tourism, oases and hotels in Egypt, and Siwa oasis and its hotels. The rationale for selecting Siwan hotels and Siwa oasis as a study area is also explained and is based on two main factors: (1) authentic factors (e.g. isolation, underdevelopment, heritage markers) and (2) commercial factors (i.e. the commercial provision of accommodation in hotels). Chapter Four explains the field study of Siwan hotels. In this chapter, major findings are presented and discussed regarding Siwa oasis as a whole, the current characteristics of Siwan hotels, the creation of a synergistic relationship between commercialization and authenticity, the possibility of applying the heritage hospitality concept, the identification of heritage characteristics that may be applied, the relationships between indigenous peoples and Siwan hotels, and heritage tourism and Siwan hotels. Results of questionnaire surveys completed by hotel guests in selected hotels are also discussed. Chapter Five discusses both theoretical and practical implications of the study. Finally, Chapter Six reiterates the 5 research goal and objectives, and summarizes the major findings of the study. The academic and practical contributions of the study are discussed and future research opportunities are proposed.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This chapter starts with a discussion of peripheral areas and tourism development. The definitions of three concepts, hospitality, heritage and authenticity, are examined, outlining their nature and characteristics. Finally, several considerations for heightening understanding of the relationships between heritage and hospitality are explored.

### **2.1 Peripheral areas and tourism development**

Peripheral areas, by definition, are areas that are geographically remote from mass markets (Hall, Boyd, 2005). These areas may include small villages, oases, archaeological sites of indigenous peoples, farms and farmhouses illustrating rural lifestyles, and national parks (Timothy, Boyd, 2003). From a cultural heritage perspective, this part of the thesis addresses the reasons for interest in tourism development in peripheral areas and the challenges and risks which are associated with such an interest.

#### **2.1.1 Peripheral areas interest in tourism development**

Those in peripheral areas may be interested in tourism development for two main reasons. First, they likely possess appropriate resources. Second, there are benefits to be gained from such development.

Relevant resources include both distinctive culture resources inherited from the past as well as resources of indigenous people.

Cultural expressions and heritage manifestations are often well preserved and passed on between generations in peripheral areas and, in periods of economic decline, their residents appear to cling more to a distinctive heritage (MacDonald, Joliffe, 2003; Robinson, M., Picard, D., 2006). From the tourists' point of view, tourism in peripheral areas can provide access to distinctive aspects of human heritage through contact with the lives of local people (Timothy,



2001; UNWTO, 2002). The wealth generated by tourism depends to a large degree on the importance of intangible and subjective phenomena, i.e., ‘authenticity’ (Archer, 1989; Hall, Boyd, 2005; MacCannell 1976). Some consider that feelings of estrangement from current lifestyles help to increase the demand for heritage tourism sites, especially in peripheral areas (Hewison, 1987; Lowenthal, 1985; Urry, 1990 cited in Waitt, 2000).

Most researchers agree that many peripheral areas are being promoted steadily by the tourism industry. For example, in Japan, the United States and the United Kingdom, members of modern societies widely believe that peripheral areas are capable of preserving their societies’ identities and heritage (Creighton, 1997; Lowenthal, 1977). Many peripheral areas are being restructured as they have become attractions and they are increasingly required to provide services to support visitors, such as hotels (Timothy, Boyd, 2001; Prideaux, Kininmont, 1999).

Indigenous peoples who live in peripheral places are frequently an essential component of tourism development. They can help heritage tourism developers to value local histories and the pasts of ordinary people. This may help to lessen the commodification of places or temper the damage that can occur to cultures (Teo, Yeoh, 1997). They can provide a picture of the past of a specific community in a living environment through contemporary activities and practices (Robinson, Picard, 2006).

Tourism development may result in social, cultural and economic benefits. Tourism development in peripheral areas is always embedded in a given social, political and cultural context (Verbole, 2000). Such development may include the maintenance and enhancement of public services, the revival of local crafts, customs and cultural identities, and increased opportunities for social contact and exchange with outsiders (Sharpley, 2002). Tourism can be a significant mechanism for promoting understanding of other areas, peoples and their pasts,

especially through a more independent and vernacular approach to cultures in peripheral areas (Bouchenaki, 2004). Tourists can provide a market for local crafts and souvenirs that draw upon local customs and skills. They can also be the audience for music, songs and stories. Hotels, for example, can supply a market for locally-produced foods, local linens, furniture and artwork (Robinson, Picard, 2006). Tourism can be a tool to support the maintenance of heritage (Nuryanti, 1999). In the absence of tourism, cultural and heritage variety is not lived, experienced or felt through the aesthetic feelings and understanding of the values that it incorporates and conveys (Robinson, Picard, 2006).

From a development point of view, governments frequently regard tourism in peripheral areas as a crucial component of rural economic development (UNWTO, 2002). However, external control over major decisions often affects the well-being of such areas (Hall, Boyd, 2005). Tourism is a type of economic development which has both natural and cultural assets as its foundations. It provides the opportunity to invest in heritage from an economic perspective (Robinson, Picard, 2006).

The potential benefits presented by appropriate cultural tourism development are numerous, including improved livelihood opportunities for unskilled or semi-skilled workers, especially women and youth who may otherwise face restricted occupational opportunities (UNWTO, 2006). Such development offers economic growth through employment creation in both new (tourism-related) and existing businesses, trades and skills, the creation of new markets for conventional products, and an increase of a region's economic base (Sharpley, 2002). In addition, it offers an alternative means to stop the decline in traditional industries. This prospect is realized through development of local resources, culture, and heritage (Kochel 1994; MacDonald, Joliffe, 2003).

Tourism spending can help to stimulate new economic growth and contribute to local economies through a high multiplier effect (UNWTO, 2006). For example, oases can have economic multiplier effects that benefit indigenous peoples (Garrod, Fyall, 2000). However, internal economic linkages are likely to be weaker at the periphery than at the core, thereby limiting the potential to realize high multiplier effects because of the substantial degree of importation of goods and services (Archer, 1989). As a result, any economic diversification tends to be welcomed (Hohl, Tisdell, 1995). Tourism is a positive way of helping to eradicate poverty (Boumedine, 2008; Ashley et al., 2001). Globally, it is obvious that culture and heritage are main resources which can, through tourism development, be used to address problems of poverty (Robinson, M., Picard, D., 2006). The preliminary infrastructure requirements of tourism development can also enhance a destination community's infrastructure, such as the provision of a sanitary water supply and latrines that are frequently lacking in peripheral areas (UNWTO, 2006).

#### 2.1.2 Challenges associated with development of tourism in peripheral areas

Of course, not all of the challenges that will be identified are evident in every situation. However, they do suggest that there are a number of issues which militate against the success of tourism development in peripheral areas.

The isolation of peripheral areas not only involves increased transportation costs to and from the urban areas but may also raise communication costs with suppliers and markets as well (Hall, Boyd, 2005). However, the chief difficulty to the build-up of locally-controlled businesses is the shortage of skilled personnel. That frequently prevents locals becoming small entrepreneurs. The local tourism industry may regularly use outside workers because locals do

not have the essential skills; obtaining and keeping a trained and experienced workforce may be very hard (Hohl, Tisdell, 1995; Müller, Huuva, 2009).

The practicability of tourism tends to be significantly reduced, because visitors may spend money in the region only for food, gas and other goods of direct consumption; many goods that tourists ask for have to be imported; operating costs for tourism facilities may be too much, with high transport costs leading to very costly supplies, and high local government charges. The economic difficulties of tourism in peripheral regions are hard to work against. The periphery has to expand the few market segments that are drawn by their limited resources. Peripheral regions have less economic elasticity in relation to the sector as a whole (Hohl, Tisdell, 1995).

It is frequently argued that small communities are not essentially homogeneous in terms of their resources, interests, needs and views on tourism growth in peripheral areas, and neither do they gain equally from the development of tourism (Verbole, 2000). For the locals who are not directly involved with the industry, tourists bring no benefits or can even be an irritation. Tourism is not simply allowed everywhere; unpleasant visitor behavior has led to disagreements with indigenous peoples (Hohl, Tisdell, 1995) and residents may find it hard to adjust to a service role. However, the appreciation and successful preservation of the local heritage rely on their participation and support (Sharpley, 2002; Filippi, 2006). Collective ownership may limit the availability of land for private projects and collective cultural aims may dominate over business aims: the community has to guard against costs caused by private projects (Müller, Huuva, 2009).

It is a challenge to control tourism in such a manner that it values intangible heritage and traditional knowledge while offering the opportunity for community and economic growth

through the provision of visitor experiences (Yunis, 2006; Bellmann cited in Abd ellatif, 2008). Especially, intangible heritage has received less attention than tangible heritage (UNWTO, 2006). In addition, tourism development must offer a high-quality visitor experience (Hohl, Tisdell, 1995; Sharpley, 2002). Such development in peripheral areas is still seldom found in developing nations (UNWTO, 2002). For example, there are many weaknesses in Saharan tourism development in Egypt. These weaknesses include under-exploitation of resources, shortage of hotel facilities, architectural and archaeological heritage in need of repair, and insufficient investment in and promotion of Saharan tourism (Hosni, 2002).

Natural conditions may lead to tremendous seasonality of the tourism product, with restricted possibilities for off-season tourism. Even when package tours are developed and offered, the profit from tourism may be mostly consumed and invested outside the peripheral economy (Hohl, Tisdell, 1995; Müller, Huuva, 2009).

A key concern is that local interests may be overruled by authoritative groups outside the region once development takes place. The local and regional government might lose control over the development process to higher government levels and industry lobbies looking out for the interests of the developed urban regions (Hohl, Tisdell, 1995). Individual peripheral tourism operators usually possess neither the skills nor the resources for successful marketing, and marketing is a requirement to overcome any lack of support from the government (Sharpley, 2002).

### 2.1.3 Risks associated with tourism development in peripheral areas

In general, of course, the development of tourism in peripheral areas, as with most other types of tourism, may have unwanted economic, social and environmental consequences for destination communities (Gannon, 1994).

In the present situation of 'wild growth' of tourism, short-term economic considerations tend to overrule social and environmental concerns, thereby threatening long-term economic potentials. As well, tourism in peripheral regions is a fairly risky enterprise. The general difficulties of tourism development, such as those relating to incomes and preferences of travelers, and weakness in policy, are intensified in peripheral regions because of their restricted resource base and greater economic inflexibility (Hohl, Tisdell, 1995).

Overdevelopment of tourism projects aimed at promoting cultural and natural resources, achieving access to economic resources, and engagement with other stakeholders for marketing purposes may lead to the loss of the particular qualities of peripheral areas and entail a risk of losing cultural control (Hohl, Tisdell, 1995; Müller, Huuva, 2009). As these areas become more urbanized, they may lose their earlier socio-economic structure (Grenville, 1999). Tourism consumes the resources of the host country, not just natural and human-made resources, but cultural ones, too. Cultural resources are limited and should be managed like any other rare resource (Weeks, Hetherington, 2006). The growing number of visitors increases environmental degradation and reduces the quality of the visitor experience itself, degrading heritage, sometimes displacing indigenous peoples and turning ways of life into commodities (Hang, Kong, 2001, Hohl, Tisdell, 1995).

## **2.2 Heritage and hospitality**

In this section, both heritage and hospitality will be defined and the relationships between heritage and history, heritage and tourism, and heritage and hospitality will be outlined.

### **2.2.1 Heritage**

The word 'heritage' caught worldwide attention particularly in the mid-80s in association with the UNESCO World Heritage Convention (Cheung, 1999). Heritage is usually connected to the past and linked to a legacy that is passed on from one generation to another. The growth of heritage as a means of accessing the past involves the identification of places that link the appeals of the past through heritage and the experience of modernity that influence the nature of heritage consumption. It filters the past into symbols of identity, linking us with forerunners and ancestors, with our personal earlier selves, and with promised descendants (Breathnach, 2006; Lowenthal 1994 cited in Waitt, 2000). Heritage can be both unifying and divisive. It unites people and everybody has a past. On the other hand, different people may have very different relationships with the same heritage site. Also, heritage has economic values. For example, it can be used to make money. It is both a resource and a product. It is an effect of economic development and it is also a cause of economic development (Ashworth, 1999).

The fact that dissimilar views exist about the meaning of heritage is frequently because the term 'heritage' is applied to two dissimilar kinds of phenomena. On the positive side, the term is used to explain culture and landscapes that are cared for by society and passed on to future generations to serve people's need for a sense of identity and belonging. These positive significances of care and identity are in sharp contrast to the more negative views of the word heritage. In this sense, as used in the 'heritage industry', the term has become synonymous with the handling or even invention and utilization of the past for commercial ends (Merriam, 1991).

Heritage can be classified into cultural and natural heritage. Cultural heritage refers to tangibles things such as historic buildings and structures, memorials and architectural remnants, as well as intangibles phenomena such as philosophies, traditions, values, rituals and art forms. On the other hand, natural heritage refers to natural aspects such as rivers, mountains, national parks and other protected areas that are inherited and passed down through the generations (Nuryanti, 1996; Prentice, 1993; Butler, Boyd, 2000; Richards, 1996).

It is critical to make a note that heritage is not the same as history. It means more than the item, time or place that is the historical reference (Knudsen, Greer, 2008). The term ‘heritage’ is naturally contentious since it involves, at worst, a subjective and selective bogus history that trivializes the historical diversity of class, gender, and ethnicity and, at best, it represents a new type of interest in and understanding of the past (Johnson, 1996; Raivo, 2002 cited in Knudsen, Greer, 2008). People use heritage places to authentikate and legitimate specific stories about the past. Visiting heritage sites can make history feel more real and strengthen the lessons that have been taught and the values that are held (Davis et al, 2009).

Heritage tourism is focused on what has been inherited, which can be represented by anything from ‘historic buildings, to art works, to beautiful scenery’ (Poria et al, 2001). Heritage and tourism are somewhat strange bedfellows, yet, there is a growing proof of their coupling all over the world. Heritage organizations involved in tourism are faced with four fundamental activities: (1) building partnerships; (2) providing a learning environment through interaction and participation; (3) preserving and guarding resources, and (4) ensuring authenticity and excellence (Hede, 2008). Heritage tourism is a reflective process which confirms and builds identity and allows the telling of a story within heritage places (Light, 2000). Certainly, heritage is itself the consequence of a discourse over which symbol of a location, from a range of interpretations of



this location, will dominate. In addition, the places selected are the result of a process of selection (Hollinshead, 1997; Kruse, 2005).

### 2.2.2 Hospitality

The word hospitality is derived from the word 'hospice', meaning a house of rest for pilgrims during medieval periods (Grottola cited in Mill, 2008; Powers, 1988). A hospice was also an early type of what we currently call a nursing home, and the term is obviously connected to hospital (Powers, 1988). The term hospitallers was primarily applied to those whose responsibility it was to offer hospitum (lodging and entertainment) for pilgrims (Burgess, 1982). On the other hand, Benveniste (cited in O'Gorman, 2007) suggested that the word 'hospitality' has a Latin origin, and is derived from two proto Indo-European expressions that have the meanings of 'stranger', 'guest' and 'power'. Numerous studies have attempted to explain that the essence of hospitality is the supplying of food, refreshments and lodging for those who are away from home (Ingram, 1999; Lashley, 2007; Brotherton, Wood, 2001).

There are two widely different approaches to defining 'hospitality': the first is semantic and the second is evidential (Brotherton, Wood, 2001). The semantic approach refers to dictionary definitions, which are fairly abundant. For example, both the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary 2008 and The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary 1990, define hospitality as the performance or way of being hospitable; the welcome and entertainment of guests or strangers with kindness and friendliness (Medlik cited in Mill, 2008; Onions cited in Hepple et al., 1990). Although, such definitions are abundant, few hospitality academics have considered hospitality and hospitableness from historical, cultural or anthropological perspectives (Lashley, Morrison, 2001). In contrast, an 'evidential' approach means defining hospitality within the 'real world',

for example through the evidence of hospitality as seen in any hotel or restaurant (Brotherton, Wood, 2001).

Hotels, as an example of hospitality provision, are often an important part of tourist experiences. Historically, they were community centres where people went to eat and socialize (Gunter, 2005). Many offer facilities for meetings and conventions, and for amusement and entertainment. As such, they make a critical contribution to overall visitor satisfaction at a destination (Presbury et al., 2005). It is essential for the hotel sector to be located tactically within the tourist sector, keeping in mind that the tourist sector consists of two components: pleasure and business. The hotel sector is changing constantly because, over the past decades and for many reasons, the requirements of guests have changed (Poater, 2009).

### 2.2.3 Possible relationships between heritage and hospitality

The link between heritage and hospitality is old. This link is seen in historic hotels, which may date back hundreds of years. In fact, there is a wide application of heritage in hotels. However, these applications vary substantially. For example, they may be applied in the whole hotel or part of it. They may reflect tangible or intangible elements of heritage or both. The relationship between heritage and hospitality is flexible i.e. there are no firm rules that manage heritage application. Both old and new buildings can mirror heritage. In addition, both luxury and ordinary hotels can mirror heritage.

*Ryokans* are traditional Japanese inns that can be found throughout Japan. *Ryokans* are most found in settings of historic significance or luxuriant natural beauty. Their operators have clung to history, architecture, art and ways of doing things and are, thus, often preferred by foreign guests as excellent backdrops for studying and experiencing all that is different about Japan. There are both classical and newly-built *ryokans*. However, both of them have maintained

their thatched roofs, their bold wood beams and their fragrant tatami floors (Seki, Brooke, 2007). Walls in their original Japanese forms were made of wattle and daub, consisting of woven frames of vines packed with rice straw and earth (Price, 1999). The physical aspects of the traditional Japanese *ryokans* are the dominant influence on customer satisfaction (Kang, 2004). There has been growth in Japan of tourism based on *ryokans*, the *onsen* (warm springs) and *tatami* (sleeping mats) (Ashworth, Tunbridge, 2000).

There are two types of hotels in Korea: tourist and ordinary. Ordinary hotels target Koreans and budget travelers while tourist hotels target foreign tourists. Ordinary hotels offer fewer facilities and provide a homely atmosphere for Koreans. Korean-style accommodations called *Yogwan* are standard ordinary hotels. Similar to *Ryokan*, they provide a small room with a heated floor. To cater to foreign travelers, many *Yogwan* incorporate modern facilities such as inside bathrooms and Western-style beds (Chon, Shin, 1990).

The state-run chain of *paradores* is prominent in the Spanish hotel scene. *Paradores* have great attraction: many are set in wonderfully atmospheric old buildings such as castles, mansions and convents. The cuisine in *paradores* depends mainly on regional and traditional food. Service depends more on individual initiative than any overall management policy. Some *paradores* do not accept children because of their precious antiques and furnishings (Inam, 2001).

Shophouses are traditional two-story buildings with a store on the ground level and the proprietor's home on the upper level. Their vernacular building styles are of architectural value and they are usually located in an urban setting. Their vernacular style is significant as it symbolizes the socio-economic history of the city; dynamic vernacular styles are obvious in Singapore's shophouse hotels and they offer a platform for the celebration of Singaporean cultural identities. This is seen in the abundance of interior décor themes ranging from traditional

*Peranakan*, referring to a diverse cultural community derived from the intermarriage of Chinese and Malays in Malaysia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, to English colonial. The 1960s Retro *Peranakan* culture is famous for its rich food, costumes and architecture, reflecting both Chinese and Malay influences. The largest concentration of *Peranakans* is found in Malacca and Penang (Malaysia) as well as in Singapore, all of which reflect a diverse ‘Singapore story’ (Chang, Teo, 2009).

‘Indian heritage hotels’ have been developed from converted palaces, fortresses, castles and hunting lodges, and residences of any size built prior to 1950. The facade, architecture and setting should have special qualities and atmosphere in keeping with the traditional way of life of the area. In addition, these hotels should offer the traditional cuisine of the area. There is a sub-classification for heritage hotels such as classical and grand, which are differentiated largely by room numbers (India Tourism Statistics, 2004).

Today, it is common to convert heritage buildings into luxury hotels (Bedard, Kadri, 2004). A recent survey on heritage hotels, ‘historical buildings converted into hotels’ in Turkey showed that these hotels attract high income and more educated tourists. This study suggested that protecting the old buildings by having them get new functions, including accommodation with authentic qualities, helps to conserve the historical buildings and benefits the local economy (Dincer, Ertugral, 2003). To understand a destination, one needs to understand its hotels. While this statement may seem to be true for ‘grand historic’ hotels which have played principal roles in urban life, the same cannot be said as strongly of ‘modern international’ hotels that are duplicated across countries (Chang, Teo, 2009). However, it is true not only of grand historic hotels, but also of any other type of hotel which convey their site’s heritage.

A worldwide trend is that, as a result of demands from the tourism industry, heritage whether material, immaterial or natural, has, like culture, become a significant resource that is

frequently staged and adjusted to new uses. This is done not only through markets, events and theme parks but also by refurbishing ancient districts, streets and buildings, converting them to new uses and functions and, as a result, giving them new meaning (Naguib, 2008). Two examples of historic hotels are the Gezira Palace Hotel in Cairo and Raffles in Singapore. Each will be considered in turn.

This is a transformed building, where new aspects have been developed over time, confirming a continuity of use and discontinuity of function. The Gezira Palace is today one of Cairo's five-star hotels and is part of the Marriott chain of hotels. The story of the palace symbolizes some vital moments in the history of modern Egypt. It begins with the Suez Canal and the preparations for its inauguration. For this occasion in 1863, the Khedive Ismail ordered the construction of a palace on an island in the centre of Cairo. The Gezira Palace was to host the French Empress Eugenie, who had agreed to preside at the opening of the Canal (Naguib, 2008). For the next hundred years, it served as a royal residence. Its conversion to a hotel allows the Egyptian people to preserve it as an example of their heritage.

The Raffles hotel tells the story of British colonialism in Singapore. Much of the colonial built heritage of Singapore continues to exist through conservation of structures such as the Raffles Hotel. However, it has been transformed into a modern leisure/lifestyle attraction designed for tourists and a wider market of residents. It stays rooted in the past and keeps a quality of exclusiveness. The hotel building is seen as a bastion of the country's heritage and is a landmark in the story of Singapore's history. At the same time, economic necessities have to be acknowledged and efforts made to make these well-matched with conservation interests. This is a major challenge facing all those engaged in heritage tourism. Analysis of the case of

Singapore, and Raffles hotel in particular, reveals one possible approach to meeting these challenge, suggesting both its successes and limitations (Henderson, 2001).

There are newly-built hotels: for example, three in Southeast Asia (the Grand Hyatt Bali, the Four Seasons Resort Bali at Jimbaran Bay, and the Oriental Hotel, Bangkok) ) that have built up a collection of cultural tourism offerings based on local cultural examples, the physical surroundings of the hotel, and the interests of its customers. These on-site cultural tourism provisions both increase chances for guests to learn about local culture and traditions and improve the hotel's attraction to potential guests (Peterson, McCarthy, 2003). Sukhothai Heritage Resort, in Thailand, is a recently built hotel. It mirrors the ancient Sukhothai architecture. Its interior design has Thai touches. This hotel is surrounded by spacious organic rice fields ([www. sukhothaiheritage.com](http://www.sukhothaiheritage.com)).

Hotel Plaza Real is a picturesque boutique hotel nestled just off the historic Plaza in Santa Fe, New Mexico. It is adorned with handcrafted furnishings and wood-burning fireplaces. It offers a blend of New Mexico's unique cultures woven together throughout the hotel, providing a distinctly Santa Fe atmosphere. It offers guests a comfortable cultural environment. This environment begins from the authentic architecture, handcrafted furnishings, art, and old world courtyard, to the original paintings, pottery and weavings by some of the Southwest's foremost artists. Within a short walking distance from the hotel are some of Santa Fe's most treasured places ([www.handr.com/plazareal.php](http://www.handr.com/plazareal.php)).

Many of the lodges scattered throughout Banff National Park are soaked in regional culture, and some have been passed down through families for generations. Some are made of rustic, rough-hewn logs with stone fireplaces handcrafted from Rocky Mountain stones. Charming little inns boast the kind of friendly service that Canadians are known for, with

personal attention to details and plenty of local information and advice for the curious traveler ([www.banfflakelouise.com](http://www.banfflakelouise.com)).

Adrere Amellal, at the foot of the White Mountain in Egypt's Siwa Oasis, is a hotel made out of bricks and mortar. Twenty-four-hour room service is not provided. Adrere Amellal is an eco-lodge. It was built using local designs, manpower and materials, and everything that is eaten (the menu is primarily vegetarian) is grown in the gardens. The thirty-four rooms and suites are simply furnished but quality is of a high standard, so the thought of a palm-front door **should** not put off the visitor. There is no reception, air-conditioning or electricity. Despite the lack of electricity, hot water is available thanks to a gas heating system, and lighting at night is from lanterns and candles. There is a pool and, less tangibly, a feeling of total seclusion and peace, especially if guests want some insight into what it feels like to be a Berber living in the Sahara ([www.tablehotels.com](http://www.tablehotels.com)).

Heritage naming is a popular trend in modern society where tourism services elect to adopt such names (e.g. Heritage Inn or Heritage Café) (Timothy, Boyd, 2003). However, these inns do not necessarily provide any aspect of heritage and they may only use the name of heritage to attract guests.

Heritage is used to differing degrees in hotels. Some apply the full meaning or the true application of heritage in local chain hotels such as *ryokan* in Japan, and in independent hotels in isolated areas such as the Adrere Amellal hotel in Siwa oasis in Egypt. In some cases historic buildings are converting into hotels, which are frequently located in cities. At the other end of the spectrum, some only use the name heritage without real application. It is hard to know, in detail, the heritage qualities available in a specific hotel? Web sites present information but,

unfortunately, it is displayed in a commercial form and for promotional purposes so the true meaning may not always be clear.

## **2.3 Authenticity**

Authenticity is a concept that has received much attention in tourism research. Although it is an idea that is difficult to define and use, it may be helpful for understanding and guiding research on the heritage-hospitality nexus. Places are changing and it is impossible to freeze them. Thus, heritage changes and what may be considered to be authentic changes. Thus, heritage is not a fixed attribute, is open to different interpretations by different people and is negotiated. However, it may be possible to get benefits by forging links between traditional ways of doing things and the provision of hospitality in hotels. In this research, the application of authenticity will be viewed as the involvement of local people and aspects of their traditional lifeways in the provision of hospitality in hotels through application of a new concept: 'heritage-hospitality'. This means the use of aspects of local heritage in hotels in order to create positive links between heritage and hospitality, resulting in the enhancement of both..

### **2.3.1 The nature of authenticity**

MacCannell (1973, 1976) was one of the first to use the notion of authenticity in his sociological studies of tourism attractions and experiences. Authenticity is commonly used in discussions of some types of tourism, such as ethnic, heritage or cultural tourism, which rely heavily on the representation of the other or of the past (Wang, 1999). The authenticity of tourist attractions continues to be a substantial academic concern in the study of both domestic and international tourism (Ehrentraut, 1993). The Nara Document on authenticity affirms obviously that 'authenticity may vary from culture to culture and even within the same culture' (UNESCO, ICCROM, ICOMOS, 1994). It is, therefore, not probable to base decisions regarding the values



and authenticity upon fixed standards. With respect to heritage, the term refers to portrayal of the past in an accurate way. Authenticity is, according to several authors, a subjective phenomenon generated by personal experience, cultural influences and national history (Timothy, Boyd, 2003). MacCannell (1976) suggested that tourists look to escape from their fragmented daily lives that hold little importance and seek meaning in authentic experiences elsewhere. Authentic souvenirs may connect the tourist with a travel destination that suggests a simpler life that is rich in meaning. Cohen (1988) suggested that authenticity is fluid across people and sites. Spooner (1986) suggested that gaining of authentic products adds to feelings of personal distinctiveness. Authenticity is, therefore, a slippery and challenged term (Wall, Xie, 2001). There is no general agreement as to its meaning and significance (Reisinger, Steiner, 2005).

Within tourism literature, authenticity is a well-known word but not a very stable notion; its meaning is likely to be a confused mixture of philosophical, psychological, and spiritual notions, which mirrors its complicated history. The problem of definition is compounded within tourism because the word is frequently used in two different senses: authenticity as genuineness or realness of objects or events, and also as a human quality signifying being one's true self or being true to one's vital nature (Reisinger, Steiner, 2005).

In heritage settings, heritage, while it can signify many dissimilar things, is frequently the re-creation of the selective past through protection or reconstruction and replication of those components that society appreciates as components of its heritage, wants to remember and feels proud about. Heritage should also be about those parts of the past that society is not so eager to reveal, and so exactness and authenticity should mirror both (Timothy, Boyd, 2003). The meaning of heritage and authenticity is culturally built and alters from one context to the next (McLean, 1998). The meaning of authenticity does differ among observers and relies on diverse

contextual sources of information (Burnett, 2001). For example, the authenticity of ghost towns may be determined by the degree of decay and staining (DeLyser, 1999). Authenticity is considerably reduced in cultural events and ethnic expressions when non-local people play the part of interpreters in places that are said to be authentic (Douglas, Douglas, 1991).

In the context of tourists' experiences, demand is now considerable for products that are mainly authentic or mainly exotic (Burnett, 2001; Cohen, 1988). So, tourism has appeared as a mechanism for achieving this to meet the fantasies of viewers (Swarbrooke, 1994), particularly within the context of culture and heritage, which has led not only to a deformation of the past, but to a stifling of the culture of the present (Hewison, 1987). Tourists can accomplish an authentic experience through relationships with people at tourist surroundings, because authenticity comes from personal experiences (Cohen, 1988; Moscardo, 2000; Pearce, Moscardo, 1986).

Within the context of heritage tourism, Wang (1999) offers a differentiation between the challenging definitions of authenticity. Authenticity in tourism can be applied to both the visitor experience (activity-related authenticity) and the toured objects themselves (object-related authenticity). Where Wang's existential definition of authenticity deals with the activities of the visitor, both objective and constructive definitions of authenticity concentrate more on objects, or the heritage tourism product that has been expanded. An essential aspect of heritage tourism is authenticity, or at least the awareness of it (Boniface and Fowler 1993; Taylor 2001; Waitt 2000). Many scholars (Clapp 1999; Cohen 1988) consider that the value of heritage tourism is improved by the provision of authentic products. Other scholars (Boorstin 1991; Bruner 1991; MacCannell 1976; Van den Berghe 1984) indicate that the authenticity of events and attractions is staged and deformed to suit the necessities of both the 'guests' and their 'hosts'. The

appearance of authenticity is vital to much of heritage tourism as the product(s) on display are frequently re-creations of an area's past in terms of both built and cultural settings (Timothy, Boyd, 2003).

In reference to cultural heritage, 'authenticity' is expressed as the relative integrity of a site, an object or an activity in relation to its unique creation. In the context of living cultural practices, the perspective of authenticity is a reflection of the conventional practice. In the context of an 'historic place' or 'object', authenticity can include the accuracy or degree of its reconstruction to a recognized earlier state (ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Charter, 1999). Authenticity can be divided into the physical fabric and intangible values of heritage. Most tourists want to experience a sense of 'authenticity' but indeed not the essentially reality. Numerous tourists are interested in cultural heritage but most have limited knowledge about the past. Authenticity is then a social construct that is established in part by the individual's own knowledge and frame of reference (Lithell, Anderson, Brown, 1993).

### 2.3.2 Authenticity as a guiding concept for research on the heritage – hospitality nexus

It will be useful for research on the heritage – hospitality nexus to consider the authenticity of offerings as 'backstage' concept through which the genuineness of certain forms of authenticity can be indicated (Figure 2.1). The provision of these forms of experience may help in achieving genuine heritage experiences through hotels. Authenticity in the present must pay respect to a conception of origins. In this way, tourism places, objects, images, and even people are not merely viewed as contemporary productions, or as context dependent and multifaceted things in the present. Instead, they are positioned as signifiers of past events, periods, or styles of life. In this way authenticity is associated with the 'traditional' or 'authentic life' of a community or region (MacCannell 1976; Taylor, 2001).

Within the topic of heritage, the type of authenticity which refers to the original instead of a copy is useful for guiding research on the heritage-hospitality nexus. This is hard to achieve in historical cities (Bruner, 1994). However, in peripheral areas, e.g. oases, it is easier to realize as indigenous peoples possess and practice ways of life that originate, draw upon and create aspects of their surroundings. In looking for authenticity, some tourists concentrate on the product in terms of its distinctiveness and originality, its workmanship, its cultural and historical integrity, its aesthetics, and/or its meanings and use (Halewood, Hannam, 2001). In hotels, using local building materials, traditional methods of construction in building, and traditional furniture and crafts are examples of this form of authenticity.

Tourists regard the experience as real when the situation is ‘objectively real’ and believed by the tourists to be real. These encounters tend more to be managed in MacCannell’s backstage areas (Cohen, 1979). The meaning of objects should not be viewed as directly originating from the object itself. Instead, it is the way the object is presented (McLean, 1998). An authentic experience entails participation in a collective ritual, where strangers get together in a cultural production to share a feeling of familiarity or harmony. This cultural production is not a whole re-creation of the past (MacCannell, 1976). In hotels, sharing and participating in specific traditions of banquets, such as sitting on the floor and beginning with a certain type of food or drink, are examples of this form of authenticity.

From the perspective of realizing authentic experiences through interaction with people in tourism situations, tourism settings can be classified into four types. ‘Authentic people in an authentic environment’ is one of these types (Moscardo, Pearce, 1986). This type is important for the direction that is taken in this research. The meaning is similar to backstage people in a backstage region (MacCannell, 1976).

For many tourists, the desire to visit authentic cultural environments is shown in the desire to visit indigenous peoples for it is they who, in the minds of tourists, symbolize real locals living in real sites and living real history (Moulin, 1991; Ryan, Crofts, 1997). Then, find authenticity in interacting with indigenous peoples. A primary encounter with another culture is often through the food on the menu and the language of the waiter (Robinson, Picard, 2006). That means that this primary encounter is often in hotels with indigenous peoples that work there (Guerrier, Adib, 2001). From a heritage - hospitality point of view, indigenous peoples are heritage makers. They create both built and living heritage, both of which may show their active and continuous role in mirroring their real heritage to guests in hotels.

2.3.3 Authenticity as a misleading concept for research on the heritage – hospitality nexus  
 Authenticity, because it means different things to different people, may also, in some of its forms, misdirect research on the heritage - hospitality nexus (Figure 2.1).

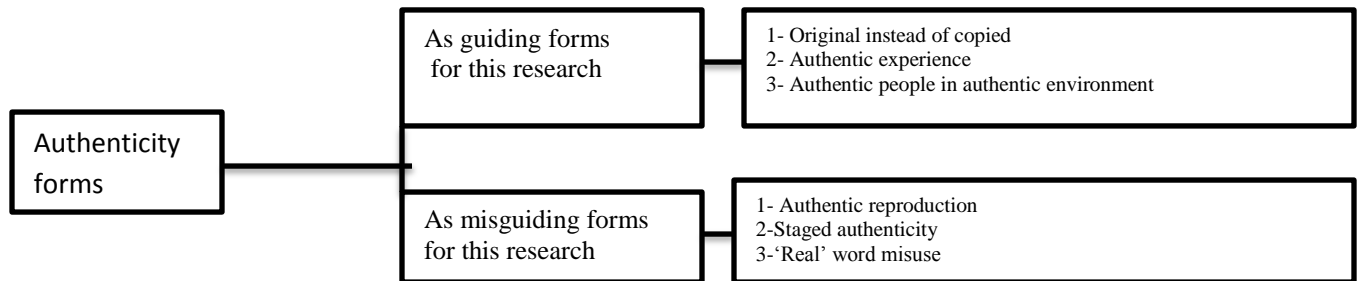


Figure 2.1: Guiding and misleading forms of authenticity for research on the heritage-hospitality nexus

Within the area of heritage, there is what may be termed ‘authentic reproduction’. This type of authenticity refers to giving the look of being original. Any type of reproduction or change, according to some, would make sites and products inauthentic (Bruner, 1994). In hotels, serving traditional food in reproduced plates instead of locally- made plates is an example of this form.

Staged authenticity means a sequence of phases in which local conditions and areas go through a procedure of being staged for tourist consumption. Front areas, or the places where tourists come in contact with local settings and peoples, are decorated and presented to symbolize sites, peoples and performances of back regions to which visitors have limited access (MacCannell, 1973, 1976). This notion of staged authenticity is directly linked to a similar concept called commoditization, which refers to experiences being packaged and sold. It implies that tourists may be unable to differentiate between authentic and inauthentic sites and experiences and service providers' willingness to offer inauthentic (front stage) experiences. Objects and events that once had cultural and spiritual significance become commodified for tourist consumption and, in the process, their form and use is altered, resulting in the loss of much of their heritage significance (Keesing, 1989). Indeed, it is argued that inauthenticity frequently stems from the commodification processes which give a phenomenon an estranging and explicit exchange importance. Authenticity is also often deliberately invoked as an exact marketing strategy. Likewise, different tourism commodities, such as souvenirs, are produced and consumed as 'authentic' experiences. But, rather obviously, their production can be a 'mixed approval' because while it may be productive for a host community, it may also lead to a craft product being mass produced and becoming inauthentic and disassociated from its unique meaning (Halewood, Hannam, 2001). The commodification of tourism has been criticised as 'pollution' of formerly authentic ethnic cultures for the purpose of touristic show (Wood, 1998). Similarly, tourist commodification weakens minority cultures through shortening and packaging cultures into '30 minute' time slots (Ryan, Crofts, 1997). When products are packaged, priced and marketed to draw mass tourists, the emphasis is on sales and profit, not on authentic experiences of dissimilar cultures or of making one's own way through an unfamiliar setting

(Steiner, Reisinger, 2005). In this way, cultural heritage is modified and sometimes deteriorates because of its handling as a tourist attraction since it becomes insignificant to the people who once believed in it (Greenwood, 1989).

The misuse of words such as real, authentic and genuine is obvious throughout the promotional literature. Here, misuse means describing unreal things as real (Silver, 1993). For example, there is a use for such misuse in hotels' promotional pamphlets. In fact, hotel managers, tour operators and other service providers appear to agree that people seek authentic experiences. However, in many cases, the word 'real' does not mean authentic.

## **2.4 Considerations for heightening understanding of heritage- hospitality relationships**

From the perspective of relevant literature, some of the principles for strengthening the heritage-hospitality nexus are diffused throughout a variety of topics and themes.

### **2.4.1 Heritage tourism and hotels**

Researchers agree that heritage tourism is quickly developing as one of the key growth segments of the tourism industry (Hollinshead cited in Chandler, Costello, 2002; Timothy, Boyd, 2003). There are different causes for this growth; for example, tourists want more cultural and heritage experiences, whether these are significant and authentic or shallow kinds of entertainment (Chandler, Costello, 2002). However, this may cause a push to keep everything from the past and explain it as heritage (Timothy, Boyd, 2003).

A natural link exists between heritage tourism and hotels, especially hotels which reflect heritage hospitality, yet little discourse and debate occurs regarding them. There is rising interest in the relationships between heritage and other sectors of the tourism industry. For example, the link between heritage and shopping is well established. However, there is a need to understand better how heritage tourism interacts with hotels, especially hotels which reflect heritage

hospitality. Operators of these kinds of hotels are often very keen to interact successfully with heritage tourism.

Most heritage attractions focus on artifacts linked to royalty, nobility or other elites. The usual over-emphasis on stately places (e.g. castles, cathedrals, historic cities, great houses, etc.) as heritage resources misrepresents the realities of the past and mirrors the elitist tendencies of those in positions of power. This trend is beginning to change, however, as heritage managers, governments and academics are beginning to value the preservation and interpretation of sites and places connected to peasants, peripheral areas and the working class in general (Timothy, Boyd, 2006). The same change is occurring in hotels. Hospitality academics are beginning to appreciate the value of small hotels or bed and breakfasts in simple homes and peripheral areas (O’Gorman, 2007).

Heritage tourism in cities usually does not expand throughout the whole community. Instead, it is typically located close to the centre, which was often the original urban core from which the city expanded into more modern regions and new business areas (Simpson, 1999). This means that heritage tourism usually occurs close to the centre in cities. In heritage cities, the physical capacity of the historical centre is usually restricted and the ability to enlarge the tourist function, for example by building skyscrapers or converting private houses into hotels, is limited so that there is a maximum number of tourists that can be accommodated in the centre. Often this maximum is regulated; in other cases it is left to the free market. In the periphery, capacity can be expanded with few limits. As a consequence, accommodation prices are higher in the centre and decline with distance from the centre. In choosing whether to visit the core as tourists or excursionists, visitors exchange the higher hotel prices in proximity to the resources with the lower prices of the periphery, discounting also for transport costs. In the end, many visitors



choose central or peripheral accommodation according to their budget. Moreover, because of limited capacity, they are subject to a 'first come first served' rule. (Caserta, Russo, 2002). As a result, historic cities offer a limited chance for local communities to interacting with tourists or to provide employment in hotels. On the other hand, they are one of the major types of location for displaying heritage. In some peripheral areas, small hotels and bed and breakfast establishments have been created as a way of getting people to stay longer and enjoy more of what the community has to offer (Timothy, Boyd, 2003). Peripheral areas often offer lower-priced hotels and more accessible chances for lively interaction with local communities.

Hotels mark and differentiate destinations. They are touristic attractions that often have distinctive architecture, are frequently influenced by cultural and environmental surroundings, and they represent 'homes away from home' for tourists, who spend much of their time in the community there (Marin, Jafari, 2002).

Heritage tourism has major economic effects. As one of the largest forms of tourism, visitors to heritage sites and the spending that goes along with them on lodging, food, admission fees and shopping, provide billions of dollars every year to the global economy and employ millions of people directly and indirectly. Lodging and food services are one of the most common sources of revenue for heritage sites (Timothy, Boyd, 2003).

Supply refers to the tourism resources and services of a region. The support services, such as hotels, that have developed around heritage tourism attractions are part of the supply. They are considered as secondary aspects, however, the primary aspects comprising both activity places (e.g. cultural, sport, and amusement facilities) and leisure settings (physical characteristics and socio-cultural elements) (Jansen-Verbeke, 1999). The supply of heritage tourism can be changed in two ways. First, it can be widened. For example, new sites may be found and sites

that were not seen before as important attractions can be raised in stature. Second, the supply can be deepened. This refers to the improvement of existing attractions, for example through adding a visitor centre or bringing in additional artifacts (Johnson, Thomas cited in Timothy, Boyd, 2003). Accommodation, as a significant part of the support service necessary for heritage tourism, has a role in enhancing or facilitating the continued existence and growth of heritage tourism. In other words, it has a role in deepening the heritage tourism supply. Hotels situated in heritage areas usually increase the importance of such areas by facilitating visitation. It is difficult to imagine any important heritage area without a hotel.

The word 'demand' is commonly used to mean the market (tourists/visitors) for heritage sites and attractions (Timothy, Boyd, 2003). Heritage tourists have an inclination to spend more time on holiday than many other types of tourists, resulting in higher levels of spending. They tend to stay more in hotels than in other types of accommodation or with their friends and relatives (Silberberg, 1995). However, hotels which reflect their sites' heritage, are not only establishments where tourists stay but they also have a role in deepening heritage tourism demand through offering unforgettable heritage experiences.

#### 2.4.2 Experiential tourism

Experiential tourism involves opportunities in which there is a strong link between tourists and local, often indigenous, peoples, appreciation of their attires, food, music and their creative expressions. These significant factors, many of, which fall into the grouping of intangible heritage, are vital tourism assets that provide product differentiation of each country's tourism supply, allowing the tourists to get a deeper understanding of the destination visited (Yunis, 2006). Communities need to better recognize the idea of the visitor experience and their abilities to meet the needs of the tourists. For example, hotels are one significant aspect of the

visitor experience that communities must consider as they strive to develop quality heritage tourism products. When correctly managed, tourism can also help in the preservation of intangible heritage, allowing the survival of traditions and cultural customs that may otherwise disappear. It also provides exceptional opportunities for encounters between peoples who would otherwise recognize little of each other (UNWTO, 2006). Intangible heritage can contribute to the realization of the concept of experiential tourism. As a result, it can deepen the tourist experience. However, it needs to be managed through, for example, hotels which apply the concept of heritage hospitality.

There is wide recognition that tourism is fragmented among varied operations of differing sizes and with dissimilar products. These include, for example, accommodations and attractions (Wall, 2003). Tourism is defined as the activity of people temporarily away from their usual residence for a time not exceeding 1 year, and for almost any purpose of travel. This incorporates not only people on holidays, but also people travelling to visit family or friends, travelling for health purposes, spiritual purposes, study visits and business conferences (UNWTO, 2007 cited in Smith, 2010). Being among people who use an alien language, eat dissimilar foods, and behave with unaccustomed manners is at the very heart of tourism. As tourists, and as people in a globalizing world, we are more and more in contact with other cultures and heritages, and are able to experience the distinctiveness of each and the common attributes of all (Bouchenaki, 2004).

The tourism product is chiefly an experience. This indicates that it is intangible and its assessment by tourists is similar to that of numerous intangibles, more in the eye of the tourist than amenable to evaluation by the enumeration of tangible products. The tourism product is generated as it is used. This is due to its typically intangible nature; it cannot be stored or

transferred. For example, hotel rooms cannot be stored and, if not used, sold on a subsequent night. Tourists must be in physical attendance to use the tourism product. This quality of tourism means that the supplying community is a hosting community and, as such, it should be able to deal psychologically and physically directly with tourists. Since the community is serving tourists and providing them with enjoyment, its hosting must be positive and cheerful. The tourism industry is usually comprised of a high proportion of small entrepreneurships. Most tourism operations are intensive in service provision, often by individuals. This follows from the intangible character of the tourism product; only a small number of physical goods exchanges hands. An associated quality is that people offer much of the tourism product as they provide services to tourists. This feature of the tourism industry is not readily affected by technological innovations (Blank, 1989).

Meeting people from dissimilar cultures, getting to know the local culture and spending time with indigenous peoples in a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere can be some of the enjoyments of travel (Mann, 2000). From the hospitality point of view, indigenous peoples working in small operations, e.g. small hotels, and providing personal services to tourists, can contribute positively to the delivery of intangible tourism products.

#### 2.4.3 Cultural heritage in oases

Oases are often distinctive communities in peripheral areas with their own traditions, heritage, arts, lifestyles, places, and values as conserved and passed on between generations (Vidal, 1954). Traditional agricultural systems and pre-modern lifestyles still control authentic oases (Al-Hamarneh, 2005). The major qualities of the traditional architecture in these settlements include an emphasis on local materials and construction processes, and focus on their environmental sustainability. The appreciation and successful conservation of the local heritage

depend on the involvement and support of the indigenous peoples (Filippi, 2006). In oases, heritage includes not only the built heritage but also the oral or the living heritage. As a result, relationships between heritage and local communities include much more than merely matters of employment and income (UNWTO, 2006). People in authentic oases often have their own language, for example, the Berber language as spoken in the Sahara. Also on traditional feast days and at weddings, the women still bring out their vast hoards of silver ornaments. The indigenous people in Siwa oasis are Berber (the indigenous ethnic group of North Africa west of the Nile Valley. They inhabit an area from the Atlantic to the Siwa oasis, in Egypt, and from the Mediterranean to the Niger River). Some hotels in oases reflect some aspects of heritage, for example, in ‘Auberge de Jeunes Internationale’ hotel in Figuig Oasis, Morocco, all rooms are furnished with local knickknacks. The drawing rooms include typical Moroccan: sofas along the walls, cushions everywhere, and a low table with the necessities for making tea ([http://www.igougo.com/lodging-reviews-b194207-Figuig-Auberge\\_de\\_Jeunes\\_Internationale\\_Goulmima.html](http://www.igougo.com/lodging-reviews-b194207-Figuig-Auberge_de_Jeunes_Internationale_Goulmima.html)).

Thus, the link between hotels and heritage tourism, experiential tourism, and the link between cultural heritage and oases are necessary and crucial in understanding the relationships between heritage and hospitality, especially in the interior of Egypt.

From the researcher’s perspective, the heritage-hospitality nexus is very sensitive. Both heritage and authenticity are multifaceted. However, for hospitality, the current focus is only on one face (the commercial face). The following are some perspectives about significant research needs which would heighten understanding of the heritage-hospitality nexus.

The respect due to cultural heritage requires that hotels applying a heritage-hospitality concept must be considered and judged within the cultural contexts to which they belong. In

addition, the respect due to basic rules of hotels such as safety and security, inventory control, and housekeeping must be considered in linking heritage with hospitality. A hotel management plan may be designed by the heritage place's indigenous peoples; it may be acceptable to them and it must be able to be implemented in the local political, social and environment context. The recognition of local characteristic requires widening formal and informal partnerships in the definition of the processes of developing heritage-hospitality links. Building creative ideas for authenticity, heritage and quality in hotels will deepen the link between them and hospitality, and help to avoid the mistake of promoting simple repetition or replication of cultural heritage forms. For example, the same traditional food type may not be served over and over again. It is important to draw on the expertise of heritage and hospitality specialists, professors and hotels owners who concentrate on how to link heritage and hospitality and to deepen the relationship between heritage and hospitality in curriculum in faculties specialized in hospitality studies.

## **2.5 Chapter summary**

Owning qualifying resources and getting a variety of benefits are main reasons for people of peripheral areas to be interested in tourism development. However, there are economic, environmental, social and political challenges linked to such interest. Additionally, there are undesirable economic, social and environmental risks linked to such interest.

Heritage is differently applied hotels (as an example of hospitality). Some apply the full meaning of heritage in local chain hotels such as *ryokan* in Japan, and in independent hotels in isolated areas such as the Adrere Amellal hotel in Siwa oasis in Egypt. In some situations, historic buildings are converted into hotels, which are commonly situated in cities. At the other end of the spectrum, some only use the name heritage without real application.

The uncontrolled relationship between heritage and hospitality dates back hundreds of years. This research tackles the concept of ‘heritage hospitality’ as a new concept; which represents a managed heritage-hospitality link through the application of, for example, traditional heritage and traditional hospitality in hotels. It aims to encourage the provision of a synergistic relationship between commercialization and authenticity in hospitality. This is certainly an area that deserves wide academic attention, especially in developing countries.

Aspects of authenticity that can be used to guide research and practice on the heritage-hospitality nexus include the original instead of copied, authentic experiences, and authentic people in authentic environment. However, the misleading forms include ‘authentic’ reproduction, staged authenticity, and the misuse of words such as ‘real’. The relationships between hotels, heritage tourism, experiential tourism, cultural heritage and oases are important for understanding the heritage- hospitality nexus.

## **Chapter 3: Research Methods**

### **3.1 Study site and study hotels**

#### 3.1.1 Study site

To provide a whole image about the study area, it is important to display some information about heritage and tourism in Egypt (the country where the study area is located), oases in Egypt and then the study area itself.

Egypt is one of the wealthiest countries in the world in terms of the amount of heritage it possesses. Egypt, however, does not have a distinguished image as a tourism destination (Baloglu, McCleary, 1999). In Baloglu and McCleary's study, Egypt is the only nation out of four, including Greece, Italy and Turkey, that does not possess an inimitable competitive advantage. Egypt, therefore, depends on famous archeological sites and monuments nationwide to attract tourists. However, the Western Desert Oases are a resource that can be used to diversify the tourism product through the development of cultural tourism, of which heritage is a part.

There are common problems in Egyptian tourism, for example, overcrowding of visitors which critically accelerates deterioration of heritage, and heritage abundance. In contrast to many countries, where the obstacle to developing heritage tourism is the availability of attractive sites and monuments, in Egypt, one of the main problems is the enormous number of cultural heritage sites and the lack of finance to support them. The government is unable to set aside a sufficient budget for the upkeep of so many sites (Hang, Kong, 2001). In Egypt, also, there is a narrow focus on cultural heritage as only monuments. There is an obvious neglect of other aspects of culture, particularly the Egyptian cultural traditions, habits, and customs. Indigenous peoples and their cultural heritage, so far largely neglected, have great potential to enhance the attractiveness of Egypt to tourists. However, a different approach is required to that which is currently in place



for such aspects of culture cannot be readily used like monuments, which may be displayed in specific places to large numbers of people at the same time.

There are many weaknesses in Saharan tourism development in Egypt. These weaknesses include under-exploitation of resources, shortage of hotel facilities, architectural and archaeological heritage in need of repair, and insufficient investment in and promotion of Saharan tourism (Hosni, 2002). Tourism in the Sahara provides travelers with a chance to experience the silence and vastness of the desert and to see changes of scenery and types of exoticism that are either attached to the unique quality of the sites (dunes, vast stretches of land and silence) or to living human productions (such as dwellings, culture, arts and crafts, and various lifestyles, as well as engravings, paintings and ruins). To draw upon these resources, it is necessary to adopt a more holistic approach to tourism development, the sustainability of which centres on maintaining and strengthening the natural and cultural diversity (Boumedine, 2008).

There are hardly any studies of heritage tourism in oases in Egypt in spite of their richness of tourism resources. Many tourists seek tourist destinations that offer pleasant experiences related not only to the natural environment but also to cultural heritage. Mainly aimed at sightseeing activities, with little attention having been paid to the protection and exploitation of minority culture, this opportunity to satisfy both tourists' demands and local economic development has been overlooked.

The oases circuit begins west of Cairo and continues west to Siwa before heading south-west towards the oases of Baharia, Farafra, Dakhla and Kharga. There are five major oases (Siwa, Baharia, Farafra, Dakhla and Kharga), the latter four forming a string of green isles set in an enormous undulating sea of aridity. Each of these oases has its own distinctive character.

While the settlements at Baharia and Farafra are still villages, those of Dakhla and Kharga are big towns surrounded by attractive historical sites.

The Western Desert remains one of the few places in the world where a visitor can experience a feeling of total isolation. From huge dunes to fantastical rock formations, the landscape varies noticeably and camping out overnight in such surroundings can be one of the highlights of a trip to Egypt. The Egyptian Sahara covers around two thirds of the country. Geographically, the oases are divided into two distinctive groups: the Siwa oasis to the west, close to the Libyan border, and the string of New Valley oases (Baharia, Farafra, Dakhla and Kharga) running south through the centre of Egypt, parallel to the Nile Valley (Hosni, 2002).

The oases of Dakhla and Kharga in Egypt belong to the modern type. In the modern oases, the socio-economic space is dominated by up-to-date infrastructure, business activities and construction. The oases of Baharia, Farafra belong to the historical type. In the historical oases, the socio-economic space is dominated by cultural landmarks, ancient ruins and well-established business activities. Siwa oasis is the only remaining authentic oasis in Egypt. In authentic oases, people live as their ancestors did (Al-Hamarneh, 2005).



Figure 3.1: Siwa oasis. Source: [http://www.minamar.com/images/map\\_siwa\\_oasis.gif](http://www.minamar.com/images/map_siwa_oasis.gif)

Siwa is the most mysterious of all of Egypt's oases; its history has been formed by many civilizations (Figure 3.1). It is the most authentic oasis in Egypt in that it has experienced fewer of the forces of modernization than other Egyptian oases. However, it is also changing. Hotels themselves are part of these changes. Application of aspects of heritage characteristics in hotels may make them a force for heritage preservation and the provision of authentic experiences, as well as increasing their attractiveness with positive economic implications. The Siwan people have their own culture and customs and, besides Arabic, they speak their own Berber (Amazigh) language. Women still wear traditional costumes and silver jewelry. So, the greater involvement of authentic local people in more authentic places may help to increase the use of local heritage in Siwan hotels, thereby facilitating its preservation. Siwa oasis is the northernmost of the five oases

of the western Egyptian desert. It is sited 120 km east of the Libyan border and 300 km south of the Mediterranean coast. The oasis stretches in an east–west direction along a depression 17 m below sea level. One can get to Siwa either by motor coach or private cars. It has been a well-known trade centre since ancient times. Many mummies have been discovered in Siwa and in the surroundings testifying to the presence of settlements at least since 2000 BC. The most significant findings are sited in three hills: 1. the Gebel al Mawta (the Mountain of the Dead) where three Egyptian tombs are found together with a Roman-era necropolis featuring dozens of rock-cut tombs; 2. Aghurmi where the ruins of the oracle temple of Amoun date back to Amasis, Pharaoh of the XXVI dynasty; and 3. The ancient fortress of Shali built in the XII century on the highest hill of the oasis in order to better defend it from the attacks of Arab tribes from the desert (Rovero et al., 2009).

Siwa has strong investment potential due to its unique environmental, agricultural and tourist qualities. The priority is given to projects such as the establishment of a factory for packing dates and olives for export, a handicraft centre to develop human resources, and an industrial complex to produce salts both for local demand and export. However, investment and development projects may preserve Siwa's unique historical, cultural and environmental nature. Unlike the hundreds of high-end luxury resorts on the Red Sea and northern coasts of Egypt, Siwa boasts its “traditional” experience. There are no five-star hotels, at least not yet. The research will focus on the Siwan hotels. This research will be the first of its kind in Egypt, in general, and also the first in the study area ‘Siwa oasis’. It is a contribution towards saving the cultural heritage in this area. Especially, this oasis provides both authentic factors (e.g. isolation, underdevelopment, heritage makers) and commercial factors (e.g. considering hotels as only places to eat and sleep).

### 3.1.2 Siwan hotels: the study hotels

To provide a complete picture of the study hotels, it is important to display some information about hotels in Egypt (the country where the study area is located), hotels in Saharan oases and then the study hotels themselves.

Attempts to supply a greater variety of tourism products (beyond the cultural tours concentrating mostly on the Pharonic sites) have led to major hotel-building projects in Aqaba (to exploit the attractions of Red Sea marine life in Taba, Dahab, Sharm El Sheik and Ras Sudr). As such, the 140,000 existing beds available in 1996 increased by an additional 36,000 on the edges of the Sinai in the year 2002. In Egypt, the entirely privately-financed hotel projects are chiefly focused on the international coastal-resort market. Little attention is paid to the Saharan oases in the west of the country. And yet they are rich in cultural heritage. The oasis region (e.g., Siwa oasis) offers little in the way of accommodation (Hosni, 2002).

Hotels in the Saharan oases need to be ambassadors for their cultural heritage. This may help to change the prevailing view of hotels as simply places to stay overnight, to eat and to drink. In addition, it may be a corrective to an approach that does not currently acknowledge the relationship between hotels and cultural heritage.

There are 24 hotels in Siwa. The research focuses on all hotels that reflect some aspects of Siwan heritage (10 hotels) to determine the current situation of heritage application and what may be done to deep and enhance the heritage-hospitality link in Siwan hotels.

## **3.2 Research design**

### 3.2.1 Research question

As discussed in Chapter two, the link between heritage and hospitality dates back hundreds of years. However, there are no firm rules that manage this old relationship. The

research tackles the concept of ‘heritage hospitality’ as a new concept; which represents a managed heritage-hospitality link through the application of traditional heritage and traditional hospitality in hotels. It aims at providing a synergistic relationship between commercialization and authenticity in hospitality.

Hospitality research exhibits an imbalance in approach. Such imbalance is a result of the uneven application of semantic and evidential approaches (See p. 16). The semantic approach may relate more obviously than the evidential to past hospitality patterns such as ‘guest houses’ for Christian pilgrims in Europe in the Middle Ages. Here, hospitality is considered as a humane or social phenomenon. However, the evidential approach may relate more obviously than the semantic to current hospitality examples, such as international hotel chains which are the same and more focusing on commercial profit than the generic understanding of hospitality. Here, hospitality is located as a commercial or economic phenomenon. That means, hospitality operations would define an unbalanced approach under the following circumstance: application of one aspect more than the other, for example, application of commercial aspect more clearly than social aspect. The following research question will be addressed: What links exist, if any, between heritage and hospitality and how can these links be enhanced through hotel management? Five research objectives follow from this question (What is the present status of heritage application in Siwan hotels? What is the possibility of applying the ‘heritage hospitality’ concept in Siwan hotels? What is the role of hotels in the supply and demand for heritage tourism? What relationships, if any, exist between indigenous peoples and hotels? and Can guidelines be developed for controlling the relationship between heritage and hospitality in Siwan hotels?). These questions will be explored through field research undertaken at selected hotels in Siwa oasis:

This research involves questioning about: current applied heritage attributes, possible heritage characteristics that may be applied, the role of hotels in overcoming the threat of losing cultural heritage, the importance from the tourists' point of view of experiencing heritage inside hotes, the relationships between indigenous peoples and hotels, the ways of applying heritage hospitality concept in hotels, and the flexible and inflexible relationships between heritage and hospitality in such hotels.

### 3.2.2 Mixed Method approach

A mixed methods research design was employed to explore the research question. It involved both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative research is a way of addressing phenomena systematically. It frequently entails developing research hypotheses and examining them through the testing of relationships among variables. In this process, the researcher strives to keep an objective position vis-à-vis the research and their informants. The variables are commonly measured by research instruments to get numerical data which, in turn, can be analyzed utilizing statistical procedures (Creswell, 2009). The qualitative research process includes taking into consideration emerging questions and procedures and the research process is not usually firmly decided in the early stages. Consequently, changes in procedures and even research question frequently occur during the study process, allowing the researcher to learn from experience and to gain from this learning while conducting the research (Creswell, 2003). Data are usually collected in the participants' setting (Creswell, 2009). Along with the increasing complexity of issues that are being explored in the humanities and social sciences, the application of mixed methods research has expanded in current decades (Creswell, 2003). Mixed methods research involves broad data collection and analysis through both textual and numeric integration (Creswell, 2003). However, by integrating the strengths of qualitative and

quantitative approaches, mixed methods research can provide a more comprehensive analysis of the research question, potentially allowing the generalization of findings to a population as well as developing a detailed and in-depth view of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2003).

A mixed methods approach was chosen for this research for five reasons. First, the heritage-hospitality link is a new research emphasis. Exploration of the relationship between heritage and hospitality is a recent development. An examination of past research efforts provides an understanding of research directions and the boundaries of a field or discipline. Several authors in the hospitality industry have emphasized that more precise research is needed for development of the field (Eder, Umbreit, 1988; Jones, 1996; Lewis, 1988; Taylor, Edgar, 1996; Evans, 1992).

Second, there is a lack of use of mixed method approaches in hospitality research. In hospitality research, the focus has been on human resources in the lodging and food service industries and on user satisfaction. Survey methods have been the most commonly employed research design. However, in hospitality as a social research field, scholars should deal with multiple independent and dependent variables. Therefore, hospitality researchers should be encouraged to use more varied research methods to gain a better understanding of the topics studied and to offer richer information and more advanced knowledge to both scholars and industry practitioners. Because the use of a variety of research methods is related to the complexity and maturity of a field or discipline, other research types such as field studies (qualitative and quantitative) and experiments should also be considered by researchers to develop and test theories applied to the hospitality field (Baloglu, Assante, 1999).

Third, the research question used in this study is both investigative and confirmatory. Therefore, a mixed methods approach is essential because it permits the answering of research



question (e.g., To what extent do you think that visitors experience Siwan culture and heritage while actually staying within your hotel as interpreted by key informants?) and the testing of hypotheses (e.g., Does gender influence hotel guest preferences of heritage in Siwan hotels?) within one single study (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

Fourth, a mixed method permits the recording of various views and creates deeper, fuller and broader insights from a diversity of interests and perspectives (Greene & Caracelli, 1997). In this research, mixed methods are used to explore a diversity of perspectives (the supply side of Siwan hotels and demand side of hotel guests) to get a bigger picture of the phenomenon being studied.

Fifth, a mixed methods approach follows a basic principle that the methods selected should have complementary strengths and have no overlapping weaknesses (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003). In this regard, when the results of the analyses of diverse types of data (i.e., data from questionnaire, interviews, focus group, and observation) in reference to one phenomenon (i.e., heritage hospitality) are coherent, a stronger inference can be made. When the results are diverse or contradictory, the findings are also valuable because they raise the need to re-examine the theoretical frameworks from which research question and hypotheses are derived.

### **3.3 Methods of Data Collection**

Fieldwork for the dissertation was carried out in Siwa from October 2, 2010 to October 21, 2010 using quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (key informant interviews, observations and focus group) research techniques. Major research methods that are employed in the research include key informant interviews, questionnaire surveys, focus group and observations. The reasons for opting for these research methods are discussed in the following sections.

### 3.3.1 Key Informant Interview

The interview is an example of social interaction between two people and it is ruled by specific norms regulating this social interaction (Bailey, 1987). Personal interviews are a significant method of collecting data in tourism research. They can provide deep insights into individual experience and the implications of events to people (Smith, 2010). The major advantage of an interview is that it offers insight into the dissimilar opinions or debates within a group. It is used regularly as an elastic tool to get in-depth information from the interviewees (Babbie, 2004; Creswell, 2003; Walliman, 2006; Bailey, 1987). Other advantages of the interview include its completeness for the interviewer can make sure that all of the questions are answered (Dunn, 2005) and its flexibility for interviewers can search for more specific answers and can repeat a question when the response points out that the respondent misunderstood (Bailey, 1987).

However, the interview possesses possible bias introduced by the presence of the researcher and the researcher's data interpretation, interviewees' personal differences in expression, and the off-site interview settings, which might affect interviewees' behaviour. Furthermore, the respondents' answers can be influenced by their reaction to the interviewer's gender, accent and social class. In addition, heavily depending on human resources, interviews tend to have a smaller sample size than questionnaire surveys. Other problems of interviews are that they can be very time-consuming (Creswell, 2003; Bailey, 1987).

Three types of interviews are commonly recognized: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. Structured interviews use an interview schedule that usually encompasses a list of standardized questions, so the process is question-focused. Unstructured interviews concentrate on personal insights and histories; thus all questions are open-ended (Dunn, 2005). Semi-

structured interviews use a mixture of open and closed questions (Bailey, 1987; Walliman, 2006). In addition, semi-structured interviews unfold in a conversational way, offering participants the opportunity to explore issues they feel are important (Longhurst, 2003). There are three main methods of conducting interviews: face-to-face, by phone, and in a focus group (Creswell, 2003).

This research employed semi-structured, face-to-face, and focus group interviews based on consideration of the strengths and weaknesses of the different types and methods. Face-to-face interviews allow eye contact with the respondent facilitating non-verbally communication (Bailey, 1987). They suit a variety of situations and people from different backgrounds (Walliman, 2006). A face-to-face interview is a flexible survey strategy (McLafferty, 2003). In addition, the interviewer may evaluate the quality of responses, notice if a question has not been correctly understood, encourage a complete answer and, finally, understand better the responses by viewing the visual signals of the interviewees (Walliman, 2006).

The major reason for choosing the semi-structured interview method is its flexibility, as this form of interview does not require all the questions to be designed and phrased in advance. This type of interviews has, to a certain extent, a pre-arranged order, yet the researcher may be flexible in the ways topics are addressed by the participant. The researcher may conduct such interviews with a somewhat open framework which allows her to have a focused conversation with her participants. Semi-structured interviews do not require all questions to be formulated ahead of time. General questions may be prepared for the interviews and then other questions may be produced during the interview, allowing the researcher to explore details and the participant to discuss topics.

In this research, General Managers of Siwan hotels were identified as key informants. Semi-structured and face-to-face interviews were employed with them. Persons in such positions may have appropriate experience and knowledge about how to create a synergistic relationship between commercialization and authenticity in hotels, and the possibility of applying the heritage hospitality concept as a new concept which may assist in achieving such a synergistic relationship. In addition, hotel general managers can help to identify heritage characteristics that may be applied in such hotels.

Eight interviews were conducted with General Managers in 2010 instead of the target of 10. The interview instrument was made up of closed and open-ended questions. One general manager manages 3 hotels: Adrere Amellal, Albabenshal and Shali lodge. In other words, one interview addressed the operation of these three hotels. Five general managers were not Siwan but were from outside Siwa; only three general managers that were interviewed were Siwan. The researcher called each general manager in order to arrange an appointment. First, the researcher began by calling the downtown hotels (Shali lodge, Albabenshal, Siwa Dream Lodge and the Siwa Paradise hotel where the researcher stayed. Then, the researcher called the more remote hotels (Adrere Amellal, Siwa Shali resort, Dehiba, Taghaghien I3sland resort, Desert Rose hotel, Qasr Alzaituna).

Fata Morgana hotel and Siwa villa were closed during the study period. Instead, the general managers of Qasr Alzaituna and Siwa paradise were interviewed. Each interview was arranged in advance by making an appointment with the general manager. The researcher began each interview by briefly introducing herself. She provided background information and the interview followed. During the interviews, detailed notes were taken. Also, a recording device was used to record all interviews. The transcription of the recording was carried out after each

interview. All interviews were conducted in Arabic and in a face-to-face situation. The interviews were held in different places in the respective hotels: the garden, the lobby and the general manager's office.

In summary, through key informant interviews, information was collected directly from 8 general managers responsible for 10 hotels in Siwa. It was also possible to infer some information on hotel guests from these interviews.

### 3.3.2 Questionnaire survey

Questionnaires are a useful means for collecting original data about people, their behaviour and social interactions, attitudes and opinions (McLafferty, 2003). Questionnaires are an information-gathering method often used in mixed method research that employs quantitative and qualitative data sources and analyses (McGuirk, O'Neill, 2005). They arguably are the most significant method for collecting data for tourism research (Smith, 2010). The major advantage of open-ended questions is that answers are not limited by the researcher's knowledge and viewpoint, so the likelihood of missing significant aspects is lowered. However, as answers are more varied and more detailed, it is usually hard and time-consuming to conduct statistical and comparative analysis. Closed questions are easier to answer, compare and analyze; but they may encourage researcher's bias by offering answers or wording inclined in a particular direction (Bailey, 1987). In general, a questionnaire contains closed questions, such as multiple choices and scaling questions. Sometimes, it includes a few open-ended questions at the end asking for comments (Creswell, 2003).

A self-administered questionnaire survey-based approach was selected as the most suitable method for the proposed research. The important advantage of self-administered

questionnaire surveys is that the researcher can reach a large number of the targeted population in a relatively short period of time, which will facilitate quantitative analysis.

The purpose of interviewing tourists was to learn the customers' perspectives on experiencing heritage inside Siwan hotels. Thus, a demand perspective with an emphasis on tourists was chosen to complement the previous emphasis on supply (hotels). The aim was to clarify the role of hotels as a significant part of the support services necessary for heritage tourism. In addition, hotel guests' preferences were sought concerning the ways of conveying heritage in Siwan hotels. In this study, a mixture of closed and open-ended questions was used to draw upon their particular strengths and weaknesses and to get more representative results.

The questionnaire consisted of six printed pages divided into six sections (Appendix I). The first focused on identifying the tourists' trip information, using five closed questions. The second focused on identifying the tourists' lodging information, using 4 closed questions and one open-ended question. The third focused on clarifying their interest in culture, using one three-point Likert scale question, one closed question and one open-ended question. The fourth focused on identifying the importance of experiencing heritage inside Siwan hotels using five-point Likert scales. The fifth focused on identifying the tourists' preferences about the ways of conveying heritage in Siwan hotels, using five-point Likert scales. The sixth included questions commonly used to document the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents.

The English version of questionnaire was developed, and reviewed and revised by my supervisor to ensure that it would fulfill the intended research purposes. Then, the questionnaire was translated into Arabic by the researcher. Friends and relatives of the researcher were invited to read through the questionnaire and provide their inputs on the wording of the questionnaires. Bi-lingualism was expected to be a significant feature of the questionnaire; however, it was not

used. The questionnaires were distributed in English. The researcher did not employ the Arabic copy which was designed to be completed by domestic respondents. The four domestic respondents were tour guides and they were able to answer in English. It was noticed that five-point Likert scale questions were confusing for a few respondents (about 4 respondents). They read “very unimportant” as “very important”. However, they recognized that and corrected their answers. The researcher had to add a ‘don’t know’ choice to ‘yes’ and ‘no’ choices to one question. The question was ‘If you visit Siwa again, would you stay in this hotel?’ Some respondents had just arrived and they had not yet decided.

Moreover, due to the limited time of respondents’ holiday in Siwa, it was feared that they might be reluctant to take to answer a questionnaire. In order to encourage French respondents, the researcher employed her French-speaking small daughter in order to introduce the researcher and the questionnaire. This helped to nicely attract French respondents to complete the questionnaires.

At the survey time, most tourists were on package tours. One of them could easily introduce the researcher to the rest. So, it was only necessary for the researcher to talk to one member of a group to explain the purpose of the research and in some situations, 4-7 questionnaires were answered in 20 minutes. In all cases, the respondents filled out the questionnaire by themselves, only asking the researcher to clarify when they had questions. Most questionnaires were administered in hotel restaurants after dinner, but three respondents preferred to take them to their hotel rooms due to lack of time, leave them for the researcher at the front desk. The questionnaire required approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

It was planned to interview 10 tourists staying at each sample hotel: 100 altogether. Sixty four foreign and four domestic guests in Siwan hotels were identified to answer the questionnaire in the time available (Table 3.1). Thus, only 68 tourists answered the questionnaire.

Table 3.1: Distribution of tourist interviews

<b>Researched hotels</b>	<b>Domestic tourists</b>	<b>Foreign tourists</b>	<b>Total</b>
Shali lodge	1	9	10
Albabenshal	0	7	7
Siwa Paradise	1	9	10
Siwa dream lodge	0	8	8
Adrere Amellal	0	10	10
Siwa Shali resort	0	8	8
Taghaghien	1	1	2
Desert Rose	0	9	9
Qasr Al Zaituna	0	2	2
Dehiba	1	1	2

There are several reasons for the target not being met: (1) some hotels considered asking 10 hotel guests to be a big number. They asked the researcher to provide hotel guests with less than 10 questionnaires (Albabenshal, Siwa dream lodge, Siwa Shali resort and Desert Rose); (2) two tour guides did not permit the researcher to talk with their tourist groups. They asked the researcher to leave the questionnaires with them and they would distribute them and leave them by the front desk, but they did not do that; and (3) some hotels did not have enough guests during the time of survey to complete their quota (Taghaghien and Dehiba). However, the research did get 10 hotel guests from three of the hotels (Shali lodge, Siwa Paradise and Adrere Amellal). Most questionnaires were distributed by the researcher herself. This was particularly useful as it provided the opportunity to check that questionnaires were answered fully. Some tourists did not answer the ‘Why?’ questions; however, the researcher noticed this immediately and tried to make sure that this was addressed as much as possible. In the Dehiba and Taghaghien hotels,



questionnaires were left by the reception and then collected later by the researcher. Four questionnaires were answered and left by the front desk in Taghaghien and Dehiba hotels.

During the 19-day survey in October 2010, as indicated above, 68 questionnaires were collected at 10 Siwan hotels (all of the available hotels which reflect some aspects of Siwan heritage and which had guests at the time of survey).

### 3.3.3 Personal Observation

Observation is flexible, qualitative and mirrors the first-hand experience gained in the research area from the researcher's perspective (Creswell, 2003). It can be a valid and effective accompaniment to quantitative research methods such as questionnaires (Hall and McArthur, 1998). However, problems exist with reliability and generalizability of findings based solely on a researchers' observation because it is unavoidably restricted by the specific time and location of the observation and highly personal to researchers' perceptions and interpretations (Babbie, 2004; Creswell, 2003). Observation can be used to gather data on non-verbal behaviour, can be conducted in the natural environment rather than in an artificial laboratory setting, and can easily be conducted over time. However, problems exist with lack of control over the study setting, difficulties of quantification and coding of data, a sample size that is often small, problems of gaining entry to the setting, and lack of anonymity while studying sensitive issues (Bailey, 1987).

The researcher made observations in Siwa in October 2010. Observation in this study occurred on three levels: (1) observation in Siwa oasis; (2) observation of all hotels in Siwa to gain an inventory of their characteristics, particularly their use of observable heritage attributes, and (3) more detailed observation of the characteristics and operation of the case study hotels. The researcher used systematic observation at both the scale of the Siwa oasis and in individual

hotels. Some preliminary work was done by using several web sites. This work included both Siwa oasis, in general, and all hotels in the oasis. In addition, some later work was done in order to compare between what was contained on the web sites and what was observed by the researcher. This comparison helped to identify what to look for regarding Siwan heritage in the Siwan hotels. For this study, observation experience was especially important in the early phases of the research where ideas were generated and questions were created. Direct observation experience was combined with other quantitative and qualitative research methods in order to balance the strengths and weaknesses of different methods, leading to a more insightful study.

In the oasis, the researcher prepared some questions to guide the observation. Such questions covered both natural and archaeological scenery, exploration of intangibles, such the behaviour of Siwan people with tourists, and the roles of Siwan young women, infrastructure (for example, paved roads, picnic facilities, signage and trail markings), and services provided for both tourists and Siwan people. Acting as a visitor, the researcher also experienced transportation to site, service standards on site, and the attractiveness of tourism resources on site, which contribute to an overall understanding of tourist experiences in Siwa oasis.

In hotels, the observation process was divided into three parts: (1) checklists, (2) staff observation and (3) comparison between hotel information on web sites and the researcher's on-site observations. Systematic observation was used to focus on and record aspects of the hotels, such as building characteristics, internal atmosphere, and the activities and services available. It was complemented by a review of such information sources as brochures, websites, menus and visitor programmes. Casual conversations were also initiated to gain first-hand impressions of staff and managers concerning the idea of applying heritage-hospitality in hotels and a

comparison between information provided on internet sites and field observation. Note-taking helped in the observation process.

The researcher prepared 24 check lists with 25 items. Such items were grouped under 4 categories (basic information, basic facilities, tangible heritage characteristics and intangible heritage characteristics). The researcher took photos of all Siwan hotels. Such photos covered both external and internal parts of each hotel. This photography helped to convey the current situation regarding the application of tangible heritage in Siwan hotels. In addition, the photographs helped ground the thoughts expressed by the proprietors of the hotels.

#### 3.3.4 Focus group

A focus group is a form of interviewing, but one involving a group of people, usually between 6 and 12, who meet in an informal setting to talk about a specific topic that has been set by the researcher. The facilitator keeps the group on the topic but is otherwise non-directive, allowing the group to discover the subject from as many angles as they please (Smith, 2010; Longhurst, 2003). Semi-structured interviews and focus groups are alike in that they are conversational and unofficial in tone. Both allow for an open response in the participants' own words rather than a 'yes or no' type answer (Longhurst, 2003). In fact, the researcher used both interview and focus group in order to cover the important application points of the heritage hospitality concept in Siwan hotels.

The General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority helped and guided the researcher in the identification of the focus group participants. The researcher contacted him upon arrival in the oasis. In this study, the focus group consisted of the following participants: (1) a well-educated Siwan man with a bachelor degree from the faculty of commerce. He wore traditional Siwan dress; (2) the General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority in Siwa; (3)

a representative of EQI 'Environmental Quality International' which is a sustainable development initiative engaged in the delivery of environmental consulting services; (4) the General Manager of archaeological sites in Siwa; (5) a tour operator, and (6) a tour guide. In other words, this group was invited to provide views from different perspectives. It was expected that this group would have appropriate experience and knowledge about the relationship between indigenous peoples and Siwan hotels, and the relationship between heritage tourism and Siwan hotels.

It was difficult to gather the focus group together in one meeting. Such participants were met, at night, in an informal setting. Two separate meetings were held as follows: (1) the General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority, the General Manager of archaeological sites in Siwa and the representative of EQI 'Environmental Quality International' met together inside the building of the Egyptian Tourism Authority; and (2) the tour operator, the tour guide and the well-educated Siwan man met in the restaurant of Siwa Paradise hotel after the dinner time: it was the most suitable time for them after finishing their work. The researcher facilitated both meetings herself in order to keep the group on the topic. However, discussion was not directed so that the group could explore the subject from as many angles as they pleased.

One session occurred for each group. Each session covered the topics of employing Siwan peoples in Siwan hotels and the role of Siwan hotels in deepening heritage tourism in Siwa oasis. In each session, interaction occurred between research participants as the group discussed issues pertaining to the research objectives. The focus group meetings occurred at the end of the field research. The researcher presented the preliminary findings of her research in the focus group meetings and the groups were able to share and validate the researcher's insights.

### **3.4 Methods of Data Analysis**

For quantitative data, SPSS was used to analyze hotel guest questionnaires. For qualitative data, content analysis was used to analyze key informant interviews, observations and focus group.

#### **3.4.1 Quantitative Data Analysis**

The survey data were coded and analyzed primarily using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 19 to examine experiencing heritage in Siwan hotels and preferences of heritage application in Siwan hotels. Preliminary analyses were conducted to examine the quality of the data. Shapiro-Wilk tests were run to test whether the dependent variables were normally distributed. The Shapiro-Wilk testing included a comparison between the distribution of the variables being studied and a theoretically normal distribution (Pett, 1997). If the deviations from normality are sufficient, the distribution being examined is considered not to be normal. The null hypothesis - the data show a normal distribution - is rejected if the obtained significance level is less than the predetermined level of alpha (i.e., .05). The results of the Shapiro-Wilk tests showed that the dependent variables used in this study did not show a normal distribution: all p values were less than .05 (the significance level used in this research). The non-normally distributed data, together with the ordinal level of the dependent variables (5-point Likert scale); indicate that non-parametric tests are more appropriate than parametric tests for this study.

The analytical procedures that were adopted are as follows: Firstly, descriptive statistics were calculated to determine the demographic characteristics (i.e. age, gender, education, occupation, place of origin, and monthly income) of the participants as well as to investigate

information about trip, lodging and interest in culture, experiencing heritage in Siwan hotels and preferences for heritage applications in Siwan hotels.

Secondly, a Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to determine whether the first and repeat visits to Siwa oasis differ from each other; it was also used to evaluate the influence of socio-demographic characteristics on experiences and preferences regarding heritage in Siwan hotels. This non-parametric test, similar to the parametric T-test, was used to determine whether or not significant differences exist between two independent samples when the assumptions of T-tests are not met (Pett, 1997, Smith, 2010). Mann-Whitney U tests are similar to T-tests when comparing measures of central tendency between two independent samples; however, they differ from T-tests in using medians rather than means for comparison. To run a Mann-Whitney U test, the scores on the dependent variable for both samples are combined into one group and ranked from lowest to highest. The two samples are then separated out, and the assigned ranks for each group are summed up. If the sum of the ranks for one group is sufficiently larger than that of another group, it can be concluded that the two groups are not from the same population.

Thirdly, a Kruskal-Wallis test was carried out to examine whether there were statistically significant differences among hotel guests' experiences and preferences regarding heritage in Siwan hotels by occupation and age. The non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test is a generalization of the Mann-Whitney-U to determine whether or not significant differences exist among three or more groups when the dependent variables are not normally distributed and are computed at the ordinal level (Smith, 2010; Sheskin, 2007).

When a significant difference was found in the Kruskal-Wallis test, Mann-Whitney U tests were used as post-hoc tests to determine which of the pairs of groups being compared was significantly different.

Fourthly, Spearman's correlation was computed to determine the relationships between (1) hotel guest experiences in Siwan hotels, (2) importance of experiencing aspects of the local culture during the stay in Siwa and experiencing heritage in Siwan hotels, (3) importance of hotel guest preferences and importance of experiencing aspects of the local culture during stay in Siwa, (4) length of stay in Siwa oasis and length of stay in Siwan hotels, and (5) hotel guests preferences in Siwan hotels. The Spearman correlation coefficient analysis allows the researcher to examine the link between two variables using ordinal-level data. It is also appropriate for an occasion when the number of cases is small, which is the case of this research (Hill & Lewicki, 2007). The purpose of this test is to determine the strength of the relationship between the two variables (Smith, 2010).

Lastly, the responses for two open-ended questions concerning the reason(s) for hotel guests to staying or not staying in the same hotel again and their opinions about the ability of reflecting culture through hotels were content analyzed to identify the most frequently mentioned descriptors (words or phrases).

#### 3.4.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

Content analysis is a research method in which researchers gather and interpret textual or graphic information that can supply insights into diverse perception and experiences. The application of it is varied and, as a consequence, the specific steps involved in doing a content analysis also vary (Smith, 2010). This method is used to make replicable and applicable inferences from texts to the contexts of their application through summarizing, simplifying, or reducing large amounts of information into fewer content groups based on rules of coding (Krippendorff, 2004). It facilitates gaining an in-depth perception of the language or meaning of the document under study (Creswell, 2002). It is usually employed in social research to analyze

recorded transcripts of interviews and different media content (Babbie, 2005). In this research, the decision to use content analysis was based on research objectives and question. The researcher conveyed her message through: (1) format of communication (texts and sound recordings) and (2) layout of communication content (counts of keywords and phrases and grouping words). So, both empirical and subjective research approaches were used. The researcher had identified what she wanted to accomplish through her research and so the research questions were used as guides to solicit and gather information. This research followed an inductive approach (using specific examples to make a point). Induction is debatably the most widespread research type of logic. It refers to the gathering of specific pieces of information, from which common conclusions are obtained (Smith, 2010)

#### 3.4.2.1 Key informant Interview analysis

The analysis of key informant interviews included data coding, preliminary and meta-coding, and the sorting and combining of preliminary codes.

Once the researcher had finished key informant interviews, she tackled the task of coding the information she had gathered. In Siwa oasis, emphasis was placed on gathering and the lack of suitable working conditions resulted in postponement of transcribing and coding the data until the researcher was back in Canada. The researcher began by reading each line of the interview transcripts to identified themes, considering each transcript as a text full of hidden topics.

Coding the content of a transcript usually included two stages. The first included determining initial themes or ideas about what was being said: 'preliminary coding'. This stage is sometimes known as 'open coding' or 'line-by-line coding'. This is followed by a second stage in which one looks at the themes or ideas identified in the initial stage and determine fuller or deeper ideas that the preliminary codes reveal 'meta-coding' (Smith, 2010). The main purpose



of using the process of preliminary coding was to assist the researcher in keeping some distance from the observations by causing her to consider their comments as analytical expressions (Smith, 2010). The coding process was not linear. In other words, as the researcher read and coded more texts, she sometimes went back and recoded previous texts as her insights evolved (Smith, 2010).

In this study, the researcher considered every sentence, attempting to note meanings in each. Then, she created two column tables: the left-hand column contained lines from both key informant interviews and focus group interviews, and the right-hand column listed themes that the researcher inferred from the respondents' words. The researcher created 15 tables for key informant interviews. The researcher went through each transcript, looked for common themes as well as starting to think about underlying patterns and insights.

In this study, the researcher followed an old-fashioned approach. She wrote each preliminary code on an index card and then sorted these into a smaller number of increasingly more general themes (or meta-codes). Working through the preliminary themes, the researcher placed each card in a separate pile that represented a potential meta-code. The researcher undertook 'memo-writing'. These memos reflected the researcher's observations and thoughts as she went through her preliminary codes. Finally, the researcher supported her presentation of interview data with selected quotations that illustrated the points she wished to make based on what her subjects had revealed to her.

#### 3.4.2.2 Focus group analysis

The analysis of focus group comments is dissimilar to that of an interview. Some focus group participants may provide support for some statements and may provide more details.

Focus group data include comments and observation from several people, sometimes generated through a disagreement or a deep exchange of thoughts (Smith, 2010).

In this research, the researcher began by listening to the recording and reviewing session notes, from beginning to end. She went through the recording and notes a second time, making notes about major topics as well as about areas of disagreement. She listened to and looked at phrases and words that appeared to be meaningful, and noted whether different people appeared to have made the same point with dissimilar words. When differences of opinion were expressed, the researcher looked for the possible reasons for the dissimilarities. Finally, the researcher demonstrated focus group findings with direct quotations, and provided the position title of the participant who provided the quotation.

#### 3.4.2.3 Siwa observation

The researcher synchronized both typing up observation notes and taking photos of both Siwa oasis and Siwan hotels. In Siwa downtown, the researcher walked different streets. However, in Siwa desert, the researcher stopped by spots which might express an idea.

#### 3.4.3 Qualitative Validity

Qualitative validity refers to the steps undertaken by the researcher to check the accuracy of the findings and interpretation of the qualitative data. In this research, the researcher used numerous strategies to identify whether the findings were precise from the perspectives of the researcher, the Siwan hotel General Managers, focus group and the readers. The following strategies for checking validity were applied to improve the accuracy of the findings:

(1)Triangulating of data from different sources of information: The data for this study were gathered from several sources including key informant interviews, focus group interviews, oasis observation, Siwan hotel observation and hotel guest questionnaires.

(2) Adopting peer debriefing to review and ask questions about the qualitative part of the research: This strategy included sharing the interpretation of the qualitative data with other doctoral students.

### **3.5 Ethical Aspects**

Ethical questions include such subjects as personal disclosure, legitimacy and integrity of the research report, the undertaking of research in cross-cultural contexts, and matters of personal privacy (Creswell, 2009).

In this research, gathering the qualitative data implied gaining entry to the research area which may be linked with a broad range of ethical matters. These matters had been considered by the researcher through all the steps taken to gain entry to the setting and to secure permission to study the participants.

The ethical matters of this study mainly concern data collection as explained below:

(1) Research plans were reviewed by the Office of Research Ethics (ORE) at the University of Waterloo and received ethics clearance. This research involved key informant interviews and focus group which are qualitative research methods that are increasingly being considered as ethical inquiries (Creswell, 2009). The ORE clearance included permission to interview both General Managers of Siwan hotels and focus group participants.

(2) The researcher developed informed consent forms for participants to read (and sign in the case of the key informants and focus group participants) before they engaged in the research, as well as participant feedback letters. These forms acknowledge that participants' rights will be protected during data gathering.

(3) The research objectives were articulated orally and in writing in each interview so they were obviously understood by the participant.

(4) The participants' rights, interests, and wishes were given priority when choices were made regarding recording the interview and reporting the data.

(5) As this study involved observation and interviewing, the researcher put much effort into conducting the research with minimum trouble to participants. Visits to observe hotels, key informant interviews and focus group meetings were timed so that they intruded little on the flow of activities of participants.

(6) Following analysis, the collected data will be kept in a locked office and will be discarded three years after data collection so that it does not fall into the hands of persons who may use it inappropriately.

### **3.6 Challenges and limitations**

In order to conduct the proposed research effectively, several practical challenges had to be met. First, inside hotels, there was no opportunity to observe all internal components such as all guest rooms and hotel kitchens. Second, there were some difficulties in arranging interviews with hotel general managers who were likely to have sufficient experience and knowledge of the research issues. For example, it was necessary to get permission from Shali lodge manager in order to enter Adrere Amellal hotel. The researcher waited for some time until the security called this manager and gave her entrance permission. Third, no funding was available for this field research. In addition, the long distance to Siwa oasis meant more costs. Fourth, there was a lack in quantitative data. The Egyptian Bureau of Statistics provides no separate statistics for hotels in Siwa oasis. Fifth, the arid atmosphere; the climatic conditions in the surrounding area are very harsh throughout the year. Sixth, the timing of the fieldwork coincided with the high season when visitor-numbers peak. This made it possible to obtain relatively large tourist samples but still not as many as was expected. On the other hand, accommodation owners and tour operators

were very busy, which was reflected in their limited willingness to participate in the survey. Most survey distribution occurred at night after dinner time.

### **3.7 Chapter summary**

In summary, a mixed methods research design was adopted in this study, engaging both quantitative and qualitative methods. Major components included the use of data collection methods such as questionnaire surveys, key informant interviews, the researcher's observations and a focus group. The questionnaire survey elicited quantitative data to learn the customers' perspectives on experiencing heritage inside Siwan hotels. Thus, a demand perspective with an emphasis on tourists was chosen to complement the previous emphasis on supply (hotels). The aim was to clarify the role of hotels as a significant part of the support services necessary for heritage tourism. In addition, hotel guests' preferences were sought concerning the ways of conveying heritage in Siwan hotels. Key informant interviews were used to collect qualitative data from General Managers of Siwan hotels. Persons in such positions were expected to have appropriate experience and knowledge about how to create a synergistic relationship between commercialization and authenticity in hotels, and the possibility of applying the heritage hospitality concept as a new concept which may assist in achieving such a relationship. In addition, hotel general managers helped in identifying heritage characteristics that may be applied in such hotels. The researcher used systematic observation at both the scale of the Siwa oasis and in individual hotels. The focus group was employed to explore the relationship between indigenous peoples and Siwan hotels, and the relationship between heritage tourism and Siwan hotels.

Various statistical techniques in SPSS 19 were used to explore and analyze the quantitative data collected through the questionnaires for hotel guests in Siwan hotels. The most

frequently used technique was descriptive statistics (such as percentages, means and standard deviations) to examine responses to each question. Based on different types of variables, Mann-Whitney U tests, Kruskal-Wallis and Spearman correlation were used to examine differences across different variables. The qualitative data collected through interviews, focus group, observation and open-ended questions in questionnaires were content analyzed to identify critical issues and common themes.

## **Chapter 4: Research Findings**

This chapter presents the findings pertaining to (1) the observation of Siwa oasis as a whole, (2) the observation of Siwan hotels, (3) the questionnaire of hotel guests, (4) the interviews of hotel general managers, and (5) the focus group. It is based on quantitative and qualitative analyses of the data collected in Siwan hotels.

### **4.1 Siwa oasis**

Siwa is typically reached after a long 8-hour bus ride through the desert from Alexandria. The researcher had time to explore the oasis and to assess its prospects during a 19-day visit. Although the main focus of the research is to explore the link between hospitality and heritage inside hotels, it was important to observe the areas in which the hotels are located and the community in which they are embedded. The latter constitutes the Siwan context in which the hotels operate.

Siwa oasis is rich in both cultural and natural heritage. This oasis provides both authentic features, such as isolation, a low level of development and tangible and intangible aspects of heritage, as well as commercial features, such as the hotels where visitors can eat and sleep. Observation of these features can help the researcher to understand the relationships between commercialization and authenticity that exist in Siwa. Observation of Siwa oasis as a whole also led to a better understanding of the Siwan people and their lives, including information about heritage, which is an important aspect of this thesis. Such observations are used to clarify the way(s) of better investing in heritage and tradition in hotels, thereby clarifying the relationship between heritage and hospitality.

This section discusses the attributes of Siwa oasis in terms of its history and geography. Siwa has experienced the Egyptian, Roman, Hellenistic, Byzantine and Arab civilizations. A second century B.C. text on the walls of Edfu temple calls the oasis Pnta. The Romans and Greeks referred it as the oasis of Jupiter Amoun. The Arabs called it “AlWaha AlAqsa” which means “the far oasis”. Since the 17<sup>th</sup> century it has been called the oasis of Siwa which comes from a Berber word meaning “bird of prey, protector of the sun god Amoun-Ra”(Fakhry, 1982).

Siwa is considered to have been the capital city of a broad territory. During the Old Kingdom, it belonged to Tehenu which means the Land of Olives. In later times, numerous conquerors marched into Siwa, including Alexander the Great, Musa Ibn Nusayr and Muhammed Ali. During both World Wars, Siwa was a vital military theatre. In WWI, it suffered from Libyan Sanussi and English cross-fire and in WWII, both the Allied forces and the Germans had a military base there. For a little over twenty years, the link between Siwa oasis and the outside world was restricted. Tourists, visitors, and non-Siwan peoples were not allowed to enter the oasis. These restrictions were lifted in the 1980's and, after this, Siwa has started to change (<http://www.touregypt.net/siwa1.htm>).

Siwa oasis is located in Egypt's western desert, 550 km from Cairo and 306 km south west of Marsa Matrouh Governorate, the capital of Siwa.. The landscape is one of the most picturesque in Egypt: after miles of desert, Siwa appears as a fantastic aberration, surrounded by date palms, olive trees and salt lakes. The oasis covers about 1,200 km<sup>2</sup>. The northern border of the oasis is distinguished by rocky cliffs and hills. The flat stony plateau that extends south from Marsa Matrouh suddenly drops to a depression that contains a green oasis. The southern



boundary is an expanse of sand dunes that stretches to the Gilf Kebir and Libya and is the beginning of the Sahara (<http://wikitravel.org/en/Siwa#b>).

Siwa is famous for its continental desert climate, with no rains in the winter except in occasional years, and for its wells. In contrast to noisy Alexandria, where the journey to Siwa started and which is home to the researcher, the calm and peacefulness in Siwa are strikingly different with fresh air and a less complicated lifestyle.

Siwa oasis possesses two contradictory faces. The first of these has the trappings of modernity (shops, restaurants, buildings, transportation) whereas the second is more natural (only spacious desert, birds and reptiles). Each of these faces will be considered in turn.



Figure 4.1.1: The only hospital in Siwa (a modern building with glass windows)



Figure 4.1.2: The bus station (built from traditional materials including palm trunk)



Figure 4.1.3: Siwa taxi

For the townscape of Siwa, The town centre is very small, consisting of three streets and a market place and little else. The centre includes the police station, the tourist information office, the hospital (Figure 4.1.1) and the bus station (Figure 4.1.2). There are very few cars and bicycles and donkeys rule the streets. As the area is rather small, it is possible to reach anywhere by bike within 15 minutes. The Siwa taxi consists of a donkey and a carriage; the donkeys are harnessed in front of a small carriage that comfortably accommodates two or three medium-sized people (Figure 4.1.3). Such local taxi are a distinctive feature as the donkeys get their meals of hay in between trips and the sounds of donkeys can be heard clearly in the streets.

The researcher saw a few women on the streets and they usually moved about in small groups, almost never alone. Adult women can sit at the back of a carriage driven by a boy.



Figure 4.1.4: A concrete building and a donkey cart holding cement packages

Modern concrete buildings are now taking over from the traditional mud homes that insulated effectively against heat and cold (Figure 4.1.4).



Figure 4.1.5: Part of the Siwan desert on the way to the Adrere Amellal hotel and Taghaghien Island hotel. This artificial palm tree is the focus of a cell phone network which covers the whole oasis



Figure 4.1.6: Paved road in the desert

For desert of Siwa, it is surrounded by an extensive and spacious desert (Figure 4.1.5). There are some hotels and old houses in the desert. The Siwan desert represents a source of tourism income where tourists make safaris. There are some paved roads which facilitate travel to the hotels (Figure 4.1.6).

Siwa is famous for both natural and human-made products. Natural production is characterized by high quality dates, olives and pure spring water. Human-made production is characterized by the uniqueness of Siwan handicrafts. Projects are supported both internationally and locally; concentrate on investing in these natural and human-made products.

Siwa possesses traditional industries that depend on agricultural products such as dates and olives. The most important economic activity in Siwa is farming and the main products are olives and dates. Even the donkeys eat the sweet dates. In the last few years, the olives have become the most important farm product. They are either eaten or preserved in brine or oil. According to Marsa Matrouh Governorate figures (2010, p.7), “Siwa's annual production of olives is estimated at 40,000 tones, while another 26,000 tons of dried dates and pressed dates are processed, as well as 2,000 tons of therapeutic plants. Additionally, bottling mineral water is another important activity in Siwa since factories produce two million cubic meters per year”.

In earlier days, Siwan people grew more grain and other edible plants. As a result, life was quite self-sufficient. Dates and olives were taken to be sold outside by the caravans which, on their return trip, brought needed items such as sugar, tea and soap. Farming dates and olives is more remunerative so grain and other products, such as fruit and vegetables, are brought in by large trucks.

There are two types of projects in Siwa: (1) internationally-backed and (2) locally-backed projects. For internationally-backed, Siwa has investment potential due to its unique environmental, agricultural, and tourist characteristics. In 1998, the Italian government started a project to promote the agricultural sector in Siwa. The project is still active in support of sustainable agriculture. This project aims to diversify crops and enhance soil and water conservation methods. Also, with funding from the Italian government and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, “Siwa Environmental Amelioration” is a project for the conservation and sustainable management of the natural and cultural resources of Siwa. The project addresses environmental issues concerning the daily life of the local people mainly in the areas of soil and water management. The project activities involve the participation of NGOs and

the local people. The Italian projects have succeeded in marketing the Siwan dates and olives in Italy and Italy is a gateway for Siwa's high-quality agricultural products to other European countries (<http://www.eeaa.gov.eg/english/main/Env2003/Day1/PublicPrivate/said.scdec.pdf>).

Siwa produces a broad range of beautiful traditional handicrafts such as baskets made of palm fronds, dresses and silver jewelry. In cooperation with various development partners, some investment projects have been created to expand these traditional industries. A project to increase the handicraft products made by Siwan ladies was funded by the United Kingdom. The project started with a small number (50 Siwan ladies) but has now expanded to 300 participants. Their products are exported to Italy, the United Kingdom and other European countries ([http://www.utlcairo.org/english/progetti/progetti/6\\_siwa.html](http://www.utlcairo.org/english/progetti/progetti/6_siwa.html); <http://www.arabworldbooks.com/new/siwafiqi.html>).

For locally-backed projects, the Governorate of Matrouh has a comprehensive plan for development until 2020. Five projects have been given priority. These include the establishment of a factory for packing dates and olives for export, a handicraft centre to develop Siwan human resources, and an industrial complex to produce salts for both local demand and export. The plan also includes the establishment of tourist projects to promote medical tourism, safaris and environmental tourism (<http://www.arabworldbooks.com/new/siwafiqi.html>).

Another locally-backed project is the “Integrated program to develop Siwa oasis”. It was established in 2010 and aims to achieve gender equality by mobilizing women to be positive citizens by eradicate their illiteracy, enhancing the educational process through modernizing six schools with IT solutions, and promoting e-commerce for Siwan SMEs for marketing their agricultural products and cultural handicrafts through the SMEs portal

<http://www.stockholmchallenge.org/project/2010/integrated-program-develop-siwa-oasis-using-ict>).

The human scene includes both tourists and residents. There are numerous foreign tourists and they can often be seen wandering in Siwa's downtown holding their cameras. Others own houses and spend all of the winter in the oasis. Resident men are responsible for doing the shopping and doing everything outside of the home. Thus, it is uncommon to see resident women wandering in the streets.

Tourism, has, in recent decades, become a vital source of income in Egypt based on cultural, archeological and environmental resources. Tourism in Siwa began strongly in the mid-1980s. Such a start synchronized with the completion of a road between Siwa and Marsa Matrouh Governorate on Egypt's Mediterranean coast. A high percentage of tourists in Siwa oasis is foreign. As mentioned above, some of them own houses and they spend all of the winter in the oasis.

Before the road was paved, only a few visitors ventured to the oasis for it was a hard drive along a road from the coast. Tourists are now coming in increasing numbers to visit the oasis (about 10,000 tourists a year, of which more than 6,000 are foreigners) (<http://www.egitalloyd.com/egitalloyd.com/DestinationArticlesPDF/73882637-49d1-4243-af43-d1e3b358fa2e.pdf>). The tourist services and facilities in Siwa consist of several restaurants, dozens of souvenir shops, one bookshop and over twenty hotels. Much attention has been given to building hotels that use local materials. Moreover, there are a number of hotels under construction, especially in the desert. Guiding services are available for tourists to stay in the desert for several days.



Most visitors respect Siwan traditions: the researcher did not see a tourist in shorts, a miniskirt and or a low-necked dress in a public place. Some tourists staying in a desert hotel might get their dinner in a downtown hotel. For example, the researcher saw a group of tourists from the “Desert Rose” have their dinner in the roof restaurant of the “Albabenshal” hotel. Tourists in Siwa feel secure and many wander around until it is late.

Desert “safaris” are popular among tourists to Siwa. They take two forms. The first, is day trips; in fact, mostly half a day. The second is trips lasting a few days during which participants sleep in the cold desert night. They may have barbeques and enjoy an excursion over the sand mountains, driving across the dunes. They can stop at fossil sites and enjoy the desert panoramas. They can also swim in the occasional springs and return late in the evening.

The population of Siwa is 23,000. It consists of 11 different social groups or tribes (<http://www.egitalloyd.com/egitalloyd.com/DestinationArticlesPDF/73882637-49d1-4243-af43-d1e3b358fa2e.pdf>; [http://en.egypt.travel/practical\\_info/first\\_time\\_in/city/siwa-oasis](http://en.egypt.travel/practical_info/first_time_in/city/siwa-oasis)). Because of its remoteness and isolation, Siwa was long a small independent republic, ruled by the heads of the tribes that lived there. Most of the inhabitants reside in the downtown of Siwa. However, there are other scattered settlements in the oasis of which the most significant are Aghurmi, al-Maraqi, Khamisah, Abu Shuruf and al-Zaituna. The tribe of Aghurmi is believed to descend from the inhabitants of the oasis at the time of ancient Rome.

Even though communications have improved, few men and almost no women marry outside of Siwa's boundaries. Few women are seen in public. Once married, they stay at home and when they go out of the home, they cover their faces and wear a blue patterned wrap over their entire body. Although they continue to wear their traditional dress, Siwan people are

hospitable, friendly and helpful. They adapted easily to tourists. As shown in (Figure 4.1.3) (p.73), a tourist and a resident beside a Siwa taxi with a tourist sitting in the back.

Siwa is rich in both cultural and natural heritage. Siwan cultural heritage is represented by several archaeological buildings, distinctive crafts and unique customs. Cultural heritage in Siwa consists of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage. The tangible Siwan heritage can be observed all over the oasis. The downtown has a unique citadel and museum, and the desert has special temples and mountains. However, both the downtown and desert have the same handicrafts, food and beverages.



Figure 4.1.7: Part of Shali citadel

For tangible Siwan heritage, one of the key heritage sites is Shali citadel. The word “Shali” means town in the Siwan language. The citadel is more than 800 years old. It was built from *Karsheef* (large chunks of salt from Siwa Lake mixed with rock and plastered in local clay).

The citadel was built on the highest spot and the walls were supported with enormous salt blocks. It has two underground springs and one underground tunnel leading outside the walls. It still dominates the centre of Siwa (Figure 4.1.7).

Siwan people in the “Shali” were self-reliant for centuries and defended their citadel against intruders. Some houses are still inhabited and can be observed from the roof restaurant of the “Albabenshal” hotel which is embedded in the citadel itself. Such mud houses provide an impression of what the town looked like in past centuries. Now it still has a few inhabitants and there is a small mosque for prayer. It is opened for visitors to climb on their own and provide a viewpoint on the top of the mountain amongst the fortress remains to watch the sun set over Siwa Lake. In the evenings, the “Shali” is bathed in lights that reflect off the walls, making the citadel look magnificent. Since 1985, the Siwans have been building modern houses, abandoning the mud brick fortress of Shali.

A second heritage site is the Siwa House Museum which is located in the centre near the bus station. It displays artefacts representing different aspects of the Siwan lifestyle. The Siwan House was built through a Canadian cooperation project. The museum is situated in a house built in the traditional known as “*Karsheef*” in the Siwan language. Each room in the museum reflects a special aspect of the everyday life of Siwan people. The museum displays traditional women's heavy silver jewelry, wedding costumes, embroidered shawls, baskets, carpets, ceramics, household utensils, traditional pottery and musical instruments. Short but informative texts clarify the use of each object in the museum. The museum sells Siwan handicrafts and an Italian mission is still helping the local people to sell their products, including embroideries, carpets and dry mud pots. This mission helps to restore and finance the character of the oasis without it being contaminated by modern civilization.

The desert contains a number of ancient temples and archeological sites. The Oracle Temple was constructed in 663 - 525 BC at Aghurmi village and dedicated to the god Amoun. The temple of Amoun stands on the Aghurm Hill. Today, the temple consists of the outside walls and, within them, a well and the remains of the walls of two rooms. The view of the oasis from the temple is still magnificent but the remains of the oracle have deteriorated to almost nothing in the past millennia (<http://mirrorofisis.freeyellow.com/id522.html>).

In ancient times, the oracle was highly regarded and people came over long distances to consult it. Even Alexander the Great is believed to have come to the oracle to find out about his origins; he wanted to make certain he was the son of Zeus, the chief god in Greek mythology. The oracle's confirmation of the matter also meant that Alexander had the holiness of the Egyptian pharaohs running in his veins (<http://www.minamar.com/alexander-the-great-oracle-siwa-oasis.html>).

In 524 B.C. King Cambesius of Persia, son of Cyrus the Great sent an army of 50,000 men from Luxor to demolish the Siwan oracle. The whole army vanished, buried in the sand. No trace of it has been found to this day and this mysterious disappearance increased the prestige of the oracle throughout the area (<http://wikitravel.org/en/Siwa#b>).

The Temple of Umm Obeayda is the second temple of Amoun. It lies a short distance from the Oracle Temple. Two centuries ago, a government official of Siwa demolished the temple to acquire materials for the construction of the police station and the modern mosque in Siwa town. All that is left is a decorated broken wall of the temple in the midst of the palms (<http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/ummubaydah.htm>).

Jabal Almawta, the mountain of dead, is about 1 kilometer from the centre of Siwa. The older tombs in the necropolis date from the 26<sup>th</sup> dynasty (664-525B.C.) and the Ptolemaic period

(525-332B.C.). However, they were plundered by grave robbers and were re-used for burying the dead during the Roman period. There are many tombs cut into the hill of Jabal Almawta. They include Si Amoun, Niperathut, Crocodile, and Mesuisis (<http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/mawta.htm>).

A variety of other forms of tangible heritage exist in both the Siwan downtown and desert. Old buildings are scattered throughout Siwa. Remains of the old Roman town and deserted houses reflect the history of Siwa. Siwan houses were built according to the climatic requirements. This type of housing is characterized by warmth in winter and coolness in summer because they have mud walls and very large rooms. Small windows were used to limit air exchange. Such windows permitted the passage of both hot and cold air. The houses were oriented in a north – south direction with a large room with two large side doors, one in the north and one in the south, where men would gather to keep cool, talk and drink tea. The roof beams were made of palm wood and covered with straw and mud to increase the insulation and ward off flies and insects.



Figure 4.1.8: Siwan baskets used for both jewelry and food

Siwan people knew how to use each part of the palm tree. Women still practice handicrafts at home, turning out wicker baskets. Siwan people also produce unusually shaped date palm baskets, wooden bowls and pottery, though often now as souvenirs (Figure 4.1.8) and the women still embroider designs onto shawls and dresses.

Siwa Oasis is famous for Siwan Bedouin *Heml* and *kleem* (known in English as rugs) which are woven from pure wool and then warped. Such handicrafts can be hung on walls or placed on the floors. Siwan *Heml* has strips with brilliant colours on a dark red background. Parallelograms, circles and triangles are symbols that are commonly used in the decorative designs of Siwan *Heml* and *Kleem*.

Traditional silver jewelry became extremely rare after the death of the last silversmith in 1958 but now a new generation is re-creating the Siwan designs. The art of making Siwa's distinctive heavy silver jewelry is dying out and many old pieces have been sold to foreigners. The most famous silver designs are the *aghrow* and *adrim*. The *aghrow* is a heavy silver coil

which goes round the neck and holds the *adrim* which is a decorated disc of silver traditionally worn by unmarried women and passed on after their wedding day.

Siwa provides distinctive types of food and beverages. Local food is prepared only from fresh products. Local beverages are prepared only from natural sources such as palm trees.

People in Siwa still preserve their old home-cooked recipes. The researcher tried some Siwan foods in a traditional Siwan house. The wife of the driver, who accompanied the researcher during her visit, clarified the nature of most of their foods in detail. Most Siwan dishes are easy to prepare and are made with fresh ingredients found in the gardens or the market. Bread is an important part of the meal and is eaten with everything. A small piece is broken off and dipped into the food, although a spoon may be used as well. Most Siwan people consume dates and olives at every meal. These are preserved and prepared in various ways.

The most famous colours of Siwan food are brown, yellow and green. Siwan women cook on the floor. They usually use clay ovens for baking bread and fuel them with palm branches. Most homes also have two smaller clay ovens used for other cooking. The wood that is used to cook the food gives it a good flavour. The plates on which the food is served are mostly made from clay. Palm baskets are used to store some kinds of food.

The Siwan breakfast includes date paste (dates, olive oil and flour), home-made bread and a plate of olive oil into which the bread is dipped. Lunch is the main meal of the day and typically includes salad, rice or macaroni, olives and a vegetable dish. An example of dishes for regular daily lunch is *Reearin*. It is only found in Siwa and is a dip made of lentils cooked with Molokhia (known in English as “Jew’s Mallow”. It resembles spinach in taste and appearance) and hot green pepper. Siwan olive oil is usually drizzled over the top. A complete Siwan meal would include *Reearin*, a plate of olives, and bread.

For the Siwan lunch, the men and older boys eat first, setting aside a bowl of food for women and young girls. The husband has his own small table and a big bowl of food from which he eats with his sons. The women eat from another bowl but remain in the same room, unless there are male visitors.

Examples of dishes for special occasions are *Neseqqud* and *Emjerdig*. *Neseqqud* is a camel soup and is eaten by all who attend the tourism festival. *Emjerdig* is a kind of large cracker that is crumbled into the camel broth and then lemon juice is sprinkled on top.

“Water is for all” is a beverage tradition in Siwa. It is an obligation to offer water to anyone who may need it, friend or stranger, and many businesses and houses have water waiting outside, from which all may drink. For drinking water, a cup and a huge clay jar are situated in the shade of a tree palm. A recycled car tire is used to hold a traditional jar.



Figure 4.1.9: Siwan tea cups



The most famous beverages are very small cups of black tea and tea with peppermint (Figure 4.1.9). Large cups of local beverages such as *Karkadeh* (known in English as Hibiscus), *kharoob* (known in English as carob), *tamrhendi* (known in English as tamarind) *gommar* (a natural, sweet confection which comes from the heart of the palm tree) and *labgi* (a fermented beverage extracted from the palm) are also consumed.

At the end of each meal, strong tea is prepared by a man or a woman when no man is present. The first tea poured goes back to the teapot. The Siwans prefer their tea extremely strong and sweet. Everyone take a small glassful, which is sipped quickly. The next tea is brewed with of a long sprig of peppermint and this is most refreshing at the end of the meal.

For Siwan intangible heritage, although Siwa is in Egypt, the lifestyles are very different from those elsewhere in Egyptian. Some of the surviving traditions contrast with those in the rest of Egypt and the modern world but there are no difference between the downtown of Siwa and the desert as the same traditions are followed throughout the whole oasis.

It is not easy to experience the many Siwan traditions for Siwan homes are difficult to penetrate. It is rare for a foreigner or a non-Siwan to be invited home. Reception is done in a special room that has a separate entrance from the rest of the house to prevent the visitor from stepping inside the house. During the visit, the women will not be seen, except perhaps for the girls in the family. The Siwan people sleep on the flat roof during the summer and always keep their faces covered from the moon because of the superstition that moonlight causes madness. The first bonfire that the researcher observed in Egypt was on the Siwan market place, in front of the “Albabenshal” hotel, in the evening. Wood is too precious to be burned in a large open fire elsewhere in Egypt. Siwan people welcome guest children with date pastes and other candies. Adult guests are welcomed with dried dates and small cups of tea.

In the present day, Siwan people form two distinct families, the eastern and the western, each divided into smaller communities. No intermarriage occurs between the eastern and western families. Tradition forbids Siwan women to ride a bike or drive a carriage. Women are requested to cover their arms and legs in public. Open expressions of affection in public and alcoholic beverages are forbidden. The family elders have been and continue to be very important in solving disputes, preserving tradition, administering justice and recording Siwan events. Traditions like storytelling are dying and being replaced by watching television series as old routines of farming dates and olives give way to meeting the demands of tourists and other modern pressures that force many to work at two jobs.

The Siwan people are fond of singing and dancing. The performers are called Zagala, which in Siwan means “club bearer”. This special class of inhabitants’ duty was, and still is, to work in the fields and gardens of the rich land-owners during the day. Today the word Zagala is used for every young man, rich or poor. The flute and drums are used for most dance music. The songs have a very beautiful meaning in the Siwan language, usually with themes of nature and love.

The most prominent festivities in Siwa are those surrounding marriage. Although the coming of television to the oasis in 1988 has brought some changes, the marriage festivals remain a week-long celebration. The entire town is invited for lunch. At 9 pm. the women of the groom’s family go and fetch the bride. They struggle until they win and take her away from the women of the bride’s family. The bride and groom then go off together until 5 o’clock in the morning. He then leaves her and stays with his friends until evening. He spends a second night with the bride until 5 o’clock in the morning, and the rest of the day with his friends. On the third day all of the family of the groom come together for lunch and congratulate the groom. Then he

goes to the garden with his friends to drink tea. On the seventh day, there are some celebrations for the mother of the bride. The relatives come for a visit and they are served a *gommar* (a naturally, sweet confection which comes from the heart of the palm tree). This is the last occasion in the marriage ceremony.

After their marriage, the women wear the traditional shawl whenever they go out of doors. The blue-and-white, rectangular *tarfottet* covers its wearer from head to toe. One hand holds the shawl in front of the face leaving only a narrow slit from which to see with one eye, the other holds the shawl tightly closed across the breast. The middle of the shawl, waist-high, boasts red, orange, and dark-green embroidery done with silk thread.

The horizontal decoration tells a story of its bearer. The embroidered band is broad, approximately 10-15 cm wide, and the embroidery is lavish. As time passes, the band grows narrower and the time spent doing the embroidery diminishes. Old women carry a band of only a couple of centimeters with no special pattern. If the shawl bears no band at all, the wearer is very old indeed. The material for the *tarfottet* comes from a village in Giza, outside Cairo, where it is especially made for the Siwan women. The researcher was told that the material can be bought for US50.

Pregnant woman in Siwa are usually cared for by a midwife. On the seventh day following the birth, the new mother's friends, relatives and the midwife gather in an upper room of the house to give the child a name. A boy is named by his father and a girl is named by her mother. Once the child's name is announced, the midwife dabs some henna on the child's body to protect the child from the evil eye. The sun is the symbol of protection in Siwa so henna patterns are adapted from images of the eye of sun.

Siwan men and women are very superstitious. They believe firmly in the evil eye and do their best to arm themselves against it. Some Siwans raise the skulls of donkeys on long sticks and fix them to garden walls as protection from the evil eye. Also, there is a small black bird with a white underbody and sometimes a white crown and it has an especially clear song. If someone harms one of these birds, he will be unhappy since they are considered lucky. There is a dome which is home to many pigeons. The researcher has been told that locals breed pigeons because they are seen as a delicacy and the more pigeon one has, the more important one is.

The people of Siwa speak Berber dialect. The Siwan language is related to the Berber languages of Morocco, Libya and Algeria. Siwi is a spoken language only, and Arabic is a second language in Siwa. For example, “*Aman*” is water, “*Aksom*” is meat, “*Azomor*” is olives, and “*Teany*” is dates.

The October full moon brings a three day harvest festival. On a sandy hill, and at its foot, booths are built, tents are pitched and all people, rich and poor, come together for lunch. None may eat until the chief climbs to the top of rock and shouts “bismillah”. In the afternoon, problems between families are brought to the chief, discussed and solved. In the evening, the men form a large circle and sing chants thanking God. The researcher attended the festival in October 2010 and saw many tourists who were keen to attend this Siwan festival. They told the researcher that they had intended to visit Siwa at this time to attend this event.

Natural heritage of Siwa includes palm and olive trees, sand dunes, a unique protected area, springs and mountains. The oasis is carpeted with thick palm trees that shade and cool fresh water springs. It is an isolated oasis surrounded by a vast area of sand dunes. Siwa is renowned for its beautiful scenery, thick groves of palm and olive trees, free-flowing springs and the surrounding mountains. In an endless sea of sand, the spring water supports large glades of palm

trees. The researcher actually saw very little water but she sensed that it was contained in every tree. Siwa lies 12 meters below sea level, so, the oasis looks like a vast palm forest dotted here and there with sand-coloured settlement areas.

The oasis is surrounded by a protected area which was established in 2002 as a project of Italian cooperation. The protected area protects the characteristic landscape, and botanical and faunal resources. The researcher visited one place in the western part of the protected area, “Bir Wahed”, which is a source of hot water that sustains a small oasis and a fresh water lake on the edge of the Great Western Sand Sea. The Siwa region has recorded 164 species of birds and 32 species of reptiles.

Siwa contains about 300 natural springs and more than 2,000 new wells which irrigate thousands of acres of vegetables and fruits grown for local consumption. The Siwa oasis is full of natural underground hot and cold water springs scattered everywhere. However, even the relatively fresh spring water is sufficiently saline to limit the number of plants to only a few that can tolerate it in irrigation water, such as the date and the olive. The lakes surrounding the oasis are too saline to make fishing possible and there is not even a single boat in Siwa. The Siwan people get salt once a year straight from the Salt Lake and the women then grind the salt at home according to need.

Cleopatra's Bath is an important tourist attraction. Cleopatra is said to have bathed in this spring on her visit to Siwa. In ancient times, it was believed that the water temperature changed according to the time of day, but this belief has been proven incorrect in modern times. There is also a small bath-house where one can change into a bathing suit. Men can swim in shorts, but women may give some thought to their attire. Beside the bath, there is a coffee house and, behind the coffee house, a small kiosk sells souvenirs.

Fatnas, another spring, is situated on an island in the middle of the Salt Lake. The island's palm trees form relaxing surroundings for swimming. Fatnas is protected enough to ensure there is no need to fear a crowd of local onlookers. Fifty meters away, across the island, there is a small cafeteria with chairs made of palm.

The most well-known lake is the Bir Wahed, which is shown on maps as Siwa Lake. It is located on the north-west side of the Oasis, almost 15 kilometers away on the edge of The Great Sand Sea. It is a hot spring, like a Jacuzzi, where sulphurous water bubbles in a pool.

The Dakroun Mountains lie about 4 kilometers southwest of the town of Siwa. The dry weather and the sweet hot spring cause it to be one of the healthiest places in the oasis. Italian specialists have erected a bottling plant for this “special” water. Each summer, under the supervision of a native Siwan specialist, thousands of people have their bodies buried in the sand from the neck down while the head is protected from the heat of the sun. The drawing power of the therapeutic sand brings welcome relief to the sufferers of rheumatism and arthritis. Others also benefit from the deep cleansing sand baths. Some tourists camp by the mountains. Each October at the full moon, Siwan people gather for a huge feast at the rock of Dakroun. The mountains also contain two undecorated tombs with three lines of Greek inscriptions, probably from the Ptolemaic period.

## **Summary**

Siwa Oasis is one of the lowlands in the western desert in Egypt. It is rich in both cultural and natural heritage. It is divided into two parts. The first part is Siwa town where there are many shops and a number of small hotels. The second part is the Siwa desert where there are also many hotels. Both parts possess aspects of Siwan cultural and natural heritage. In this oasis, there are modern buildings like those that can be seen in any city in Egypt. There are also more

modern buildings which are currently under construction. Most studies and projects focus on ecotourism and selling the local products to a larger market in Egypt or internationally.

Siwa's fame lies primarily in its ancient role as the home to an oracle of Amoun, the ruins of which are a popular tourist attraction. Siwa Oasis has only been opened up to tourism within the last 20 years with growth in tourism occurring rapidly over the past 10 years with the paving of the road to Siwa.

Siwan peoples are hospitable and helpful. They spoke Arabic with the researcher; however, they speak their local language 'Amazigh' with each other. The Berber people of Siwa are deeply conservative. Siwan ladies are very rarely seen in public (usually in the back of a donkey cart).

#### **4.2 Siwan hotels**

Observations of Siwan hotels were made in fall 2010. Hotels in Siwa oasis are divided into three categories: (1) luxury hotels which include the hotels that were researched i.e. "the first ten hotels" (Adrere Amellal, Albabenshal, Shali lodge, Safari Paradise, Shali Dream lodge, Taghaghien, Dehiba, Siwa Shali Resort, Desert Rose, Qasr Alzaituna, Safari Garden, Taziry eco-lodge and Siwa Inn Am Agbenek). Such hotels reflect clearly some aspects of Siwan heritage. Most luxury hotels are located in the desert; (2) budget hotels which include the second group of Siwan hotels (Cleopatra, Kelany, Youssef, Alexander the Great, Reem Alwaha, Arous Alwaha, Wadiinngoom, palm trees, Amoun, Mubarak and Penta). They are characterless hotels in that they did not clearly reflect any aspects of Siwan heritage. Most budget hotels are located in downtown Siwa and are older than the luxury hotels. Most budget hotels are small and were not rated, such as Arous Alwaha and Cleopatra. It is common to see a modern hotel building located close to a traditional hotel building. For, example, Kelany hotel is close to the Albabenshal hotel

(about a 1 minute walk); (3) Some non-Egyptians have bought houses in Siwa and operate them as lodging facilities, marketing through the Internet and accepting the guests officially as friends not tourists, so they pay nothing to the tourism authorities. It was impossible to observe such houses. Some owners refused to permit observation and other houses were closed as they are only open in the winter season.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the researcher systematically observed and recorded aspects of the hotels, such as the characteristics of internal atmosphere and external building materials, activities and services available, first-hand impressions of working staff concerning the idea of applying heritage-hospitality in hotels, and a comparison was made between information provided on internet sites and the field observations. Notes were taken on what was observed. They were recorded after each observation process. The observation process was divided into three parts: (1) using checklists, (2) observation of working staff and (3) comparison between hotel information on web sites and the researcher's observations.

#### 4.2.1 Observations using check lists

The researcher prepared 24 check lists each with 25 items. Items were grouped into 4 categories (basic information, basic facilities, tangible heritage characteristics and intangible heritage characteristics). Such items covered the external and internal aspects of all Siwan hotels. This check list provided the means to both describe the current situation of all Siwan hotels and to compare between them.

For basic information, most Siwan hotels are privately-owned either by Siwan or non-Siwan investors. Most of them are owned by non-Siwan investors. Only two hotels are owned by the government. They are budget hotels (Mubarak and Arous Alwaha). All Siwan hotels are small in size. The numbers of rooms are between 3 and 50. Dehiba hotel is the biggest hotel (50



rooms). Albabenshal is the smallest hotel (6 rooms). Most budget hotels follow vertical building designs. However, most hotels built with traditional materials follow horizontal building designs.

The age of most hotels is less than 10 years (Albabenshal, Dehiba, Desert Rose, Qasr Alzaituna, Taghaghien, Shali lodge, Siwa Shali Resort, Siwa Dream Lodge, Siwa Safari Garden, Taziry, Siwa Inn Am Agbenek, Palm Trees, Reem Alwaha). Most hotels which are less than 10 years old have been built with traditional materials. However, most of hotels which are more than 10 years old are budget hotels, except for only one hotel built in a traditional style (Adrere Amellal).

Most Siwan hotels are located in the downtown of Siwa or near to it (within about 10 minutes' walk). Only eight hotels are located in the desert (Adrere Amellal, Taghaghien, Dehiba, Desert Rose, Qasr Alzaituna, Taziry, Siwa Inn Am Agbenek and Amoun). Most of the latter are built in a traditional style. Amoun hotel is the only budget hotel that is located in the desert. It is used in the summer by people who come to experience cures by sand burial.

For basic facilities, most hotels have phone only. Some hotels have phone and internet services. No hotel has a safety-deposit box. Half of the hotels have parking lots, while the other half is without. Most hotels have fire extinguishers. Most of them have no first-aid facilities. Most hotels have no health and safety guidelines. Only two hotels have such guidelines: Dehiba and Cleopatra. Most guidelines are related to what to do when hearing a fire alarm. An employee in Adrere Amellal hotel told the researcher that the workers themselves take care of the bees wax candles which are used in lightening the hotel. In guestrooms, for example, they blow out candles once the customers go outside their rooms.

Siwa oasis is famous for natural springs. Most hotels there have one or more natural springs which are used as swimming pools. Most of these swimming pools are small. Most of the

hotels have no other special characteristics. Six hotels, however, have special characteristics: (1) at Adrere Amellal hotel, there is neither electricity nor a reception desk. However, there is an organic farm beside the hotel; (2) the presence of a Bedouin tent (Paradise Safari hotel, Siwa Shali resort and Kelany hotel); (3) a doctor is available on request and a mail postage service is also available (Qasr Alzaituna hotel); (4) Intensive use of decoration (only 2 cm between each item) (Shali Lodge hotel); and (5) a squash court, gym and sauna (Mubarak hotel).

For tangible heritage characteristics, the architecture of about half of Siwan hotels is neither traditional nor modern. It uses international materials such as cement, red bricks, huge white stones, glass and metal. The other half applies traditional or *Karsheef* architecture, which is characterized by the use of salt blocks, taken from the Siwan salt lakes. The irregular ball-shaped blocks are employed in the masonry with plentiful mud mortar which is also very rich in salt. Palm trunks form the supporting structure of the floors at the different levels and by other wood supplements (sometimes olive wood) which function as connections. Such unique architecture results from the ability to take advantage of the local environmental resources and, at the same time, has made it possible to create comfortable buildings in the severe climatic conditions of Siwa.



Figure 4.2.1: Palm trunks used in hotel architecture (Shali Lodge)

Most of this second type of hotels mixes *Karsheef* with the use of stone, cement and red bricks. The most well-known hotels which only apply *Karsheef* and palm wood are Adrere Amellal, Albabenshal and Shali lodge (Figure 4.2.1) and they are under the same ownership. Adrere Amellal is the oldest (more than 10 years), Shali lodge is 3-years old and the newest is Albabenshal (only one year). Applying *Karsheef* unifies the architecture of the hotels. There are differences in the architecture of each hotel; however, the first impression is that all traditionally-built hotels possess the same architecture.

Before the 1980s, all Siwan houses were built from *Karsheef*. Today, lots of houses are made of modern materials instead of *Karsheef*. Unless hotels are built of *Karsheef*, most Siwan buildings will soon be lacking in character. In the downtown, the architecture is inconsistent with both modern and traditionally-built hotels. However, in the desert, although the building designs are dissimilar, one can see them as one because they are all at least horizontal and with an

impure

mud

colour.



Figure 4.2.2: The Youssef hotel



Figure 4.2.3: Part of the exterior of Adrere Amellal eco-lodge

The external composition of half of Siwan hotels is modern in style (4 or 5 story vertical cement buildings). They are painted in a pink or white colour. Most buildings have balconies. Most of such hotels have not been evaluated. One cannot differentiate them from other residential buildings unless billboards are hanging outside announcing the hotel name. Two examples of the modern style are Cleopatra and Youssef hotels (Figure 4.2.2). The most famous Siwan *Karsheef* style hotels are: (1) a series of one or two story horizontal Siwan-style houses (Adrere Amellal) (Figure 4.2.3); (2) a three-level construction on alleyways built into ruins on a hill above Siwa's old town (Albabenshal); (3) a low-rise small building with an open-top roof (Shali Lodge). Other hotels follow the style of African bungalows such as: (1) Taghaghien Island hotel and (2) an extension of Qasr Alzaituna hotel.



Figure 4.2.4: Modern decorations (Arous Alwaha hotel)



Figure 4.2.5: Mixed wall decoration (Shali Dream Lodge)



Figure 4.2.6: Purely Siwan wall decoration (Adrere Amellal eco-lodge)

Wall decorations are the most typical form of decoration used in both modern and traditional-style hotels. Decorations of half of Siwan hotels are modern. Mirrors and pictures are examples of such decorations. Some of the former portray natural scenery (Arous Alwaha hotel) (Figure 4.2.4). The other half consists of both mixed decorations (Siwan and modern), for example Siwa Dream Lodge hotel (Figure 4.2.5) and purely local hand-made decorations such as carved stones or internal wall holes, for example, Adrere Amellal hotel (Figure 4.2.6).



Figure 4.2.7: Modern furniture (Dehiba hotel)



Figure 4.2.8: Rock beds and side tables (Adrere Amellal)

The furniture in most hotels is modern, such as fabric sofas, lounge chairs, coffee tables, night stands, wooden beds and wardrobes. All budget hotels and Safari Paradise hotel, Dehiba hotel (Figure 4.2.7) and Taghaghien Island hotel are examples of such hotels. Only 4 hotels use pure Siwan furniture such as rock beds, palm tree beds, traditional fabric floor cushions, and traditional fabric floor benches that create long shapes to enclose corners, or surround low tables. Adrere Amellal (Figure 4.2.8), Shali lodge, Albabenshal and Taziry are example of such hotels. The furniture of only two hotels is a mix of both modern and Siwan furniture. Siwa Shali Resort and Desert Rose are examples of such hotels.

Most hotels have no brochures. Only three hotels have brochures. Such brochures are characterized by a rectangular shape, small size and light colours (beige and white). Their written content focuses more on services and architecture and provides very brief factual information. They are displayed in the lobby. Photos displayed on the brochures either reflect the



external building (Siwa Dream Lodge) or interior (Qasr Alzaituna hotel) on tri-folded paper. Postcards are also used to display parts with modern designs and Siwan artifacts (Desert Rose hotel).



Figure 4.2.9: *Heml* and *kleem* coloured woven carpets in the Desert Rose hotel

Most Siwan hotels display Siwan artifacts. The artifacts mostly used are clay pottery, palm baskets and woven carpets (*Heml*, *kleem*) which is known in English as rugs (Figure 4.2.9). The colours of most Siwan artifacts are red, orange, brown and green. The sizes vary from large to small. The shapes are round or rectangular. They are either hung on walls or placed on the floor. However, they are not used for their original purpose: for example, particular palm baskets would usually be used to keep dates.



Figure 4.2.10: Native Siwan worker in Siwan dress (he was in front of the *Karsheef* parking lot of Adrere Amellal eco-lodge)

Most staff dress is modern or casual business clothing. Some working staff wears traditional Siwan clothes. Most traditional Siwan dress is very modest. Generally, dress depends on the weather and on personal taste. However, the Siwan male clothing is used for the desert. It consists of layered flowing robes which absorb the sun's hot rays while allowing cooling breezes to circulate. Siwan men wind a cloth around their head and neck to reduce moisture loss that can lead to heat stroke and to shield the face against the harsh dry sand (Figure 4.2.10).

There is no relationship between the hotel concept and the staff dress. For example, working staff in traditionally-built hotels may wear modern dress (Siwa Shali Resort) and working staff in modern structures may dress traditionally (Cleopatra hotel). However, there is a relationship between the place of origin and the staff dress. For example, native Siwan staff

members usually wear traditional dress (Adrere Amellal eco lodge) and non-Siwan staff members usually wear casual business dress (Taghaghien Island hotel).

All chinaware used in Siwan hotels is modern. The Chinaware is plain white; there are no hotel logos. All coffee and tea cups used in hotels are modern and plain without logos. Most utensils used for food and beverage preparation in hotels are modern. The cooking utensils are made from aluminum. Some hotels use glazed clay utensils called *tajin*. Such utensils are used only to prepare food in ovens. However, the utensils used in these hotels are mainly modern.



Figure 4.2.11: Salt lamps on tables (Adrere Amellal eco-lodge).

Most lightening is modern. The main features of such modern lightening are simplicity and similarity (mostly bulb lamps) in the hotels that use them. Safari Paradise hotel and Dehiba are examples of such hotels. However, there are some hotels that use the traditional ways of lightening such as oil lamps (they produce light continuously for a period of time from an oil-based fuel source), salt lamps (chunks of mined 'salt' that have been hollowed out to allow room for a light bulb or tiny candle. The light glows through the salt (Figure 4.2.11). Bees wax candles are also used. Such candles have long been known for their air purifying effects and can greatly

reduce dust and other allergens. They are set in the walls and give a warm amber glow. Adrere Amellal is an example of a hotel that uses the Siwan way of lighting.

- Most restaurant designs are modern. Tables and chairs are modern wooden styles. Table settings or place settings (the way table is laid out with tableware, including eating utensils and dishware) are not ideal or complete. One can find only knives, forks and spoons; they are placed to the right according to Western culture. However, there are no napkins which may be placed on the left. Table shapes are either round or rectangular. The quantity of chairs is either 4 or 6. Most tables are covered by a tablecloth. There is no table decor. Most hotels provide breakfast and dinner. Most hotels have no menus to choose from. Even if there is a menu, it is a modern-style menu. It is a thick double-sided piece of paper written in English. It is very simple; there is no typography or layout, and it does not reflect the hotel theme or location. Some modern-style restaurants are decorated with Siwan artifacts, for example, Safari Paradise hotel.

Most hotels have one or more restaurants. For example, Adrere Amellal hotel has 9 themed restaurants. Each restaurant offers a specific cuisine, for example, Italian and French cuisines. Some modern-style restaurants include Siwan artifacts; for example, the Safari Paradise hotel. However, the designs of such restaurants are somehow similar. They do not reflect the cuisines they offer.



Figure 4.2.12: Traditionally-built roof restaurant (Shali lodge)

Some hotels (Adrere Amellal, Shali Lodge and Albabenshal) employ Siwan materials in their restaurants, such as palm tree tables and chairs, floor cushions and low tables (Figure 4.2.12). In Adrere Amellal, there are sleeping beds in restaurants. Such beds provide more comfort for hotel guests. There are no tablecloths to cover the tables. Candles are the tables' decor. Both modern and traditional restaurants in Siwan hotels are either roof restaurants (Albabenshal, Shali lodge, Desert Rose, Youssef and Kelany) or in-house restaurants (for example, Adrere Amellal, Taghaghien, Safari Paradise and Qasr Alzaituna).

Generally, room designs in Siwan hotels are simple. They consist of a wardrobe, bed(s), side table(s) and the walls are painted in a single colour. They are of different sizes according to the type of room; for example, single or double. Most guest room designs are modern. Modernity here means that all room components are not made in Siwa; they are brought from other Egyptian cities. They are similar to city hotels in Egypt. In such Siwan hotels, one can see a contradictory scene (lots of Siwan handicrafts hanged in otherwise modern-style guest rooms). Some hotels apply the designs of traditional Siwan houses, such as small windows, a high ceiling

and spacious areas. The components of the guest rooms are Siwan and hand-made (mostly palm tree wood). There are no chairs. Beds are low-rise. Rooms are carpeted by *heml* and *kleem* (which is known in English as rugs). However, there is a small amount of Siwan handicrafts. Adrere Amellal, Albabenshal and Shali lodge are example of such hotels.

Most guest room amenities are modern. Televisions, air conditions, fridges, beside lamps and ceiling fans are examples of such modern amenities. Some hotels apply Siwan amenities such as candles and gas bottle boilers. Adrere Amellal, Albabenshal and Shali Lodge are examples of such hotels. All linen and towels in Siwan hotels are modern. They are plain without hotel logos. All of them are white. All bathroom amenities are modern. Showers, sinks, toilets, soaps and shampoo are examples of such amenities. Only Adrere Amellal hotel offers soaps locally made from pure Siwan olive oil and there is no shampoo provided.

Hotel surroundings are different from place to place. Some hotels surrounded the market place in the downtown of Siwa. Most hotels are surrounded by groves of palm trees or the desert, the mountains or the old citadel (*Shali*).

For intangible heritage characteristics, Siwan hotels do not incorporate the characteristics of Siwan intangible heritage such as music, folk tales, ballads, songs, ways of entertaining guests, ways of staff communication with guests and ways of welcoming guests. The only exception is Shali Dream lodge which prepares Siwan folklore parties on demand.

#### 4.2.2 Observations of staff

All staff members in all hotels are men. Their ages are between 19-35 years old. Their number is small. For example, there are only two workers in Siwa Dream lodge. Even in bigger hotels, one can easily count the employees. Siwan workers are friendlier than non-Siwan workers. They are proud of the hotel facilities, such as the number of restaurants (a Siwan

worker in Adrere Amellal told the researcher that the hotel is the only Siwan hotel that has high quality in nine different restaurants). As a result, they encourage guests not to eat outside the hotel. Another non-Siwan worker in the Safari Paradise hotel told the researcher that he and lots of staff members had lived and worked in the hotel for 20 years. Thus, staff turnover is not high.

Most staff members are from outside of the oasis. The role of Siwan people, inside hotels, is only to take care of the hotel garden except at the three sister hotels (Adrere Amellal, Albabenshal and Shali lodge) where all staff members are Siwan. Most working staff did not understand the meaning of the word of “heritage”. The researcher had to explain it as culture or civilization. They understood that heritage application could be through hanging some Siwan artifacts on the walls or placing them on the floors of the hotels. In hotel restaurants, for example, most are not well- trained to serve food and beverages. In addition, they did not follow the service routine such as making eye contact and observing customers in order to not let them wait for help. Eye contact does not mean using “sharp” eyes or annoying hotel guests.

#### 4.2.3 Comparison between internet sites and field observation

Some preliminary work was done by accessing several web sites to determine the kinds of information that is commonly provided. Some later work was done in order to compare what was contained in the web sites and what was observed by the researcher. This comparison helped to identify the steps that are needed in order to convey the Siwan heritage in the Siwan hotels.

It was not difficult to get information about all Siwan hotels through different web sites. Some hotels, which are described as luxury, have their own internet sites, for example, Adrere Amellal and Taghaghien. The photos of such hotels concentrate more on reflecting their external appearance. The display of information for each hotel is similar; it follows the same categories such as amenities, locations, famous visitors and prices. However, budget hotels have no special

web sites. The available information about such budget hotels is notably brief, and photos of such hotels are rarely provided.

The researcher discovered that there were two hotels that were built in the Siwan desert a few years ago, but their internet sites were updated a few months ago (after finishing the preliminary work on different web sites). The two hotels are Taziry eco-lodge, which faces the Adrere Amellal hotel, and the Siwa Inn Am Agbenek. Both of them are traditional hotels. However, no hotel web sites present any form of Siwan traditions in the services that they describe. Some hotels announce that they offer traditional food and use traditional plates. The researcher observed that there are some hotels which offer some Siwan foods. However, they are served on modern Chinaware. There are no indications about the menu provided in the hotel web sites.

## **Summary**

Hotels in Siwa oasis are divided into three groups: (1) luxury hotels, (2) budget hotels and (3) foreigners' houses. The observation process was divided into three parts: (1) using checklists, (2) observation of staff and (3) comparison between hotel information on web sites and the researcher observation.

The check list observation was used to assess the similarities and differences between all Siwan hotels. All Siwan hotels have similar characteristics such as small size, lack of safety deposit boxes, simplicity of guest room designs, modernity of chinaware, coffee and tea cups and bathroom amenities and they do not draw upon the intangible cultural characteristics of Siwan heritage. Most Siwan hotels are under private ownership, of similar age, possess small swimming pools, and lack brochures, menus, and health and safety guidelines. Most employ modern furniture and staff dress, lighting, guest room amenities and restaurant designs. Phones and fire



extinguishers are provided and Siwan artifacts are used as wall decorations. Siwan hotels differ in architecture and external building styles. Half of Siwan hotels apply modern architecture and modern external building styles while the other half applies traditional architecture and traditional external buildings styles.

Staff observation revealed that all workers in Siwan hotels share the same characteristics. They are of the same gender: all are males aged 19-35. They are hospitable and friendly. Their turnover is not high. Their numbers are small; one can easily count them in each hotel. All of them are proud of their hotel facilities. Most of them are not Siwan natives but come from a variety of Egyptian cities. Most of them understand the word heritage as hanging artifacts on walls. Most of them do not follow common hotel service guidelines, for example, establishing eye contact with visitors.

The comparison between hotel information on web sites and the field observation clarified that it is easy to get information about hotels in Siwa. There is a difference between information displayed about luxury and budget hotels. Luxury hotels have their own internet sites. Their photos concentrate on presenting the exterior of their buildings. Their display of information is similar and follows the same categories such as amenities, locations, famous visitors and prices. However, budget hotels have no special web sites. The information that is available about them is insufficient and it is rare to get photos of such hotels.

The Internet is not a reliable source for collecting data about all hotels. The field observation discovered two hotels which had no information provided on web sites. No hotel web sites made reference to any form of Siwan traditions in the services that they offer. Some hotels announce that they provide traditional food and use traditional plates. However, the researcher observed that there are some hotels which offer some Siwan foods. However, they are

served in modern Chinaware. There are no indications about the menus provided in the Siwan hotels. The only repetitive item of Siwan food is the word *tajin*.

### 4.3 Hotel guests' questionnaire survey

The purpose of interviewing tourists was to learn the customers' perspectives on experiencing heritage inside Siwan hotels. Thus, a demand perspective with an emphasis on tourists was chosen to complement the previous emphasis on supply (hotels). The aim was to clarify the role of hotels as a significant part of the support services necessary for heritage tourism. In addition, hotel guests' preferences were sought concerning the ways of conveying heritage in Siwan hotels. In this study, a mixture of closed and open-ended questions was used to draw upon their particular strengths and weaknesses and to get more representative results. Six categories of questions were included in the questionnaire, including socio-demographic profile, trip profile, lodging profile, interest in culture, experiencing heritage inside Siwan hotels and preferences about heritage application in Siwan hotels.

During the 19-day survey in October 2010, as indicated above, 68 questionnaires were collected at 10 Siwan hotels (all available hotels which reflect some aspects of Siwan heritage and which had guests at the time of survey). This section presents and discusses the results of the survey, commencing with the characteristics of respondents.

#### 4.3.1 Socio-demographic profile of hotel guests

This study is the first that documents the demographic characteristics of hotel guests in Siwa oasis. The socio-demographic characteristics of respondents (68 individuals) are shown in Table 4.3.1. Each attribute will be discussed in turn.

Table 4.3.1: Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Socio demographic characteristics	Number of responses	Percentage
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<b>Gender</b>		
Male	24	35
female	44	65
<b>Age(years)</b>		
18-34	4	6
35-54	32	47
55 and above	32	47
<b>Place of origin</b>		
France	25	37
USA	9	13
Italy	7	10
Other countries	27	40
<b>Monthly income(US\$)</b>		
Less than 1500	21	31
1500-2999	36	53
3000 and above	11	16
<b>Education</b>		
High school or lower	13	19
University or higher	55	81
<b>Occupation</b>		
Teacher	10	14
Company employee	20	30
Retired	20	30
Others	18	26

The sex of the participants was not evenly distributed. Almost twice the number of females (65%) responded as males (35%). It is common to find a disproportionately large proportion of females participating in cultural tourism. It may also reflect: (1) The feeling of safety in Siwa oasis in general and the peaceful atmosphere in Siwan hotels in particular; (2) It is usual to see female tourists come back from a safari at a late time; and (3) Additionally, the researcher met many females as one tourist group (4-8 females). The only man with such female groups was probably the tourist guide.

Most hotel guests were 35 years or older. The largest population demographics were 35-54 and 55 and above, both with 47% (Table 4.3.1). Almost all (94%) respondents were in these

two age groups. This means that young visitors, at only 6%, were rare in Siwa. Perhaps such young groups prefer other destinations, such as beaches, with more active recreational opportunities.

At the time of the field research, which was conducted at the beginning of the peak tourism season which starts in October and ends in April, there were hotel guests from 14 different countries. The largest group (over one third of the sample) were from France (37%), followed by USA (13%) and Italy (10%). Other countries that were represented were Germany and the United Kingdom (both 9%), Egypt (6%), Spain (4%), Switzerland (4%), and Australia, Poland, Hong Kong, Portugal, Hungary and Korea, each with 1 respondent (2% each). Thus, the majority were international visitors from diverse places of origin.

Table 4.3.1 shows that the majority (53%) of participants earned a monthly income of between US\$1,500-2,999. Just under one third (31%) earned less than US\$1,500. A minority (16%) of participants earned a monthly income of US\$3,000 and above. These data suggest that the living standard of hotel guests is high, especially as, once there, Siwa is a cheap destination in comparison to other Egyptian destinations. That means that many hotel guests or other tourists to this oasis can easily afford a longer hotel stay and do lots of activities related to Siwan heritage.

Most respondents had attended college, university or graduate school (81%). This implies that people with a higher education are more likely to visit Siwa and to be interested in cultural heritage. Only (19%) of participants had a high school or less than high school education.

Company employees and the retired were the most common occupation groups (both 30%), followed by teachers (14%). Writers, professors, a healer, tour guides, physicians, a student and a government employee were amalgamated into an “other” group comprising

approximately a quarter (26%) of all respondents. This suggests the type of employment of visitors is quite diverse.

The majority (65%) of respondents were traveling to Siwa for the first time. This suggests that Siwa is still a new tourism destination for most tourists. It could also indicate that having visited once, there is not a strong desire to return and that Siwa is facing the challenge of building a substantial repeat clientele. However, the number of second homes that exist in Siwa undermines this second explanation. Most (53%) visitors got information about Siwa from friends or relatives, followed by internet sites (21%), travel agencies (16%), and other sources (10%) such as reading books. This indicates that word of mouth is the primary source of information on the oasis.

In terms of their purpose of travel, 88% of visitors to Siwa went for personal reasons and 11% for business. Thus, the great majority were on holiday. Most were on a package tour (62%). This suggests that the oasis is a good selling option for tour agencies and that it deserves to be on the map of Egyptian destinations. However, as indicated above, travel agencies are not the main source of information for the tourists. Most hotel guests stayed in Siwa for less than a week (74%), followed by one to two weeks (24%) and only 2% stayed for more than two weeks. Thus, length of stay is generally not very long. This may suggest that the tourist programs in the oasis are limited and insufficient to encourage long stays. Although it is a very long way to get to Siwa, most visitors stay only a short time.

The majority (75%) of respondents were staying in Siwan hotels for the first time. Thus, most guests were providing their first impressions of Siwan hotels. However, first impressions are an important concern in the hospitality industry. Often, first impressions may be the last impressions for hotel guests. Moreover, first-time visitors are likely to be very sensitive and they

can form a belief about facilities that is difficult to change. Many hotels strive to be welcoming in order to attract repeat visitors.

Half (50%) of hotel guests got information about Siwan hotels from friends or relatives, followed by travel agencies (24%), internet sites (21%) and other sources (5%) such as travel books. Again, word of mouth is the main source of information, as was the case for Siwa as a whole, with other sources of information about the oasis and its hotels being similarly reported. The exception was the difference in the order of travel agencies and internet sites. Internet sites outweigh travel agencies as a source of information about Siwa. However, travel agencies are more important than internet sites as a source of information about Siwan hotels.

In terms of length of stay in Siwan hotels, the majority stayed for less than a week (69%), followed by (16%) for more than two weeks and (15%) for one to two weeks. This confirms that although the oasis is in a remote location, most hotel guests stayed only a short time in Siwan hotels (mostly two days). Siwa was chosen as a study site because of the opportunity to shed light on the role of traditional hotels in: (1) deepening the supply and demand for heritage tourism; (2) investing time and money in addressing the needs of cultural tourists; and (3) being an ambassador for the oasis as a heritage place. However, it seems that Siwan hotels have not made successful efforts to lengthen the stay of their guests. Moreover, they have not successfully encouraged them spend lots of time inside the hotel itself (which means more profits and could mean more reflection of Siwan heritage). In fact, the oasis is small and possible activities are limited. It is not like cities where many activities may be available and there are lots of places to visit. Sightseeing in remote locations requires much time in travel which can shrink the role of hotels to be only places to eat and sleep.

Almost all (91%) hotel guests indicated that they would stay again in the same hotel. This suggests a high degree of satisfaction with the hotels. Only 5% of respondents would not stay in the same hotel again and the same percentage (4%) did not know if they would stay again in the same hotel. All participants who did not want to stay again in the same hotel said either that: (1) hotel staff was not well-trained; or (2) bad service was provided in the hotel. All participants who were undecided were new arrivals. Most hotel guests have the potential to be loyal customers. This positive situation may be taken into consideration by the hotel managers in Siwa.

In response to an open-ended question concerning “Why?” or “Why not?” hotel guests would prefer to stay again in the same hotel, most respondents preferred to stay again in the same hotel for at least one of two reasons: (1) the location (either near to the desert or to the city centre); and (2) the traditional building style and furniture (which are rustic and cozy, and provide a unique experience that hotel guests had not witnessed before). Although few aspects of Siwan tangible heritage (which are not difficult to put in place) were mentioned as reasons for staying again in Siwan hotels, nonetheless, it appears that many visitors did appreciate them. Furthermore, it may be straightforward for managers to provide such experiences for hotel guests are not very demanding in this respect and most are satisfied with what is currently available. However, it could mean that hotel guests would be willing to absorb more and more aspects of both tangible and intangible Siwan heritage if it were readily available.

Hotel guests’ interests in culture were investigated in the questionnaire survey. The importance of experiencing aspects of the local culture in Siwa, the activities undertaken in Siwa and opinions about reflecting heritage through hotels were all probed. The importance of experiencing aspects of local culture in Siwa was examined using a three-point Likert scale: very

important, important and neutral. The majority (66%) of respondents viewed such experiences as being “very important”, followed by about a third (34%) who viewed it as being “important”. Not one respondent considered it to be unimportant. Clearly, all hotel guests appreciated Siwan culture and heritage and wanted to experience Siwan traditions.

In descending order of frequency, respondents ate traditional food (96%), bought local crafts (91%), interacted with local people (88%), visited archaeological sites (77%), experienced local festivals (65%), visited a museum (56%) and undertook other culture-related activities such as going on a desert safari (7%). The most common activities could be done inside the hotels themselves (eating traditional food, buying local crafts and interacting with local people). This may indicate the importance of hotels in deepening the supply of opportunities to experience Siwan culture.

The majority (78%) of respondents thought that heritage can be successfully represented in hotels, followed by (13%) who had no idea about this possibility, and a small minority (9%) felt that heritage could not be portrayed through hotels. Clearly, the vast majority saw a role for hotels in exposing visitors to the local culture. They justified this opinion in a variety of ways: (1) the aim of any hotel is to attract more tourists many of whom may be looking for exposure to a different culture to their own. Thus, heritage can be used to create a competitive advantage. One respondent said, ”Heritage is unique. Hotels should invest in such uniqueness. I have stayed in many hotels. However, I can only remember hotels which reflect their place’s culture and heritage”. That means that there can be a symbiotic relationship between heritage and hotels, the former contributing positively to the provision of an unforgettable experience that attracts more tourists who value the heritage; (2) hotels own or manage aspects of their operation that have heritage components such as working staff, staff uniforms, brochures, food and beverage,



building(s), designs, decor and architecture styles. All of these can be used to share aspects of heritage with visitors. For example, one participant said “Well, locals work here, so one learns better from them”. This means that hotels are organizations that have many opportunities to convey heritage if they do so in a proper way. Here, a proper way means a way which is similar to the past lifestyles of residents. Additionally, this means that the opportunities are not restricted to buildings, furniture or locations in order for hotels to convey aspects of heritage in their operations.

Respondents who did not know or were uncertain if heritage could be reflected successfully through hotels, either considered hotels simply as places to stay with few other expectations, or had no knowledge about oasis heritage. For example, one informant said, “A hotel reflects the place but it is the place”. Another said, “I have no idea about the culture of Siwa yet and I’d like to get it from my stay in this hotel”. Perhaps such tourists had not previously experienced aspects of local culture within hotels. Additionally, they may have believed that it is hard to feel the character of a place in a hotel and, in fact, there are Siwan hotels that do not introduce or expose their guests to Siwan heritage. Those who believed that heritage could not be portrayed satisfactorily in hotels adopted similar arguments: they either saw no link between hotels and culture, or felt that it was difficult to experience heritage through hotels. For example, one respondent said, “The local culture has no cultural relationships with hotels or tourism”. Another said, “It is hard to feel the place’s habits and thoughts through hotels”. Such tourists may have felt that intangible heritage, aspects such as the habits and thoughts in a place are not easy to share in hotels and, even if attempts are made to share them, it is not easy for tourists to feel or comprehend them. They may feel that the aspects of heritage that are commonly shared with them are superficial representations of the real thing.

#### 4.3.2 Experiencing heritage in Siwan hotels

This section reports on the hotel guests' opinions about the importance of different reasons for staying in Siwan hotels (very unimportant, unimportant, neutral, important and very important), the presence and absence of aspects of Siwan traditional customs inside Siwan hotels (present and absent), their desire to have the opportunity to learn about some aspects of Siwan heritage (very much, probably, don't care, probably not and definitely not) and their agreement with statements about enhancing or strengthening the relationship between heritage and hospitality in Siwan hotels (strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree and strongly agree).

Table 4.3.2: Reasons for staying in Siwan hotels (%) (N=68)

	<b>Very unimportant</b>	<b>Unimportant</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Very important</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Location	2	1	9	50	37	4.16
Price	1	1	16	62	19	3.95
Natural scenery	0	0	1	53	46	4.44
Relaxing atmosphere	0	0	3	35	62	4.59
Traditional construction	0	0	7	52	41	4.33
Interest in Siwan cultural heritage	0	2	7	44	47	4.34
Gaining Siwan experience	0	0	11	40	49	4.37

The survey results from hotel guests' opinions on "the importance of reasons to stay in Siwan hotels" are presented in Table 4.3.2. None of the items received many responses in the "very unimportant", "important" or "neutral" options. Price, with 16% reporting "neutral" was a mild exception. Relaxing atmosphere, gaining a Siwan experience, interest in Siwan cultural

heritage, natural scenery, and traditional construction, in that order, were most often considered to be “very important”. Price, followed by natural scenery, traditional construction were most often regarded as “important” but a Siwan experience and Siwan cultural heritage were each thought by more than 40% to be important. Thus, relaxing atmosphere, scenery and aspects of heritage were important or very important to most visitors and there appeared to be flexibility with respect to price among some. With regard to the mean scores, relaxing atmosphere had the highest mean score while price had the lowest mean score.

Table 4.3.3: Guests’ opinions on the presence of Siwan customs in hotels (%)

<b>Siwan traditional customs</b>	<b>Present</b>
Traditional building	99
Traditional foods	93
Traditional furniture	97
Traditional artworks	91
Traditional music	0
Traditional songs	0
Traditional stories	0

Guests’ opinions on “the presence and absence of Siwan traditional customs in Siwan hotels” are presented in Table 4.3.3. The table reveals the prominent presence of Siwan tangible heritage and the virtual absence of intangible Siwan heritage. Traditional building materials and furniture are variously present in Siwan hotels but, with slightly higher than 95%, almost all respondents acknowledged the presence of these. The presence of traditional food and artwork were almost as widely acknowledged. However, the presence of traditional music, songs and stories was not witnessed by any respondent. This suggests that (1) Siwan hotels are concentrating on only aspect of heritage: tangible cultural heritage. Additionally, they completely neglect intangible cultural heritage; (2) Siwan hotel managers similarly view heritage

as consisting only of specific aspects of tangible heritage (building, furniture, food and artwork) or, at least, this is what they present; (3) Siwan hotels may imitate each other and may lack original concepts and characteristics, (4) Siwan hotels may apply the most visible (from the hotel owners' or managers' points of view) components of heritage Siwan. This means that Siwan hoteliers try to adopt easy ways of reflecting Siwan heritage. For example, pure *Karsheef* buildings may require annual maintenance but maintenance requirements are reduced when *Karsheef* is mixed with other modern building materials. The contributions of Siwan people to the presentation of their culture are indirect and short-term investments through one-time production of buildings, furniture and artworks, and (5) Siwan hotels neglect the living aspect of heritage which depend more on continuing and long-term investment of time and effort of local people. For example, they neglect to invest in local people to share Siwan music, songs and stories.

Table 4.3.4: The desire of having the opportunity to learn about local heritage in Siwan hotels (%) (N=68)

	<b>Very much</b>	<b>Probably</b>	<b>Don't care</b>	<b>Probably not</b>	<b>Definitely not</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Folktales	69	24	4	0	3	1.44
Sayings	67	24	6	1	2	1.54
Ballads	63	25	9	0	3	1.54
Songs	80	12	6	0	2	1.35

Respondents were asked about “the desire of having the opportunity to learn about heritage in Siwan hotels” and the results are presented in Table 4.3.4. Four aspects of Siwan heritage (folktales, sayings, ballads and songs) were asked about. There is an overall positive opinion about having the opportunity to learn about Siwan heritage in Siwan hotels as very much or probably.

Songs are the most chosen aspect to be learned (80%), followed by folktales (69%), followed by sayings and ballads, opinions are varied but with slightly higher than (63%). For probable like, folktales, sayings and ballads, opinions are varied but with slightly higher than (23%). However, songs represent about the half probability of other learning aspects (12%). This suggests that hotel guests are so interested in learning about the immaterial aspect of Siwan heritage in Siwan hotels.

Table 4.3.5: Statements about enhancing or strengthening the relationship between heritage and hospitality in Siwan hotels (%) (N = 68)

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Providing a learning environment through interaction with Siwan people	0	1	3	49	47	4.41
Providing a learning environment through participating in Siwan heritage activities	0	1	4	52	43	4.35
Ensuring authenticity of crafts	0	1	7	56	36	4.25
Ensuring authenticity of building materials	0	0	10	62	28	4.18
Welcoming guests in the unique Siwan way	1	0	3	50	46	4.38
Providing traditional meals using local ingredients	1	0	4	43	52	4.43

Hotel guests were asked their opinions about enhancing or strengthening relationships between heritage and hospitality in Siwan hotels". The results are presented in Table 4.3.5. Likert scale (strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, strongly agree) were used to determine the extent of agreement with six statements. The statements refer to interaction

with local people, participation Siwan heritage, authenticity of crafts, authenticity of building material, Siwan way of welcoming guests and use of local ingredients in meals.

There are general agreements with statements about enhancing or strengthening the relationship between heritage and hospitality in Siwan hotels. The majority of opinions were in the “agree” and “strongly agree” categories with the statements. The responses that received the most “strongly agree” responses were, in order, “providing traditional meals using local ingredients”, “interaction with Siwan people”, “welcoming guests in the Siwan way”, and “participating in Siwan heritage activities”. The majority of respondents agreed with “ensuring authenticity of building materials” (62%), followed by “authenticity of crafts” (56%), “welcoming guests in the Siwan way” (50%). “Participation in Siwan heritage activities” received agreement from 49% of respondents. “Providing traditional meals using local ingredients” received agreement from (52%) of respondents. No statement was met with greater than 10% of responses outside of the “agree” and “strongly agree” categories. With regard to the mean scores, providing traditional meals using local ingredients had the highest mean score while ensuring authenticity of building materials had the lowest mean score.

The results suggest that there is strong support for strengthening the links between heritage and hospitality in Siwan hotels. They indicates that hotel guests believe that this can be achieved by: (1) involving Siwan people who can enliven heritage exposure through interacting with and welcoming guests in their own traditional ways; and (2) participation of hotel guests in Siwan heritage activities and by providing Siwan food and beverages in hotels. It means that hotel guests do not want to be only receivers of Siwan heritage; they would like to be active involved. It suggests that exposure to Siwan heritage may be deepened and not merely displayed. However, both authentic crafts and building materials are widely appreciated. Thus, in order to

create a more complete image of Siwan heritage and strengthen the heritage-hospitality link, the authenticity of tangible objects, such as buildings and crafts, is important. Integration and harmony between intangible and tangible aspects is necessary to provide guests with an enhanced heritage-hospitality nexus and authentic experiences.

#### 4.3.3 Preferences for heritage application locations

Table 4.3.6: Locational preferences for heritage applications (%) (N = 68)

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Mean</b>
The whole hotel	2	0	7	61	30	4.13
External building	0	1	5	66	28	4.21
Lobby	0	1	2	66	31	4.26
Guest rooms	0	1	4	68	27	4.19
Public areas	1	2	8	65	24	4.04
Throughout the hotel	0	1	3	68	28	4.22

The survey results from hotel guests’ opinions on “the preferences of in which parts of the hotel to experience the Siwan heritage components” in Siwan hotels are presented in Table 4.3.6. Six different parts of the hotel were identified (the whole hotel, external building, lobby, guest rooms, public areas and throughout the hotel) and a Likert scale (strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, strongly agree) was used to assess the preferences.

Responses were very similar for all locations with approximately two-thirds expressing agreement and most of the rest expressing “strong agreement”, meaning that heritage applications are highly appreciated in all parts of the hotel. Very few people disagreed with this. In fact, the small differences in the percentages between the hotels also indicate the interest of guests in experiencing Siwan heritage in Siwan hotels.

Table 4.3.7: ` Guests’ preferences for respecting Siwan traditions inside Siwan hotels (%) (N = 68)

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Restricting alcoholic beverages	2	13	18	59	8	3.53
Avoiding short dresses	0	12	21	57	10	3.67
Male guests served by men staff	9	9	16	54	12	3.51
Women guests served by women staff	10	10	10	56	14	3.51
Staff wearing traditional Siwan dress	4	2	6	56	32	4.10

The survey results concerning hotel guests' opinions on "preferences for respecting Siwan traditions inside Siwan hotels" are presented in Table 4.3.7. Again, six different aspects of Siwan traditions (restricting consumption of alcoholic beverages, avoiding short dresses, separating men and women in public areas, male guests served by men staff, women guests served by women staff and staff wearing traditional Siwan dress) were selected to indicate the extent of hotel guests' agreement with respecting such traditions.

There is general support for respecting Siwan traditions in hotels: more than half of respondents supported this in all cases. The most strongly supported was staff wearing traditional Siwan dress. The most resistance was made to the tradition that guests be served by people of their own gender: approximately 20 percent were against this and between ten and 15 percent were unsure. Nevertheless, approximately two thirds agreed with this and a similar proportion agreed with restricting the consumption of alcoholic beverages and avoiding the wearing of short dresses. With regard to the mean scores, staff wearing traditional Siwan dress had the highest mean score while both male guests served by men staff and women guests served by women



staff had the lowest mean score. This suggests that there is widespread support for staff wearing traditional Siwan dress and considerable support for abiding by other Siwan traditions.

Table 4.3.8: Preferences for aspects of Siwan pre-modern life (%) (N = 68)

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Mean</b>
<i>Karsheef</i> rather air conditioners	0	6	16	56	22	3.94
Providing traditional snacks	1	0	3	46	50	4.43
Providing candles rather than lamps in guest rooms	1	10	9	49	31	4.00
Sitting on the floor rather than at tables	0	15	4	46	35	4.01

The survey results concerning the use of pre-modern aspects of Siwan life are presented in Table 4.3.8. Respondents were provided with four different examples of such possibilities. They were: using *Karsheef*, a traditional building material, as an alternative to using air conditioners; room service provision of Siwan traditional snacks, for example, Siwan date cookies as an alternative to European snacks; providing candles as an alternative to lamps in guest rooms; and sitting on the floor for some banquets as an alternative to sitting at the tables. With regard to the mean scores, providing traditional snacks had the highest mean score while using *Karsheef* rather air conditioners had the lowest mean score.

Once again there was strong support for the adoption of Siwan traditions. All four items received strong support with the strongest report for the provision of local snacks. Most uncertainty was found for the use of *Karsheef* rather than using air conditioners and a small minority was hesitant about using candles as an alternative to lamps in guest rooms. It follows that the provision of some traditional Siwan snacks, such as date cookies, would be welcomed as an alternative to European snacks provided by room service". Furthermore, the other

opportunities that were widely supported could be combined and offered together. Thus, for example, eating cookies could be done sitting on the floor, in candlelight in a *Karsheef* building.

Table 4.3.9: Menu preferences (%) (N = 68)

	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Mean</b>
Consistent Siwan menu	0	6	13	74	7	3.82
Seasonally changing Siwan menu	0	1	0	52	47	4.44
Mix of international and Siwan items	0	1	0	52	47	4.44

When asked about menus in Siwan hotels, three options were provided: consistent Siwan menu, seasonally changing Siwan menu and mix of international and Siwan items. The survey results are presented in Table 4.3.9. There is broad support for the provision of Siwan food and it appears that there is substantial support both for a changing menu and the provision of international menu items. Guests appear to appreciate diversity but there is also strong support for the provision of Siwan menu and the lesson to be learned is that this option may always be made available.

A variety of statistical tests were used to test for differences among groups of respondents in their views concerning heritage and hospitality in Siwa. Since there was considerable agreement among respondents, only a limited number of statistically significant differences were found. The sections that follow focus upon the statistically significant differences and other results are mentioned only briefly.

#### 4.3.4 Differences in experiencing heritage in Siwan hotels

Spearman's Rank Correlation tests were used to test for differences in experiencing heritage in Siwan hotels.

Table 4.3.10: Relationships between support for enhancing heritage-hospitality links and reasons for staying in Siwan hotels

	Natural scenery	Relaxing atmosphere	Traditional construction	Interest in Siwan heritage	Gaining Siwan experience
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
Providing a learning environment through interaction with Siwan people	.233	.030*	.026*	.020*	.015*
Providing a learning environment through participating in activity-related Siwan heritage	.010*	.046*	.009*	.020*	.000*
Ensuring authenticity of crafts	.245	.121	.474	.167	.046*
Ensuring authenticity of building materials	.271	.135	.527	.297	.072
The welcoming of guests in unique Siwan ways	.408	.004*	.013*	.001*	.000*
Providing traditional meals using local ingredients	.021*	.001*	.077	.060	.002*

\* Statistically significant difference at .05 level

No significant differences were found in the heritage-hospitality link with either hotel location or price. However, all statements supporting enhancement of the heritage-hospitality link were positively related to gaining a Siwan experience. The exception was ensuring the authenticity of building materials. This means that enhancement of heritage-hospitality links can occur regardless of location. Also, the lack of a relationship with price suggests that simple authentic features can be used to enhance the relationship between heritage and hospitality in Siwan hotels (Table 4.3.10).

Table 4.3.11: Relationships between enhancement of heritage-hospitality links and the opportunity to learn about heritage

	Folktales	Songs	Sayings	Ballads
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
Providing a learning environment through interaction with Siwan people	.003*	.003*	.016*	.007*

Providing a learning environment through participating in activity-related Siwan heritage	.023*	.007*	.011*	.008*
Ensuring authenticity of crafts	.000*	.001*	.001*	.000*
Ensuring authenticity of building materials	.013*	.078	.085	.012*
The welcoming of guests in unique Siwan ways	.000*	.013*	.013*	.000*
Providing traditional meals using local ingredients	.000*	.002*	.001*	.000*

\* Statistically significant difference at .05 level

Statistical analyses show that the authenticity of building materials is significantly and positively correlated with two aspects of heritage: folktales and ballads. The reason is unclear. Perhaps both of them reflect traditional stories (which may take longer time than sayings and songs). This may suggest that ensuring authenticity of material building may well affect the interaction with such local stories. Further, all other statements were significantly and positively correlated with all suggested ways of exposing visitors to Siwan heritage (Table 4.3.11).

Table 4.3.12: Relationships between reasons for staying in Siwan hotels and experiencing aspects of the local culture

Stay Reasons	Importance of experiencing aspects of the local culture
	Sig. (2-tailed)
Traditional construction	.048*
Interest in Siwan cultural heritage	.016*
Gaining Siwan experience	.001*

\* Statistically significant difference at .05 level

No significant differences were found in association with hotel location, price, relaxing atmosphere and natural scenery. However, significant differences were found in association with traditional construction, interest in Siwan cultural heritage and gaining a Siwan experience ( $p < .05$ ) (Table 4.3.12).

Table 4.3.13: Relationship between support for enhancement of heritage-hospitality links and experiencing aspects of local culture

<b>Support for enhancing heritage-hospitality relationships</b>	<b>Importance of experiencing aspects of local culture</b>
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>
Providing a learning environment through interaction with Siwan people	.036*
Providing a learning environment through active participating in Siwan heritage	.000*
Ensuring authenticity of crafts	.011*
Ensuring authenticity of building materials	.007*
Welcoming of guests in unique Siwan ways	.006*
Providing traditional meals using local ingredients	.048*

\* Statistically significant difference at .05 level

All statements about the enhancement of heritage-hospitality links were significantly and positively correlated with the importance of experiencing aspects of the local culture during the stay in Siwa (Table 4.3.13). This suggests that it is necessary to enhance heritage-hospitality links in Siwan hotels in order to convey the local culture of the whole oasis to tourists.

#### 4.3.5 Differences in preferring heritage applications in Siwan hotels

Spearman's Rank Correlation tests were used to assess differences in preferring heritage application in Siwan hotels.

Table 4.3.14: Relationships between the display of culture in hotels and experiencing aspects of local culture in Siwa

<b>Location within hotel</b>	<b>Importance of experiencing aspects of local culture</b>
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>
The whole hotel	.000*
External building	.004*
Lobby	.000*
Guest rooms	.018*
Public areas	.002*
Throughout the hotel	.021*

\* Statistically significant difference at .05 level

The results show consistent significant positive relationships (Table 4.3.14) i.e. those most interested in Siwan culture would like it to be shared throughout the hotels. However, this does not mean support for uniformity: each part of the hotel can play a role in conveying Siwan culture, although each part may reflect Siwan culture in a different way, thereby providing broad exposure to many aspects of Siwan culture.

Table 4.3.15: Relationship between both aspects of Siwan traditions and menu kinds and the importance of experiencing aspects of local culture

<b>Agreements with the importance of Siwan traditions and menu kinds</b>	<b>Importance of experiencing aspects of the local culture during stay in Siwa</b>
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>
Avoiding short dresses	.018*
Consistent Siwan menu	.001*

\* Statistically significant difference at .05 level

No significant differences were found regarding preference for particular Siwan traditions (restricting alcoholic beverages, separating men and women in public areas, male guests served by men staff, women guests served by women staff, staff wearing traditional Siwan dress, using *Karsheef* as an alternative to using air conditioners, providing traditional Siwan snacks, providing candles as an alternative to lamps, and sitting on the floor for some meals as an alternative to sitting at tables) and the importance of experiencing local culture. The exception was the avoidance of short dresses ( $p < .05$ ). Additionally, no significant differences were found in seasonally changing the Siwan menu and the mix of international Siwan items. However, one significant difference was found in the desire for provision of a consistent Siwan menu ( $p < .05$ ) (Table 4.3.15). This was most important to those for whom experiencing Siwan culture was also important.

#### 4.3.6 Similarities and differences between first-time and repeat visitors to Siwa oasis

Mann-Whitney U tests were employed to determine whether or not there were significant differences between first-time and repeat visitors to Siwa.

Table 4.3.16: Relationship between first-time and repeat visits to Siwa and experiencing heritage in Siwan hotels

	<b>First visit (N=45)</b>	<b>Repeated visit (N=23)</b>	<b>Z</b>	<b>P</b>
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Mean</b>		
<b><u>The importance of reasons for staying in Siwan hotels</u></b>				
Interest in Siwan cultural heritage	3.6	4.2	-2.543	.011*
Gaining Siwan experience	3.0	4.9	-2.753	.006*
<b><u>Enhancement of the heritage-hospitality link in Siwan hotels</u></b>				
The welcoming of guests in unique Siwan ways	3.1	4.1	-2.905	.004*

\* Statistically significant difference at .05 level

Significant differences were found between new and repeat visitors in both interest in Siwan cultural heritage and gaining a Siwan experience. Additionally, one significant difference was found in responses to attitudinal statements regarding the heritage-hospitality link (The welcoming of guests in unique Siwan ways) ( $p < .05$ ). Repeat visitors placed greater importance on experiencing heritage in Siwan hotels than first-time visitors (Table 4.3.16).

Table 4.3.17: Relationships between first-time and repeat visits to Siwa and preferences for heritage applications in Siwan hotels

	<b>First visit (N=45)</b>	<b>Repeated visit (N=23)</b>	<b>Z</b>	<b>P</b>
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Mean</b>		

<b><u>Hotel parts</u></b>				
The whole hotel	3.6	4.3	-1.977	.048*
<b><u>Siwan traditions</u></b>				
Restricting alcoholic beverages	3.8	4.2	-2.438	.015*
Separating men and women in public areas	3.6	4.1	-2.430	.015*
<b><u>Pre-modern ways of life</u></b>				
Providing candles as an alternative to lamps in guest rooms	2.9	4.4	-3.141	.002*
Sitting on the floor, for some banquets, as an alternative to sitting at the tables	3.9	4.1	-2.225	.026*

\* Statistically significant difference identified at .05 level

When asked about their preferences concerning the parts of the hotel in which heritage may be shared, no significant differences were found for most options (external building, lobby, guest rooms, public areas, and traditional construction). However, repeat visitors were significantly more likely to express a preference for the application of heritage throughout the entire hotel. No significant differences were found between first-time and repeat visitors regarding the avoidance of short dresses, male staff serving male guests, female staff serving female guests and the wearing of traditional Siwan dress by staff. However, two significant differences were found: repeat visitors were more likely to support restrictions on the consumption of alcoholic beverages and separating men and women in public areas tradition. No significant differences were found regarding the use of *Karsheef*, a traditional building material, as an alternative to using air conditioners, or in the room service providing Siwan traditional snacks, such as date cookies, as an alternative to European snacks. Similarly, no significant differences were found regarding menu preferences. However, two significant differences were found: repeat visitors were more likely to support the provision of candles as an alternative to lamps in guest rooms and sitting on the floor, for some banquets, as an alternative to sitting at tables (Table 4.3.17). Although the above findings are not strong, they are consistent. Where



statistically significant relationships exist, they confirm that repeat visitors place higher value than first-time visitors on experiencing Siwan heritage.

#### 4.3.7 Influence of socio-demographic characteristics on experiences and preferences for heritage in Siwan hotels

Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis tests were conducted to determine whether hotel guests' experiences and preferences for heritage in Siwan hotels differed significantly on the basis of socio-demographic characteristics.

Table 4.3.18: Influence of occupation on experiences and preferences of heritage in Siwan hotels

	<b>Teachers (N=18) Mean</b>	<b>Company employees (N=20) Mean</b>	<b>Retired (N=20) Mean</b>	<b>Others (N=18) Mean</b>	<b>Chi square</b>	<b>P</b>
<b><u>Stay reasons</u></b>						
Traditional construction	2.4	4.2	3.7	2.8	10.159	.017*
Gaining Siwan experience	2.2	4.3	3.5	3.2	9.785	.020*
<b><u>The desire to learn heritage aspects</u></b>						
Folktales	4.6	2.7	3.5	3.6	9.478	.024*
Sayings	4.8	2.6	3.4	3.6	12.006	.007*
<b><u>Siwan tradition preferences</u></b>						
Separating men and women in public areas	3.5	4.3	3.3	2.6	8.482	.037*
<b><u>Pre-modern life styles</u></b>						
Sitting on the floor, for some banquets, as an alternative to sitting at the tables	3.6	4.4	2.6	3.3	10.423	.015*

\* Statistically significant difference at .05 level  
df=3

As shown in Table 4.3.18, across the four occupational groups (i.e., teachers, company employees, retired, and others (writers, professors, a healer, tour guides and physicians), two stay reasons, traditional construction and gaining Siwan experience; two heritage aspects, folktales

and sayings; one Siwan tradition, separating men and women in public areas;, one pre-modern Siwan life style, sitting on the floor, for some banquets, as an alternative to sitting at the tables were found to be significantly different across the four occupational groups. The nature of these differences is explored further below through paired comparisons.

Table 4.3.19: Influence of occupation on experiences and preferences for heritage in Siwan hotels: Paired comparisons

Group	Comparison	Experiences and preferences of heritage	Z	P
1vs.2	Teachers vs. Company employees.	<b><u>Importance of reasons to stay in Siwan hotels</u></b>		
		Importance of Traditional construction	-2.661	.008*
		Importance of gaining Siwan experience	-3.209	.001*
		<b><u>The desire of learning heritage aspects</u></b>		
2vs.4	Company employees. vs. others.	Folktales	-3.007	.003*
		Sayings	-3.321	.001*
2vs.3	Company employees. vs. retired.	<b><u>Siwan tradition preferences</u></b>		
		Separating men and women in public areas	-2.944	.003*
		<b><u>pre-modern Siwan life preferences</u></b>		
		Sitting on the floor, for some banquets, as an alternative to sitting at the tables	-2.905	.004*

\* Statistically significant difference at .05 level

Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted, as post-hoc tests, to determine which of the pairs of occupational groups was significantly different based on mean rank (Table 4.3.19). In these paired comparisons, a Bonferroni adjustment was used. This involved obtaining a new significance level by dividing the p-value to be achieved for significance (.05 in this research) by the number of paired comparisons. The number of pairs to be compared was obtained through the formula  $k(k-1)/2$ , where k represents the number of groups of independent variables. As four occupation groups were involved, six groups of comparisons were needed, and a significance level of .0083 was used.

A comparison between teachers and company employees produced a statistically significant difference in the importance of gaining Siwan experience and traditional construction as reasons to stay in Siwan hotels. Company employees had a better appreciation of the two reasons than did those who were teachers. However, teachers had more desire to learn both folktales and sayings than did those who were company employees. Additionally, company employees had a more preference to separate men and women in public areas than did those the ‘others’ group (writers, professors, a healer, tour guides and physicians). Also, company employees had a more preference to sit on the floor than did those who were retired.

Table 4.3.20: Influence of age on agreements with pre-modern ways of Siwan life preferences

	<b>18-44 (N=17) Mean</b>	<b>45-54 (N=19) Mean</b>	<b>55-64 (N=14) Mean</b>	<b>65 or above (N=18) Mean</b>	<b>Chi square</b>	<b>P</b>
Sitting on the floor, for some banquets, as an alternative to sitting at the tables	3.5	4.5	3.2	2.5	11.169	.011*

\* Statistically significant difference at .05 level  
df=3

One pre-modern life style, sitting on the floor, for some banquets, as an alternative to sitting at the tables, was found to be significantly different across the four age groups (Table 4.3.20).

Table 4.3.21: Influence of age on agreements with pre-modern ways of Siwan life preferences: Paired comparison

<b>Group</b>	<b>Comparison</b>	<b>Pre-modern Siwan life preferences</b>	<b>Z</b>	<b>P</b>
2vs.4	45-54 vs. 65 or above.	Sitting on the floor for some banquets, as an alternative to sitting at the tables	-3.024	.002*

\* Statistically significant difference at .05 level

As shown in Table 4.3.21, in comparisons between the 45-54 and 65-or-over age groups, the results showed statistically significant differences in the pre-modern Siwan style of sitting on the floor. Hotel guests in the age group 45-54 had a greater preference to sit on the floor than did those in the 65-and-over age group.

### **Summary**

This section presented the results of cross-tabulations of the hotel guests' questionnaire results and associated statistical tests. It reports four profiles of hotel guests (socio demographic characteristics, trip, lodging and interest in culture). Results of Mann-Whitney U tests showed that repeat visitors are more interested than first time visitors in, for example, the importance of gaining Siwan heritage and being welcomed with the unique Siwan way. Results of Spearman's Rank Correlation tests also showed, for example, that (1) heritage- hospitality links in Siwan hotels are fundamental to conveying the local culture of the whole oasis to tourists, and (2) consistent significant positive relationships i.e. those most interested in Siwan culture would like it to be shared throughout the hotels. Results of Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis tests also showed, for example, that (1) Occupation, to some extent, influences hotel guest agreements with the importance of reasons for stay in Siwan hotels; desire to learn about aspects of Siwan heritage, and Siwan tradition preferences, (2) Age, to some extent, influences hotel guest preferences for experiencing pre-modern ways of Siwan life.

### **4.4 The Perspectives of Managers**

This section examines the roles of hotel managers and their perceptions of the heritage-hospitality link in Siwan hotels. Hotel managers play an important role in influencing the experiences of tourists that visit their properties. While they do not necessarily own the properties that they manage and, as such, do not have complete control concerning what goes on

in them, they hire and fire staff, set work schedules, set the tone and make decisions about how the facility will be operated. Persons in such relevant positions may have appropriate experience and knowledge about how to create a synergistic relationship between commercialization and authenticity in hotels, and the possibility of applying heritage hospitality as a new concept which may assist in achieving this synergistic relationship. In addition, hotel general managers may help in identifying heritage characteristics that may be applied in such hotels.

Small hotels may have a small management team consisting of only one to three managers. The researched Siwan hotels are examples of such small hotels; they are 10 small facilities. Each hotel is managed by only one manager. Thus, in Siwa, such managers have a very important role to play in determining the ambience that is offered to visitors. At the same time, they are in a good position to describe the attributes of their facilities and the challenges and opportunities, and successes and failures of their hotels.

The researcher utilized semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with eight general managers instead of the target of 10. Such managers were interviewed concerning their facilities and how they are operated. One general manager managed 3 hotels: Adrere Amellal, Albabenshal and Shali lodge. In other words, one interview addressed the operation of these three hotels. Taghaghien, Qasr Alzaituna, Siwa Shali resort, Dehiba, Siwa Paradise were managed by non-Siwan managers. Desert rose, Adrere Amellal, Albabenshal, Shali lodge, Siwa dream lodge were managed by Siwan managers.

All researched hotels were privately owned. The manager of Siwa dream lodge was the owner of this property. Other owners were living abroad, for example, the owner of 'Desert Rose hotel'; he lived in Germany and he completely left his property to a Siwan manager. All

managers were more than 40 years old. All of them were men. Siwan managers dressed in traditional Siwan clothing. Non-Siwan managers dressed in business casual clothing.

The research examined those Siwan hotels which reflect some aspects of Siwan heritage. This examination was undertaken through three perspectives: a) the possibility of applying the concept of ‘heritage hospitality’ in Siwan hotels; b) the relationship between such hotels and the oasis where they are located; and c) the relationship between such hotels and the Siwan people. The sample of 10 hotels was selected based primarily on their use of heritage and the willingness of their managers to collaborate with the researcher. The sample hotels were used to explore the relationship between such hotels and the Siwan cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible, in greater depth. Hotel managers were asked 15 questions. Responses to each question will be examined in turn. Qualitative data from interviews are reported systematically by interview questions instead of developing themes that emerged based on the information gathered from multiple questions. The researcher identified themes that she observed repeatedly in responses to each question. It was appropriate to do this because research questions had been identified prior to collecting data. The disadvantage is that it made it more difficult for new issues to emerge in the study that the researcher had not identified prior to entering the field. Also, it is possible that relationships among responses to different questions` may have been overlookedhelped the research reflect different and similar responses for each question and permitted more elaboration of presenting data more than using categories.

The first question was “To what extent do you think that visitors experience Siwan culture and heritage while actually staying within your hotel?” In response to this question, all respondents indicated that hotel guests experienced Siwan culture and were satisfied with their cultural experience. For example, the manager of ‘Adrere Amellal’ hotel indicated that, “I have a

belief that hotel guests experience the Siwan heritage to a high extent” and this was a typical response. One manager said, “Hotel guests experience the Siwan heritage to the extent of being one of the oasis residents. For example, the hotel guest eats Siwan food and sleeps on Siwan-made beds”. Thus, it is clear that hotel managers felt that their hotels provided an appropriate cultural experience and that their visitors were satisfied with what they provided.

The second question probed more deeply by asking, “Why do you say this?”. In response to this question, most hotel managers indicated that hotel guests were satisfied with their hotels because they provided them with access to the uniqueness of Siwa’s traditions and traditional buildings design. The manager of Qasr Alzaituna’ hotel stated that, “Hotel guests get a unique experience which they could not find anywhere else. For example, the external building of the hotel follows the low-rise traditional Siwan houses. Such traditional buildings attract visitors and make them feel the heritage of the Siwan people” and this was a typical response. Other managers indicated that hotel guests were satisfied with their hotels because they came back to their hotels. One manager stated that, “There is an increasing number of visitors to the hotel”. Thus, it is clear that hotel managers felt that hotel guests got a unique heritage experience and the numbers of visits to their hotels increased as a result.

The third question was “What aspects of Siwan heritage do visitors experience within your hotel?” In response to this question, most hotel managers indicated that hotel guests experienced Siwan heritage through one main aspect; traditional building material: *karsheef* which is made of mud bricks. The manager of ‘Shali lodge’ hotel stated that, ”all the buildings of the hotel are made of Karsheef and palm trees. Cement is not used in this hotel” and this was a typical response. Other hotel managers indicated that hotel guests experienced Siwan heritage through the location of the hotel. The manager of ‘Dehiba’ hotel stated that, “Hotel guests

experience the Siwan heritage through the natural beauty of Siwa. The hotel is located in a distinctive location where there are salt lakes, the spacious areas of desert sand, palm trees and the healthy air of Siwa”. Thus, it is clear that hotel managers considered the Siwan building material 'Karsheef' and the location are the aspects of Siwan heritage that hotel guests experience within the Siwan hotels.

The fourth question was “What aspects of tangible heritage are used in your hotel?”. In response to this question, most hotel managers indicated that they used *Karsheef*, the local building material, as a tangible aspect of heritage. They used it either in building all parts of the hotel or some parts of it or even as an external layer which covered a cement building. The manager of the Albabenshal hotel stated that, “The hotel is a restoration of the old village of Siwa oasis (the old village of Shali was founded at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> century as a defense against wandering tribes. The residents built a fortified village on a hill. It had high walls, towers and houses several stories high all crowded together for defense. It is now in ruins). *Karsheef* is used in each part of the hotel. It is used in the external building, the stairs, the guest rooms and the restaurant”. Another manager stated that, “The external building is covered by a layer of Karsheef which is a main character of Siwan houses. However, the hotel itself is built from cement and red bricks” and this was a typical response. In addition to using *Karsheef*, some managers indicated that they used, in some areas of their hotels, locally-made tables, beds, chairs, handicrafts, carpets and bees wax candles. Also, they indicated that they used natural springs as swimming pools for guests and provided some Siwan food. The manager of Siwa Dream Lodge hotel stated that,” There is a highly intensive use of wall hanging handicrafts, Siwan carpets on the floor, palm tree beds and olive tree tables. There is also a small natural spring which is used as a small swimming pool”. Thus, it is clear that hotel managers mostly



used the Siwan building material *Karsheef* as a tangible cultural heritage. Some of them also used some tangible items made from local materials.

The fifth question probed more deeply by asking “Why do you use such aspects of tangible heritage?”. In response to this question, most hotel managers used the local building material *Karsheef* in order to attract and satisfy tourists. The manager of Siwa Dream Lodge stated that, “Using *Karsheef* can attract tourists. They prefer to try everything different from their culture and tradition” and this was a typical answer. Thus, some managers used Siwan items in order to attract and satisfy tourists. Another manager stated that, “Tourists will not come to the hotel if it does not reflect the Siwan heritage. They can go to Marsa Matrouh, the capital city of Siwa; it is a city full of modern hotels. However, they are coming to this hotel in order to try some Siwan food and the Siwan handicrafts”. Thus, it is clear that hotel managers believed that the reflection of tangible Siwan heritage, mainly the use of local building material, through their hotels was a good way to attract tourists.

The sixth question was “What aspects of intangible heritage are used in your hotel?” In response to this question, nine hotel managers indicated that they did not use aspects of intangible heritage in their hotels at all. The manager of the Taghaghien hotel stated that, “There are no aspects of Siwan intangible heritage in my hotel”. Another manager stated that, “I did not think about it at all” and this was a typical response. Only one manager, the manager of Siwa Dream Lodge, indicated that he applied Siwan intangible heritage on a very limited scale. The manager of Siwa Dream Lodge stated that, “The hotel offers Siwan dancing folklore. Such dancing folklore is on demand; it is not on a regular basis and it is not included in the program of my hotel.” This was also a typical response. Thus, it is clear that most hotel managers did not

apply Siwan intangible heritage in their hotels. Even if a hotel manager applied an aspect of Siwan intangible heritage in his hotel, it was only when it was specifically requested.

The seventh question probed more deeply by asking “Why?”. In response to this question, most hotel managers indicated that they did not use intangible Siwan heritage because their main concern was the easier investment in both the traditional ways of Siwan building construction and a beautiful location in Siwa. The manager of Adrere Amellal stated that, “The hotel concentrates more on the simple and easy reflection of Siwan tangible heritage through the building and its location. However, it is a good idea to consider the intangible heritage of Siwa”. One hotel manager indicated that he did not use intangible Siwan heritage because of the short length of stay of guests in his hotel. The manager of Shali Lodge stated that, “The hotel did not consider intangible Siwan heritage because of the limited length of stay of tourists in the hotel. Tourists who are coming to my hotel spend a few days. Really, a few days of tourists’ stay are not enough to offer aspects of Siwan intangible heritage.” The only manager, the manager of Siwa Dream Lodge, who applied an aspect of intangible Siwan heritage, indicated that it helped to create a profit. He stated that, “I got this idea from some customers who asked me to offer them some Siwan dancing folklore. Since then, I’m getting lots of tourists asking me to offer them such folklore and I’m gaining much money” and this was a typical response. Thus, it is clear that most managers concentrate on using easy ways to reflect Siwan heritage. Such ways were using traditional building construction in good sites. Two managers drew upon their experience with tourists to decide upon the appropriateness of applying Siwan intangible heritage. One of them said it was not useful because the length of stay of guests was too limited to offer aspects of Siwan intangible heritage. However, another manager accepted it because it satisfied customers and achieved a financial return.

The eighth question was “What are the advantages of using aspects of Siwan heritage?”. In response to this question, most managers indicated that both attracting and satisfying tourists are advantages of using Siwan heritage in their hotels. The manager of the Desert Rose hotel stated that, “Such aspects attract tourists. All hotel guests ask about the heritage of Siwa. For example, a customer asked me ‘Do you have electricity?’ I answered ‘No’. He replied ‘That is fine, because if you have electricity, you will have TV and loud music and this will badly affect my interest in experiencing Siwan traditions’”. Other managers indicated again that the use of local materials (*Karsheef*, olive tree wood and thick palm groves) is a good way of reflecting Siwan heritage in their hotels. Such managers indicated that the advantages of using local materials were the cheap prices, the availability and the ability to help the hotel match its surroundings. The manager of the Qasr Alzaituna hotel stated that, “The availability of different local materials is an advantage of using such aspects”. Another manager stated that, “Using aspects of Siwan heritage saves money; they save transportation costs”. Thus, it is clear that hotel managers appreciated some of the aspects which reflect Siwan heritage in their hotel. Most of them appreciated such aspect were motivation factors for tourists. Other managers appreciated the unique characteristics of such aspects and the financial benefits of using local materials.

The ninth question was “What are the disadvantages of using aspects of Siwan heritage?”. In response to this question, most managers indicated that they found no disadvantage in using aspects of Siwan heritage in their hotels. The manager of Siwa Paradise hotel stated that, “There are no disadvantages of applying aspects of Siwan traditions in this hotel” and this was a typical response. Some managers indicated that the only disadvantage that they face is the yearly maintenance of *Karsheef*. The manager of Siwa Dream Lodge stated that, “*Karsheef* needs maintenance each year” and this was a typical response. Thus, it is clear that

most managers believed that there were no disadvantages of using Siwan heritage in their hotels although others indicated suffering from the ongoing maintenance of the hotel buildings made from *Karsheef*.

The tenth question was "What is the aim of applying Siwan heritage in your hotel?". In response to this question, most managers indicated that attracting tourists and low costs of local materials are the main reasons for applying Siwan heritage in their hotels. The manager of Albabenshal stated that, "Attracting more tourists and reduced costs by using local materials are the aims of applying Siwan heritage in this hotel". One manager indicated that the aim of applying Siwan heritage is preserving the traditions of Siwa. The manager of Siwa Dream Lodge stated that, "The aim is preserving Siwa's tradition" and this was a typical response. Thus, it is clear that most hotel managers believed that the aims of applying Siwan heritage were to draw more tourists and to benefit from the low costs of Siwan materials.

The eleventh question was "Are there any problems with exposing visitors to Siwan traditions within a hotel setting?". In response to this question, all hotel managers indicated that there were no problems with exposing visitors to Siwan traditions within a hotel setting. The manager of Shali Lodge stated that, "Visitors appreciate our traditions. They understand them and they are coming to Siwa to enjoy such unique traditions". The manager of Siwa Paradise hotel stated that, "I faced no problem at all. Vice versa, the exposure of tourists to Siwan tradition makes them happy" and this was a typical response. Thus, it is clear that all hotel managers believed that the exposure of visitors to Siwan traditions satisfies them and, as a result, it did not cause any problem.

The twelfth question was "How can a balance be achieved between managing the hotel as a money-making establishment and managing it as a representative of Siwan culture?". In

response to this question, most managers indicated that this balance could be achieved through applying some different ways of investing in the low-cost components of Siwan heritage which help to attract lots of tourists and consequently gain more money. Such ways were the investment in simple lighting (Siwan small lamps), available Siwan food (organic vegetables, olives and dates), *karsheef* mud brick building material, palm groves, restoration of old Siwan buildings, Siwan dress, and the use of beautiful locations in Siwa. The manager of Siwa Dream Lodge stated that, “The hotel does not offer alcoholic beverages; they are against Siwan traditions. I advise hotel guests not to wear short dresses outside of the hotel; it is against Siwan traditions. However, they can wear a short dress inside the hotel. The hotel used *Karsheef* in order to reflect the Siwan way of life. I try to let the hotel guests feel that they are at their homes. For example, they can prepare tea at any time”. The manager of Albabenshal hotel stated that, “The hotel is a revival of old Shali and this revival is a great balance which invests in original Siwan building and attracts tourists”. The manager of Adrere Amellal stated that, “The hotel invests in the simple and low-cost Siwan materials and offers them with a high quality standard and at a high level of cleanliness. In addition, all hotel employees are Siwan and they wear the traditional Siwan dress”. Some managers indicated that applying a mix of Siwan and modern features can create the desired relationship. Such a mix satisfies different tastes and achieves the relationship. The manager of Shali Lodge stated that, “The hotel maintains *karsheef* in order to preserve the Siwan traditions. However, it follows the desire of customers concerning the type of food and the modern design of toilets”. Another manager stated that, “The hotel offers a mix of Siwan and modern tastes. For example, if some customers ask me to add billiard tables, microwaves, and internet services, I will do that. I think that will satisfy different demands and achieve that balance”. Thus, it is clear that most hotel managers believe that the relationship

between managing the hotel as a money-making establishment and managing it as a representative of Siwan culture can be fulfilled through investing in the unique and low-cost elements of Siwan heritage in their hotels. The uniqueness of such elements attracts tourists. The reduced costs of such elements save money to the hotels themselves. Consequently, the Siwan heritage elements can be used to achieve such a relationship. Managers believe that providing both Siwan and modern aspects can be used to create that relationship.

The thirteenth question was “Please compare your own situation with that in other hotels in Siwa?”. In response to this question, most managers considered the location of their hotels in comparison with other hotels. They viewed the location as either remote in the Siwan desert or near to the Siwan downtown as a competitive advantage. The manager of the Desert Rose hotel stated that, “The location of the hotel is a perfect location in the desert where calmness and natural beauty prevail. Such a location grants the hotel the advantage of putting beds on the roof where tourists can sleep and watch stars at night”. The manager of Siwa Paradise hotel stated that, “The location of this hotel is close to the downtown of Siwa. It is a well-known hotel; lots of tour agencies are dealing with it”. Some managers considered other aspects of their hotels in comparison between them and other hotels. Such aspects included the quality of services or the mix of Siwan and modern aspects, or pioneering an idea that was not applied by other hotels. The manager of Adrere Amellal stated that, “The hotel is the leader in applying Siwan traditions in a Siwan hotel. It is the most expensive hotel in Siwa. It offers high quality services. The hotel guests are very rich people. All staff members are Siwan; they wear Siwan dress”. The manager of Albabenshal hotel stated that, “It is the only hotel in Siwa which has applied the concept of re-using an old building”. Thus, it is clear that most managers believed that their hotel locations

differentiated them from each other. Some managers believed that their hotel concepts differentiated them from each other.

The fourteenth question was “Do you have plans to enhance or reduce heritage applications in your hotel? “. In response to this question, five hotel managers indicated that they did not have plans to enhance or reduce heritage applications in their hotels. These hotels were the Desert Rose, Adrere Amellal, Dehiba, Albabenshal, and Siwa Paradise. The manager of Dehiba stated that, “There are no current plans”. The other five indicated that they had plans to enhance or reduce heritage application in their hotels. Such hotels were Taghaghien, Qasr Alzaituna, Siwa Shali Resort, Siwa Dream Lodge, and Shali Lodge. Thus, it is clear that half of the hotel managers did not possess a current plan. However, the other half considered either enhancing or reducing the heritage application.

The fifteenth question was” If you have plans, what are they?”. The managers of Taghaghien, Qasr Alzaituna, Siwa Shali Resort, Siwa Dream Lodge, and Shali Lodge indicated that they had plans for additional construction. Such construction included adding either more Siwan buildings or a natural spring as a swimming pool or a cement building. Four managers indicated that they planned to increase the Siwan construction. The manager of Siwa Shali Resort’ stated that, “There is a whole building from *Karsheef*. It is still under construction”. The manager of Shali Lodge stated that, “The hotel management is planning to add more guest rooms. Such rooms will follow a vertical design which will allow guests more privacy. In addition, the hotel management is thinking of adding a natural spring as a swimming pool”. One manager indicated that he planned to add a cement construction. The manager of Siwa Dream Lodge’ stated that, “there is an extension under construction. It includes eight rooms. It is built from cement and red bricks which do not need yearly maintenance. The building design follows

two rows of dome- shaped structures”. Thus, it is clear that most hotel managers, who had plans, concentrated most on adding Siwan buildings to their hotels.

### **Summary**

Hotel managers felt that their hotels provided an appropriate cultural experience, that their visitors were satisfied with what they provided and that hotel guests got an inimitable heritage experience and that, as a result, their numbers of visits to their hotels increased. Moreover, They thought that the Siwan building material '*Karsheef*' and the location are the characteristics of Siwan heritage that hotel guests experience within the Siwan hotels. They mostly used the Siwan building material '*Karsheef*' as tangible cultural heritage. Some of them also employed some tangible items made from local materials. They believed that the reflection of tangible Siwan heritage, mainly the use of local building material, through their hotels was a good way to draw tourists.

Most hotel managers did not apply Siwan intangible heritage in their hotels. Even if a hotel manager applied a feature of Siwan intangible heritage in his hotel, it would be only on demand. Most of them focused on applying some easy ways to reflect Siwan heritage. Such ways were traditional hotel buildings in good Siwan sites. Two managers got their denial or acceptance of applying Siwan intangible heritage from the tourists themselves. One of them denied it because the stay time of guests was too short to offer aspects of Siwan intangible heritage. However, another manager accepted it because it satisfied customers and achieved a return.

All managers appreciated the value of reflecting Siwan heritage in their hotel. Most of them appreciated such aspects as motivation factors for tourists. Other managers appreciated the unique characteristics of such aspects. Most of them believed that there were no disadvantages of



using aspects of Siwan heritage in their hotels. Some managers suffered from continuing maintenance of the hotel buildings made from *Karsheef*.

Most managers believed that the aims of applying Siwan heritage were to draw more tourists and invest in the low costs of Siwan materials. All hotel managers believed that the exposure of visitors to Siwan traditions satisfied them and, as a result, it did not cause any problem. Most managers believed that the relationship between managing the hotel as a money-making establishment and managing it as a representative of Siwan culture could be fulfilled through investing in the unique and low-cost elements of Siwan heritage through their hotels. The distinctiveness of such components attracted many tourists. The reduced costs of such components saved money for the hotels themselves. Therefore, the Siwan heritage elements achieved such relationship between culture and profit. Other managers believed that providing both Siwan and modern aspects could create that relationship.

Most managers believed that their hotel locations differentiated them from each other. Some managers believed that their hotel concepts differentiated them from each other. Half of the hotel managers did not think about a current plan. However, the other half had a plan to enhance or reduce heritage applications. Most of those who had plans focused more on adding Siwan buildings to their hotels.

#### **4.5 Focus group**

The general manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority in Siwa guided the researcher in the identification of focus group participants. The researcher contacted him upon arrival in the oasis. The focus group consisted of the following participants: (1) a well-educated Siwan man with a bachelor degree from the faculty of commerce. He wore traditional Siwan dress; (2) the General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority in Siwa; (3) a representative of

‘Environmental Quality International’ (EQI) which is a sustainable development initiative engaged in the delivery of environmental consulting services; (4) the General Manager of archaeological sites in Siwa; (5) a tour operator, and (6) a tour guide. In other words, this group was invited to provide views from different perspectives. This group had experience and knowledge about the relationship between indigenous peoples and Siwan hotels, and the relationship between heritage tourism and Siwan hotels. However, the group did not include strong representation of the local residents. Rather, it emphasized people with familiarity with the local situation, tourism and had responsibilities for aspects of tourism, directly or indirectly.

It was difficult to gather the focus group together in one meeting. The participants were met, at night, in an informal setting. Two separate meetings were held as follows: (1) the General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority, the General Manager of archaeological sites in Siwa and the representative of EQI ‘Environmental Quality International’ met together inside the building of the Egyptian Tourism Authority; and (2) the tour operator, the tour guide and the well-educated Siwan man met in the restaurant of Siwa Paradise hotel after the dinner time was over. These times proved to be the most suitable for them after they had finished their work. The researcher facilitated both meetings herself. This enabled her to keep the discussions on the topic. However, discussion was not directed so that the groups could explore the subject from as many angles as they pleased.

Each group met once. Each session covered the topics of employing Siwan people in Siwan hotels and the role of Siwan hotels in deepening heritage tourism experiences in Siwa oasis. In each session, interaction occurred between research participants as the group discussed issues pertaining to the research objectives. The focus group meetings occurred at the end of the field research period. The researcher presented the preliminary findings of her research in the

focus group meetings and the groups were able to learn about, comment upon and validate the researcher's insights. Reporting of qualitative data from the focus groups was organized by focus group questions instead of developing themes based on the entire data sets. The researcher used themes that she observed repeatedly for each question. Since pre-determined questions were explored and information on particular was being sought, it was appropriate to do this although it is possible that relationships between responses to questions may have been overlooked.

The first question was "What link, if any exist, between Siwan people and Siwan hotels?" In response to this question, most respondents (the General Manager of archaeological sites, the native Siwan man, the tour guide and the tour operator) indicated that there is at present only a limited link between Siwan people and Siwan hotels. For example, the General Manager of archaeological sites indicated that, "I have a belief that it is a limited link. Only some hotels hire some Siwan staff" and this was a typical response. However, the General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority thought that there is no link between Siwan people and Siwan hotels. This manager said, "There is no link at all". In contrast, the NGO representative suggested that there is a good link between Siwan people and Siwan hotels, thus offering a contradictory opinion. However, most participants of the focus groups held the opinion that the link was limited.

The second question probed more deeply by asking, "Why do you say this?" In response to this question, most focus group participants indicated that there is a limited link between Siwan people and Siwan hotels because the policy of Siwan hotels is to employ staff from outside of Siwa oasis. The local man stated that, "Hotels employ a small percentage of Siwan people. It is easier for them to hire trained staff from other Egyptian cities instead of training

native Siwan people. However, this way of staff hiring may clarify that hotels care more about gaining money than preserving Siwan traditions” and this was a typical response. The tour guide stated that, “Hotels hire a limited number of Siwan people. Such hotels present a source of income for Siwan people. In addition, Siwan people constitute cheap staff members who, for example, don’t need to be provided with specific buildings to overnight”. The General Manager of archaeological sites indicated that there is a limited link between Siwan hotels and Siwan people because of the unique qualities of Siwan people. He stated that, “Working in hotels represents a vulnerable source of income. So, Siwan people prefer not to be involved in such types of work. In addition, Siwan staff is lazy and not qualified. For example, they might clean the whole guest room and leave the bathroom dirty. Siwan staff have high self-esteem; they refuse to take orders. Moreover, Siwan people are strongly linked to their family affairs. Such a strong link is more important than being involved in work. For example, they need to attend marriage ceremonies. Excuses for missing such ceremonies are not acceptable at all”. The General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority indicated that there is no link between Siwan hotels and Siwan people because working in hotels is not the concern of Siwan people. He stated that, “Working in the field of agriculture is the first concern in the oasis”. To the contrary, the representative of the NGO indicated that there is a good link between Siwan hotels and Siwan people because Siwan people help to differentiate the Siwan hotels. She stated that, “Siwan people build and operate Siwan hotels. For example, ‘Adrere Amellal’ is a successful idea because all staff members are native Siwan. They were trained in order to be skilled hotel staff and then benefit the hotel. In this hotel, staff members are keeping their Siwan traditions and are performing their work perfectly. The most important issue here is that a strong link between Siwan hotels and Siwan people can be realized through: (1) training and qualifying

Siwan people in order that they can work in Siwan hotels; (2) letting them know that working in hotels pays a good income and it is not against their Siwan traditions and customs. For example, staff members in Adrere Amellal hotel feel that they are the hotel owners”.

Thus, it is clear that most focus group participants considered that limited local involvement in Siwan hotels resulted from the hiring of non-Siwan people and this may be related to the particular characteristics of both Siwan individual personalities and Siwan group tradition. One participant (the General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority) suggested that tourism is not the concern of Siwan society. However, a minority voice (the representative of NGO) considered that the link between Siwan hotels and Siwan people is symbiotic because Siwan hotels are a good source of money and, additionally, Siwan people prominently convey their own heritage and, thereby, help to make Siwan hotels distinctive.

The third question was “What do you think are the most effective ways to share aspects of heritage inside Siwan hotels?” In response to this question, most participants indicated that training and employing Siwan people in Siwan hotels are the most effective ways to share aspects of heritage inside Siwan hotels. The General Manager of archaeological sites stated that,

Hiring Siwan staff should be a governmental condition for building a hotel in the oasis. The following examples clarify the present situation in Siwan hotels: (1) some Siwan hotel owners randomly invest in Siwan heritage. For example, such hotels hang up Siwan handicrafts in a modern style guest room; (2) other Siwan hotel owners are keen to provide tourists with simple features of Siwan heritage (display of Siwan dress in the lobby and hanging up a Siwan carpet in the guest room). Such owners believe that such simple aspects provide tourists with the feeling of distinctiveness and this helps to achieve their aim (attracting more tourists); (3) however, the owner of the three sister hotels Adrere Amellal, Shali lodge and Albabenshal has studied the preservation of Siwan heritage and employed native Siwan people in their hotels. Really, Siwan staff in Siwan hotels can properly convey heritage through hotels.

This was a typical response. The General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority stated that,

Building hotels in the oasis is a new idea. It is clear that there is no systematic planning for hotels in Siwa. For sure, such random planning can badly increase because there are no rules to control the ways of sharing heritage inside Siwan hotels. So, it is critical to save the oasis heritage. The best way is to let the oasis people integrate with such hotels through building and operating them”

Some participants indicated that providing access to the traditional Siwan lifestyle and artifacts is the most effective way to share the heritage. The local informant stated that, “It is important to convey Siwan heritage through the lifestyles and artifacts of Siwan people. For example, Siwan food utensils, songs and dance should be included in the hotel program”. Thus, it is clear that focus group participants were aware that Siwan heritage is presented in the hotels to varying degrees. However, it became apparent through the discussion that they felt that the most effective way to share aspects of heritage inside Siwan hotels was to concentrate on “the human factor” and their cultural heritage products. This could be done through hiring Siwan people and investing in their lifestyles. It was felt that Siwan people could create a dynamic atmosphere through the planned sharing of heritage in the hotels.

The fourth question was “How can hotels strengthen demand for heritage tourism products?” In response to this question, all focus group participants except the tour operator indicated that displaying Siwan handicrafts and training local people are the ways to strengthen demand for heritage tourism through hotels. Although most participants had the same opinion concerning the possibility of displaying Siwan artifacts, they differed in the type of display that they recommended. The General Manager of archaeological sites stated that, “Siwan heritage should be conveyed in a believable way. For example, Siwan handicrafts should be displayed in a lively way. Local hotel staff plays an important role in making silent handicrafts lively ones. They can show the tourists their colours, their uses and tell stories related to them.”. The tour guide stated that, “Increasing the use of both Siwan handicrafts and people will benefit my [the

tour guide] business. The hotel is a profit-oriented organization, so it is important that it is supplied with available and cheap Siwan handicrafts. In addition, there should be agreements between hotels and souvenir shops. Such agreements should include the display of handicraft samples inside Siwan hotels to encourage the hotel guests to buy more from specific souvenir shops”. The local Siwan man stated that, “The oasis is one structure. Hotels should be integrated into this structure through avoiding all non-Siwan things, including hotel staff and hotel objects (handicrafts)”. The tour operator stated that, “Promotion for Siwan hotels through travel agencies is a way to strengthen demand for heritage tourism through hotels. Travel agencies can provide hotels with groups of tourists. As a result, that will increase the purchase of Siwan products”. Thus, it is clear that almost all participants viewed displaying of Siwan handicrafts and hiring Siwan staff are ways to strengthen the demand for heritage tourism products through hotels. Such ways encompass both the people themselves and their hand-made objects. The tour operator suggested a different way, which was the promotion of Siwan hotels through travel agencies.

The fifth question was “How do you think Siwan hotels could strengthen the exposure of visitors to heritage tourism?” In response to this question, focus group participants indicated that Siwan hotels could strengthen the exposure of visitors to heritage tourism either inside the hotels or outside them. Half of the participants (the General Manager of archaeological sites, the General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority and the NGO representative) indicated that Siwan hotels could organize trips and tourist programs in order to strengthen the exposure of visitors to heritage tourism. The General Manager of archaeological sites stated that, “I think that Siwan hotels can prepare planned tourist programs which may include visiting different archaeological sites in the oasis”. The General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority

stated that, "I think that hotels can organize trips for tourists in order to discover Siwan heritage. Such trips could be promoted through the internet".

The other half of participants (the local man, the tour guide and the tour operator) indicated that Siwan hotels could strengthen the exposure of visitors to heritage tourism through investing in their traditional buildings, handicrafts and room designs. The tour operator stated that "If the hotel displays different items of Siwan heritage, tourists will ask about their components and prices. As a result, that will promote such items and increase the exposure of tourists to heritage tourism". This was a typical response. Thus, it is evident that focus group participants have two predominant perspectives. One half believes that hotels may play a role in preparing heritage trips for tourists. The second half emphasizes that hotels may display different heritage products for tourists.

The sixth question was "What other contributions can hotels make to the preservation and sharing of the traditions of Siwa? A wide variety of suggestions was received in response to this question. The General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority stated that," Siwan hotels should be built and operated by Siwan people. It is the only way to preserve Siwan traditions in hotels. For example, when outsiders build and operate Siwan hotels, they will never preserve Siwan traditions". The local man stated that, "Hotels should not bring in non-Siwan musicians and hire non-Siwan staff. They should be stuck to what is inside the oasis itself". Thus, the General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority and the local Siwan man had similar opinions. The General Manager of archaeological sites stated that, "Hotels can convey some Siwan traditions and clarify the rules that should be followed in order to keep the traditions of Siwa. For example, the tradition of separating men and women at lunch time should be applied in Siwan hotels. I think that the study of Siwan traditions will help hotels control and preserve the



oasis traditions”. The NGO representative stated that, “It is so important to let the tourists know how certain hotels preserve the traditions of Siwa. For example, a responsible person in each hotel should talk to tourists and explain to them that alcoholic beverages and short dresses are forbidden in the oasis. In other words, there should be nice and dynamic ways in order simultaneously to preserve and reflect Siwan heritage through hotels”. The tour guide stated that, “Hotels can make promotions for Siwan festivals and provide information about them. In addition, they can provide short seminars about Siwan heritage. Hotels are organizations which provide different forms of comfort and entertainment and this will help them a lot to make contributions”. The tour operator stated that “Siwan hotels can easily acquire cheap land for building. I think that if they increase the green spaces and preserve the Siwan house style, they will make a good contribution to preserving the Siwan traditions”.

Thus, a variety of views emerged from focus group participants including: (1) strict application of the details of Siwan traditions which would forge a strong link between heritage and hotels; (2) talks with hotel guests which would clarify the Siwan traditions in a hospitable way (which may depend to some extent on the hospitality rules of hotels); (3) hotels may take on an organizational role in promoting Siwan festivals and preparing seminars about Siwan heritage, (4) preservation of Siwan-style houses and the gardens surrounding them; and (5) Siwan people may play more prominent roles in hotels, including building and operating them.

The seventh question was “How useful is the idea of heritage hospitality in preserving Siwan traditions?”. In response to this question, there were different opinions. Four of the participants (the General Manager of archaeological sites, the local man, the tour guide and the tour operator) indicated a strong belief in the usefulness of the idea. However, two of them (the General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority and the NGO representative) indicated only

conditional support. The General Manager of archaeological sites stated that, “It is a good idea for both the oasis and the hotels.” The General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority stated that, “There is no link between Siwan traditions and hotels unless they are operated by Siwan peoples. I can say that the link between most hotels here and the oasis traditions is a commercial link; it does not preserve the oasis heritage. If this study aims at deepening Siwan heritage inside Siwan hotels, it will not be a bad idea.” The NGO representative stated that, “It is an important idea if it will be properly applied in Siwan hotels. I mean respecting Siwan heritage and applying its details in a proper way”. Thus, while most participants viewed heritage hospitality as being a useful idea, two participants gave only conditional support. The conditions included: (1) hiring Siwan people; (2) deep application of Siwan heritage through involvement of Siwan people; and (3) proper application of Siwan heritage.

The eighth question probed more deeply by asking “Why?”. In response to this question, each participant presented distinctive reasons. The General Manager of archaeological sites stated that, “This idea will help situate Siwan heritage in an academic form. This, as a result, will help preserve Siwan heritage. Additionally, the hotel can preserve Siwan heritage through both the desire to attract more tourists and the desire of Siwan people to preserve their traditions. So, this study will help preserve Siwan traditions”. The General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority stated that, “The deepening of Siwan heritage inside Siwan hotels is required. Really, the quantity of hotels (increasing the numbers of hotels) is not required at all. In sum, this idea will improve available hotels and new hotels built under the control of a study will preserve the place and put the people before the hotel itself.” The NGO representative stated that, “It will preserve Siwan heritage. In addition, it will give the oasis more importance and an increase in tourist numbers”. The local man stated that, “It will summarize Siwan heritage through the hotel.

It will answer tourists' questions about Siwan heritage. Really, it is an easy way for tourists to experience Siwan heritage through hotels". The tour guide stated that, "It is an important idea for tourists. Tourists have guided me to the unique heritage of Siwa. They changed my view of Siwan people from considering them only as poor people to unique heritage makers. I thought that pharonic heritage is the only heritage that draws tourists to Egypt." The tour operator stated that, "This idea will differentiate Siwan hotels from other hotels in all Egyptian cities".

The above opinions, while all being different, are similar in that they consider the idea of heritage hotels to be a good way of preserving heritage in Siwa. Such different opinions include: (1) situating Siwan heritage in an academic context; (2) improving available hotels and building new hotels under the control of principles which give priority to the place and the people before the hotel itself; (3) giving more prominence to heritage in hotels will increase the number of tourists to the oasis; (4) it an easy way for tourists to experience Siwan heritage through hotels; (5) tourists look for heritage places and they are fond of Siwan heritage and people; and (6) Siwan hotels would then be different from other hotels in Egypt.

### **Summary**

The final stage in the research built on the findings of the first four and was comprised of two small focus group discussions. The focus-group forum was used in order to gain a fuller picture of informant opinions regarding relationships between indigenous people and Siwan hotels, and the relationship between heritage tourism and Siwan hotels. Most participants considered the link between Siwan people and Siwan hotels as limited. However, the opinions of the General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority and the NGO representative were contradictory: the manager felt that there was no link but the representative thought it was good.

Most focus group participants considered that the relationship between Siwan hotels and Siwan people was small, either because of the hiring of non-Siwan staff or because of the special characteristics of Siwan individual personality and Siwan group tradition. One participant (the General Manager of the Egyptian Tourism Authority in Siwa) believed that there is no link between Siwan hotels and Siwan people because the field of tourism is not the concern of Siwan society. In contrast, another participant (the representative of an NGO) considered that the link between Siwan hotels and Siwan people is symbiotic because Siwan hotels are a good source of money and, additionally, Siwan people help to convey their own heritage which distinguishes Siwan hotels.

Most focus group participants viewed that the most effective ways to share aspects of heritage inside Siwan hotels involve human factors and their communication of cultural heritage; for example, through hiring Siwan people and investing in their lifestyle. In this way, Siwan people can create a dynamic and planned sharing of heritage inside Siwan hotels.

Almost all participants viewed that both displaying Siwan handicrafts and hiring Siwan staff are ways to strengthen the demand for heritage tourism products through hotels. Such ways encompass both the people themselves and their hand-made objects. The tour operator suggested a different way: the promotion of Siwan hotels through travel agencies.

Two perspectives were revealed regarding the exposure of tourists to heritage tourism: hotels may play a role in preparing heritage trips for tourists and they may display different heritage products for tourists.

Most participants viewed that the idea of heritage-hospitality as being useful one, especially if Siwan people were hired and Siwan heritage were applied appropriately.

#### **4.6 Chapter summary**

Siwa Oasis (the study area) is the only authentic oasis in Egypt. Its people are still conservative. It is a new tourism destination which is noted for both cultural and natural heritage. A variety of accommodation types is found in Siwa, including luxury hotels, budget hotels and foreigners' houses. All Siwan hotels are of a similar size and they use modern chinaware and have simple guest-room designs. Half of the hotels are built using modern architectural styles and half are in traditional styles. Most hotel staff is not Siwan. All of them are young men. No hotel web sites made reference to any form of Siwan tradition in the services that they provide. Hotel guests, with different gender, monthly income and education levels, are interested in experiencing aspects of Siwan heritage aspects and their provision is fundamental for enhancing heritage-hospitality links. Siwan hotel managers believe that it offers hotel guests access to heritage, especially through use of *Karsheef* building material. However, intangible heritage is largely ignored and managers mostly believe that a relationship between commercialization and authenticity can be achieved through investing in both the uniqueness and cheapness of Siwan heritage components. There is a limited link between Siwan people and Siwan hotels, because of the employment of non- Siwan staff or perhaps because of the unique qualities of Siwan character and customs which mean that they do not look for employment in tourism. Nevertheless, the human factor is the most effective way to share aspects of heritage inside Siwan hotels and this requires greater involvement of local people. Additionally, this could help to realize the provision of heritage hospitality.

## Chapter 5: Discussion

Based on the literature review presented in Chapter Two and the field studies conducted in Siwan hotels, this chapter revisits the research goal of creating a synergistic relationship between commercialization and authenticity in hotels through heritage hospitality. It aims at discovering answers to research questions put forward at the beginning of the research. Questions will be answered directly through the contextual analyses. It discusses the implications of the major findings that were reported in Chapter Four and highlights their theoretical and practical implications. General heritage-hospitality guidelines and a chapter summary are then provided.

Places are changing and it is impossible to freeze them. However, it is possible to employ traditional ways of doing things and, hence, provide more place-based authentic experiences through greater application of heritage in hotels. Employment of local people who can represent their culture in an authentic manner is one way of doing this. Authenticity may be realized through application of a new concept: 'heritage-hospitality'. This means the use of local heritage in hotels in order to create positive, mutually supportive, links between heritage and hospitality.

A mixed methods approach was chosen for this research. For quantitative data, SPSS was used to analyze hotel guest questionnaires. For qualitative analysis, the decision to use content analysis was based on the research objectives and questions. The researcher conveyed her message through: (1) format of communication (texts and sound recordings) and (2) layout of communication content (counts of keywords and phrases and grouping words). So, both quantitative and subjective research approaches were used. The researcher identified what she wanted to accomplish through her research before entering the field and used research questions as a guide for data collection. This research followed an inductive approach (using specific examples to make a point).

In order to conduct the research efficiently, numerous practical challenges had to be met. First, inside hotels, there was no opportunity to observe all internal components such as all guest rooms and hotel kitchens. Second, there were some problems in organizing interviews with hotel general managers. Third, no external funding was available to cover the costs of the field research. Additionally, the long distance to Siwa oasis meant more costs in both time and money. Fourth, there was lack published information, especially quantitative data, in Siwa. The Egyptian Bureau of Statistics provides no separate statistics for hotels in Siwa oasis. Fifth, the arid atmosphere had to be contended with: the climatic conditions in the area are very harsh throughout the year. Sixth, the timing of the fieldwork coincided with the high season when visitor-numbers peak. This made it possible to obtain relatively large tourist samples but still not as many as was expected. On the other hand, accommodation owners and tour operators were very busy, which was reflected in their willingness to participate in the survey. Most survey distribution occurred at night after dinner.

## **5.1 Heritage in Siwan hotels**

### **5.1.1 The present status of heritage application in Siwan hotels**

Because there is little in the hospitality literature concerning the application of aspects of heritage in hotels, the researcher drew upon literature on tourism development in peripheral areas, reflecting the fact that hotels are part of tourism and Siwa is in a peripheral location. Siwa is rich in many types of heritage and Siwan people still keep their heritage. This matches the reports of Vidal (1954) and (Timothy and Boyd, 2003) who regarded oases as distinctive locations for displaying heritage because they are places in which heritage is frequently passed down between generations and which have been protected by distance from the changes associated with modernity. The most important economic activity in Siwa is farming and the

main products are olives and dates (observations in Siwa and focus group interviews). That goes with the observation of Al-Hamarneh (2005) who indicated that that traditional agricultural systems still dominate authentic oases such as Siwa.

Mostly, tourism in Siwa depends on package tours. Travel agencies are a way to strengthen demand for heritage tourism through hotels. However, Siwan hotels do not invest that through increasing the various ways of reflecting Siwan heritage. Although the very long way to reach Siwa, tourist activities are well known for being done in a short time.

Siwan hotels concentrate on the economic aspect of heritage as money maker, as they apply and understand it (hotel observation and General Manager interviews). Additionally, heritage is an unfamiliar concept to most staff in Siwan hotels (General Manager interviews and observations in Siwa). The heritage that is displayed in Siwan hotels is often historical rather than contemporary. However, numerous authors (Ashworth, 1999; Knudsen, Greer, 2008; Johnson, 1996; Raivo, 2002 cited in Knudsen, Greer, 2008; Davis et al, 2009) have pointed out that although heritage has economic values. For example, it can be used to make money. It is both a resource and a product. Additionally, it can be much more than historical artifacts and historical places. It is much broader than this and it can be used to create a new type of interest in and understanding of the past.

At present, Siwan hotels provide guests with shallow visitor experiences (only tangible Siwan heritage) rather than intangible cultural heritage, mainly the use of local building materials. Filippi (2006) commented that the use of local materials characterizes the traditional architecture in oases. They apply the most prominent and more remarkable components of tangible Siwan heritage. This means that Siwan hotel managers may try to employ easy ways of reflecting Siwan heritage through building style and composition, and furniture. Thus, it is



common to see local architecture and hand-crafted furniture. Examples of this can be readily identified throughout the world; for example, in local traditional hotel and inn chains (*Ryokans*, *Yogwans*, *paradores*, shophouses and Indian heritage hotels), historic and grand hotels (The Gezira Palace Hotel in Cairo, The Raffles hotel in Singapore), the employment of cultural elements in Asian hotels such as Sukhothai Heritage Resort, and elsewhere (e.g. Hotel Plaza Real in New Mexico, Adrere Amellal and Banff lodge (Seki, Brooke, 2007, Price, 1999, Kang, 2004, Chon, Shin, 1990, Inam, 2001, Chang, Teo, 2009, India Tourism Statistics, 2004, Naguib, 2008, Henderson, 2001, Peterson, McCarthy, 2003, [www. sukhothaiheritage.com](http://www.sukhothaiheritage.com), [www.hhandr.com/plazareal.php](http://www.hhandr.com/plazareal.php), [www.banfflakelouise.com](http://www.banfflakelouise.com), [www.tablehotels.com](http://www.tablehotels.com)).

On the other hand, hotel observation, the hotel guest questionnaire, interviews with general managers and the focus group interviews all revealed that intangible cultural heritage is completely neglected. Thus, the potential to share local music, folktales, ballads, songs, ways of entertaining guests, ways of staff communication with guests and ways of welcoming guests are overlooked and seldom used in hotels in Siwa. Additionally, Siwan hotels managers do not often use lively Siwan intangible heritage in part because the length of stay of tourists in the hotel is limited. From their point of view, a few days are insufficient to offer aspects of Siwan intangible heritage (General Managers interview) This suggests that opportunities are being missed although the literature suggests that intangible heritage can be used in tourism to lengthen tourists stay, generate income, deepen the visitor experience and help to preserve traditions (Timothy and Boyd 2003; Archer, 1989; Hall, Boyd, 2005; MacCannell 1976, UNWTO, 2006). However, in peripheral areas in developing countries, the provision of an outstanding visitor experience and awareness of how to do this is commonly very limited. Additionally, it is a greater challenge to incorporate intangible tourism projects in an economical manner (Hohl,

Tisdell, 1995; Sharpley, 2002, UNWTO, 2002, Hosni, 2002; Yunis, 2006; Bellmann cited in Abd ellatif, 2008).

Siwan hotel managers rarely consider interaction with local people and the participation of hotel guests in activities related to Siwan heritage. Most staff members are from outside of the oasis. The role of Siwan people, especially inside hotels, is very limited at present: they do little more than take care of the hotel's garden (hotel observation and General Manager interviews). However, Hede (2008) indicated that organizations which have a role in supporting heritage tourism should provide a learning environment through interaction and participation, thereby ensuring authenticity and excellence in visitor experiences. Hotels which try to support heritage tourism may put such ideas into practice.

Siwan hotels serve food and beverages in reproduced chinaware instead of local- made chinaware (personal observation). This harmonizes with the report of Bruner (1994) which indicated that "authentic reproduction" has the look of being original but makes sites and products inauthentic.

#### 5.1.2 Heritage characteristics that may be applied in Siwan hotels

Siwan hotels may consider the opportunity and importance of linking the past and present of Siwa. Heritage presents a new type of interest in and understanding of the past and inherited stories. Such an interest can be supported through the application of a heritage-hospitality link which involves linking old and modern practices in a synergistic way. For example, folktales and songs with local and inherited lyrics could have a role in conveying the cultural experience of Siwa oasis and its old and current lifestyles to tourists. Numerous authors (Breathnach, 2006; Lowenthal 1994 cited in Waite, 2000) have pointed out that Heritage is usually connected to the past and linked to a legacy that is passed on from one generation to another. The growth of

heritage as a means of accessing the past involves the identification of places that link the appeals of the past through heritage and the experience of modernity that influence the nature of heritage consumption. It filters the past into symbols of identity, linking us with forerunners and ancestors, with our personal earlier selves, and with promised descendants.

Heritage can unite people and everybody has a past and it can be classified in various ways, such as tangible cultural, intangible cultural and natural heritage (Ashworth, 1999; Nuryanti, 1996; Prentice, 1993; Butler, Boyed, 2000; Richards, 1996). However, heritage can also be experienced in structures like hotels; for example, *paradores* in Spain. There is an opportunity for Siwan hotels to benefit from the different aspects of Siwan heritage and traditions through creating, for example, a local heritage Siwan chain that links, draws upon, presents and preserves all types of Siwan heritage.

Special experiences can be created when there is a strong link between tourists and indigenous peoples, and appreciation of their attire, food, music and their other creative expressions. Such intangibles are vital tourism assets that can be used to differentiate products, allowing the tourists to get a deeper experience (Yunis, 2006). Siwan hoteliers may consider the value of the greater involvement of Siwan people who are able to convey aspects of heritage in their properties. Especially, hotels differentiate destinations and they are frequently influenced by cultural and environmental surroundings, and they represent 'homes away from home' for tourists. Additionally, hotels which offer local cultural examples increase chances for guests to learn about local culture and traditions and to improve the hotel's attraction to potential guests. So, they should be located tactically within the tourist sector. Additionally, they are changing constantly according to the requirements of guests (Marin, Jafari, 2002; Peterson, McCarthy, 2003; Poater, 2009).

## **5.2 The role of Siwan hotels in overcoming the threats to Siwa's cultural heritage**

Hotels are organizations which own different ways of comfort and entertainment. Siwan hotels can contribute in the preservation and sharing of the traditions of Siwa through making promotions for Siwan festivals and providing short seminars about Siwan heritage (focus group interviews). (Gunter, 2005) and (Presbury et al., 2005) also regarded hotels, as an example of hospitality, are an important part of tourist experiences as they make a critical contribution to overall visitor satisfaction at a specific destination; they offer facilities for meetings and conventions, and for amusement and entertainment.

In Siwa oasis, traditions like storytelling are dying as old routines of farming dates and olives give way to television series, demanding tourists and modern pressures that force many to work two jobs. However, working in hotels will preserve such traditions and bring money (observations in Siwa and focus group interviews). (Timothy, Boyd, 2003) also regarded hotel services as one of the most common sources of revenue and employing millions of people for heritage sites. Additionally, they are considered as secondary aspects in heritage tourism attractions.

Hotels which reflect their sites' heritage may not be only establishments where tourists stay but they may also have a role in deepening heritage tourism demand through offering unforgettable heritage experiences. Especially, heritage tourists can spend lots of money in heritage area (hotel guest questionnaire, observations in Siwa and focus group interviews). Additionally, several authors (Silberberg, 1995; Johnson, Thomas cited in Timothy, Boyd, 2003; Jansen-Verbeke, 1999; Timothy, Boyd, 2006; O'Gorman, 2007) regarded that heritage tourists have an inclination to spend more time on holiday than many other types of tourists, resulting in higher levels of spending. They tend to stay more in hotels than in other types of accommodation

or with their friends and relatives. Hotels help deepen the supply of heritage tourism attractions through the improvement of existing attractions. Hotels situated in heritage areas usually increase the importance of such areas by facilitating visitation. It is difficult to imagine any important heritage area without a hotel. Additionally, heritage managers, governments and academics are beginning to value the preservation peripheral area and their small hotels.

Siwa oasis grants Siwan hotels the natural scenery (e.g. springs, salt lakes and palm trees) which is, at present, the first reason for tourists to stay there. Additionally, the location, which is part of the oasis lands, is the primary reason to stay again in the same Siwan hotel (hotel guest questionnaire and General Managers interviews). Additionally, the high importance of other reasons symbolizes the role of hotels in conveying the tangible aspect of Siwan heritage and attracting more visitors to the oasis (hotel guest questionnaire, observations in Siwa and General Manager interviews). For example, the Siwan building material '*Karsheef*' is considered an important aspect of Siwan heritage that hotel guests experience within the Siwan hotels (General Managers interviews).

Today, lots of Siwan houses turn to use modern materials instead of *Karsheef*. Unless there are *Karsheef* built hotels, all Siwan buildings will be characterless buildings (observations in Siwa and General Manager interviews). Attracting more tourists and investing cheap Siwan building materials are the results of respecting aspects of Siwan traditions inside Siwan hotels. Additionally, there are no disadvantages of using such aspect except the yearly maintenance of *Karsheef* (General Manager interviews). (Naguib,2008; Chang, Teo, 2009) also indicated, as worldwide trend, heritage becomes a significant resource that is frequently staged and adjusted to new uses. Additionally, hotels which reflect heritage aspects of their sites help understand such sites.

### **5.3 Tourists' point of view, of the importance of experiencing heritage inside Siwan hotels**

The great majority of tourists go to Siwa for a personal purpose and they are on holiday. Additionally, they prefer to experience intangible aspects and traditions of Siwan heritage inside Siwan hotels. Such aspects include (songs, ballads, folktales, being welcomed in the traditional Siwan way and staff wearing traditional Siwan dresses; they do not prefer casual dress as observed in most Siwan hotels ) (General Manager interviews, hotel guest questionnaire, focus group interviews, hotel observation and observations in Siwa). This coincides with several authors (Robinson, Picard, 2006; Blank, 1989; Nuryanti, 1999) who regarded tourists a market for local crafts and souvenirs and audience for music, songs and stories inside hotels. Additionally, the intangible nature of tourism helps heritage being lived, experienced through the aesthetic feelings and understanding of the values that it conveys.

Additionally, many authors (Timothy, 2001; UNWTO, 2002; Hewison 1987; Lowenthal 1985; Urry 1990 cited in Waitt, 2000; Burnett, 2001; Cohen, 1988; Moscardo, 2000; Pearce, Moscardo, 1986; Bouchenaki, 2004; Chandler, Costello, 2002 ; Lithell, Anderson, Brown, 1993) indicated that tourists increase the demand for the tourism in peripheral areas because (1) such areas can provide access to distinctive aspects of human heritage through contact with the peripheral way of life, (2) their feelings of estrangement from current life and (3) personal experience through authentic products and local people who are able to enrich the limited knowledge of tourists about the past and authenticity. The previous reasons coincide with (hotel guest questionnaire and hotel observation) which clarified that hotel guests, in Siwa, have about three main reasons for requiring deeper heritage experiences: (1) the strong interest of visitors in Siwan heritage and their belief in considering hotels as integral part which reflect Siwan heritage, (2) hotel parts are viewed by visitors as one unit which may convey heritage as a whole

image. That means, the more parts reflect heritage, the more deep reflection of Siwan heritage and (3) the stay reasons are considered to be a unified group of reasons. Altogether is considered to be a tourist attractive.

Mostly, hotel guests are loyal customers; they prefer to stay again in the same hotel and they are satisfied with what is available 'hotel locations and traditional buildings and furniture' which represent similar tangible aspects of Siwan heritage. However, most of them stay for a short time (hotel guest questionnaire, hotel observation and General Manager interviews). This concurs with (Chandler, Costello, 2002 ; Lithell, Anderson, Brown, 1993) who indicated that most tourists want to consume senses of 'authenticity' but most have limited knowledge about the past because authenticity is established in part by the individual's own knowledge.

Hotel guests experience cheap hotel prices in Siwa. The price reason has no effect on the hotel guests' decision of hotel choices because Siwan hotels, which are interested in reflecting some Siwan heritage aspects are similar in reflecting specific aspect of Siwan heritage (hotel guest questionnaire, General Manager interviews and hotel observation). This harmonizes with the report of (Caserta, Russo) 2002 who regarded that accommodation prices are not high in the periphery.

#### **5.4 The relationships between indigenous peoples and Siwan hotels**

Siwan people can primarily strengthen the link between heritage and hospitality because they represent the most effective way to share lively aspects of heritage inside Siwan hotels and the most dynamic way to support the demand of heritage tourism products through hotels (focus group interviews; hotel guest questionnaire, hotel observation, observations in Siwa and General Manager interviews). For example, Siwan staff who wear Siwan dress in the three hotel 'Albabenshal, Shali lodge and Adrere Amellal' differentiate them from other Siwan hotels

(General Manager interviews). This concurs with the observations of (Filippi, 2006; Sharpley, 2002; Teo, Yeoh, 1997; Robinson, Picard, 2006; Mann, 2000) who indicated that local peoples have a great role in (1) successfully conserving heritage, (2) lessen the commodification of places or temper the damage that can occur to cultures, (3) provide a picture of the past of a specific community in a living environment through contemporary activities and practices and (4) provide tourists with the enjoyments of travel through getting to know the local culture and spending time with indigenous peoples in a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere.

There are two main reasons for the limited link between Siwan people and Siwan hotels: (1) the application of an easy policy of Siwan hotels in hiring trained non- Siwan staff and (2) the unique qualities of Siwan people 'self- esteem, laziness and strong family link' (hotel observation and focus group interviews). This finding goes with the observations of (Hohl, Tisdell, 1995; Müller, Huuva, 2009; Sharpley, 2002; Filippi, 2006; Timothy, Boyd, 2003) who regarded that, in oases, although there is an opportunity to invest local people, it is easier to bring in trained workers from elsewhere because they suffer from (1) the shortage of trained workforce. So, local tourism projects use outside workers and (2) the hardness of adjusting local communities to a service role and the domination of collective cultural aims over business aims. That means, Siwan people may be convinced by their role in preserving their own heritage through hotels and the high profits gained from working in hotels. Especially, in oases, heritage includes not only the built heritage but also the oral or the living heritage. As a result, relationships between heritage and local communities include much more than merely matters of employment and income. So, it is significant to train Siwan people to the different aspects of experiential tourism, hotels and heritage tourism, cultural heritage and oases and original authenticity.



## **5.5 Heritage-hospitality link**

There are five essential concepts to control the link between heritage and hospitality: (1) distinctive hospitality, (2) the way(s) of heritage application, (3) hotel establishments (4) authenticity, and (5) balancing hotel profits and heritage preservation.

The essence of hospitality is the supplying of food, refreshments and lodging (Ingram, 1999; Lashley, 2007; Brotherton; Wood, 2001). That agrees with what Siwan hotels do (hotel observation). However, such studies did not mention that such supply may be through a hospitable way. Hospitality is not only supplying items. The semantic definition of hospitality is the performance or way of being hospitable; the welcome and entertainment of guests or strangers with kindness and friendliness (Medlik cited in Mill, 2008; Onions cited in Hepple et al., 1990). That may be applied in Siwan hotels. However, there may be an addition of the word distinctiveness to kindness and friendliness. For example, such distinctiveness can be created through investing different aspects of Siwan heritage and traditions.

Heritage has two applications: (1) positive ‘caring of culture and landscape for a sense of identity and belonging’, (2) negative ‘utilization of the past for commercial ends’ (Merriam, 1991). Although there is unaware application of heritage in commercial purposes, employing heritage in commercial purposes ‘hotels’ is not completely negative. However, it does depend on how to invest heritage and respect it. That means there may be a studied method in order to lessen such negative.

Hotels are organizations which own lots of components (working staff, staff uniform, brochures, food and beverages, building(s), way(s) of designs, decor and architecture styles) that can successfully convey heritage if applied in a properly similar to the original life styles of natives. Siwan hotels may consider (1) the small and effective material and immaterial heritage

touches, and (2) heritage hospitality concept which is a good preserver of heritage because it situates Siwan heritage in an academic form, improves available hotels and building new hotels under the control of a study which preserves the place and the people before the hotel itself, satisfies and then increases well experienced tourist numbers to the oasis, and differentiates Siwan hotels than other Egyptian hotels (hotel guest questionnaire and focus group interviews). This coincides with the example of (Henderson) 2001 who regarded that it is a major challenge to match economic necessities with conservation interests in The Raffles hotel in Singapore.

It is not possible to base decisions concerning the values and authenticity within fixed standards. However, it is possible to portray the past in an accurate way (UNESCO, ICCROM, ICOMOS, 1994). Authenticity is a relative concept. For example, in this research, Authentic people in authentic places, as a type of authenticity, may be applied in hotels through application of a new concept: 'heritage-hospitality'. That means the use of local heritage in hotels in order to generate positive links between heritage and hospitality. So, Siwan hotels in desert can provide different aspects of authenticity than Siwan hotels in downtown Siwa. The problem of authenticity in heritage tourism is that it can be used in two different applications (1) a human quality signifying being one's true self or the visitor experience (activity-related authenticity) which can be increased through local people and (2) the genuineness of objects themselves (object-related authenticity) (Wang, 1999; Reisinger, Steiner, 2005; Douglas, Douglas, 1991). However, if authenticity is used in hospitality 'e.g. Siwan hotels', there will be no problem because the hotel as an organization can guarantee both senses of authenticity. The two different senses of authenticity can be realized through enhanced heritage-hospitality link which may include both providing hotel guests with simple authentic immaterial (the welcome of guests with the unique Siwan ways and interaction with local people and lively participation of hotel

guests in activity- related Siwan heritage and providing Siwan food and beverages in hotels) Siwan experience and simple authentic material (ensuring authentic crafts ensuring both authentic crafts and building materials). Such enhanced link is not related to hotel locations (bad or good) or hotel prices (low or high). However, that seems contradictory to the opinion of hotel General Managers regarding the importance of their locations as a competitive advantage (hotel guest questionnaire and General Manager interviews).

That means, enhancing heritage-hospitality link is not difficult to be applied in Siwan hotels. However, it does need awareness of Siwan authentic heritage aspects in a simple and conveyable way (hotel guest questionnaire and focus group interviews). Here, the priorities are for the lively human being (hotel guests) interaction either with other human beings (Siwan people) or heritage activities (folktales, sayings, ballads and songs) which are fundamental for enhancing heritage-hospitality link in Siwan hotels (hotel guest questionnaire).

Mostly, Siwan hotels can balance both gaining money and preserving Siwan culture through investing the uniqueness (preserving Siwan heritage and attracting lots of tourists) and low costs (saving lots of money to the hotels) of Siwan heritage elements (Siwan small lamps, organic vegetables, olives, and dates, non- alcoholic beverages, *Karsheef* building material, palm groves, revival of old Siwan buildings, Siwan dress, and Siwan beautiful locations). Although General Managers indentify the way of balancing both gaining money and preserving Siwan heritage, (1) they still have plans toward additional construction (either more easy *Karsheef* buildings or characterless cement buildings), and (2) they do not make efforts to lengthen the stay of their guests and moreover, encourage them spend lots of time inside the hotel itself (which means more profits and more reflection of Siwan heritage aspects). In fact, the oasis is small and activities are limited. It is not like cities where there are lots of activities and remote

sightseeing (which may take much time to reach them) and consequently, shrink the role of hotels to be only a place to eat and sleep (General Manager interviews and hotel guest questionnaire).

## **5.6 Flexible and inflexible relationships between both heritage and hospitality in Siwan hotels**

There may be nice and dynamic ways in order to simultaneously preserve and reflect Siwan heritage through hotels. Especially, enhancing heritage-hospitality link in Siwan hotels is not restricted to hotels. However, it may preserve and convey Siwan heritage (hotel guest questionnaire and focus group interviews). In this research, flexible and inflexible heritage-hospitality link will, mostly, summarize and clarify the previous research question.

### **5.6.1 Flexible heritage-hospitality relationships**

Flexible heritage–hospitality relationships include the relationships between heritage and hospitality which can accept some positive modifications. For heritage side, the relationships can be modified in order to be in more hospitable way. For hospitality side, the relationships can be modified in order to go with different heritage aspects. However, this flexibility should be accompanied by explanation of local people to hotel guests.

Hotel locations, surroundings, sizes and possessing parking lots or clay ovens do not affect heritage reflection through hotels. For example, some hotels may own cheap building lands and then they increase green spaces. Others may have only the building (focus group interviews). Hotels in Siwa desert can use clay ovens fuel them with palm branches. However, down town hotels can bring food from Siwan houses for money. So, the point here is how to exactly convey heritage (hotel guest questionnaire and focus group interviews).

Food traditions such as separating men and women can be conveyed in a hospitable way. For example, women can share men the same table, however, men may start even with a piece of bread and then women follow. 'Water is for all' tradition which means offering water to anyone who may need it can be conveyed in a hospitable way. For example, offering mineral water for free. It is possible to do that because bottled water in Siwa is so cheap than any other Egyptian spots.

Telling hotel guests about some unique Siwan traditions and superstitions can be reflected in a hospitable way. For example, birth of a child tradition can be written on a piece of a palm leave and put in a wooden holder on restaurant tables. Additionally, for example, moonlight superstition can be applied in hotels (hotel guests can sleep on the hotel roof during the summer and keep their faces covered from the moon because of the superstition of **madness caused by moonlight**).

Women dress tradition such as dress decorations which tell a story of its bearer can be conveyed in a hospitable way. For example, such local decoration 'e.g. a sentence in Siwan language can be written in English letters' on small Siwan scarves as souvenirs for foreign tourists.

#### 5.6.2 Inflexible relationships

Inflexible heritage–hospitality relationships include the relationships between heritage and hospitality which are applied as they are or according to tourist preferences especially, the application of heritage aspects in different hotel parts. There may be strict application of detailed Siwan traditions which may rely on a study of Siwan hotels- Siwan traditions link

Diversity and exactness are connected concepts. Both may convey common heritage aspects 'e.g. *Karsheef* buildings and Siwan furniture' and detailed heritage aspects' lively

interaction with Siwan people'. Diversity depends on difference in heritage aspects in different hotels which may be under the management of a local chain. However, exactness depends on the reality and authenticity of such aspects (hotel guest questionnaire, focus group interviews and General Manager interviews). So, Siwan hotels may employ Siwan products according to their real use and lessen their commodification. For example, they may not hang handmade pottery and food palm baskets on walls and display traditional Siwan dresses and local products in their lobbies for sale (hotel observation). Additionally, they may invest locals in explaining the meaning and use of such products.

The above finding matches the reports of (McLean, 1998; Burnett, 2001; Timothy, Boyed, 2003; ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Charter, 1999; Cohen, 1988; Moscardo, 2000; Pearce, Moscardo, 1986; Boniface and Fowler 1993; Taylor 2001; Waitt2000;; Cohen, 1979; Halewood, Hannam, 2001, Moscardo, Pearce, 1986; Moulin, 1991; Ryan, Crotts, 1997; Robinson, Picard, 2006; Guerrier, Adib, 2001; Keesing, 1989; MacCanell, 1973, 1976; Wood, 1998; Greenwood, 1989;; Steiner, Reisinger, 2005 ) who regarded that heritage and authenticity are culturally built and rely on diverse contextual sources of information. Heritage frequently presents components that society appreciates.

However, original authenticity should mirror both appreciated and unappreciated heritage aspects because it can guarantee the growth of the conventional practice and provide tourists with personal experiences through both lively interaction with traditions and constant objects. Commodification of traditional objects deteriorates their form and use, resulting in the loss of much of their heritage significance. Additionally, tourist commodification weakens minority cultures through shortening and packaging cultures into '30 minute' time. When products are packaged, priced and marketed to draw mass tourists, the highlighting is on sales

and profit, not on authentic experiences of dissimilar cultures or of making one's own way through an unfamiliar setting.

As explained above, Siwan people may build and operate Siwan hotels. They can play multiple roles: (1) welcome of guests, for example, children guests are welcomed with date pastes and other candies and adult guests are welcomed by dried dates and small cups of tea, (2) entertainment of guests, for example, young Siwan men 'Zagala' who use the flute and drums for dance music and sing a very beautiful meaning in the Siwan language, usually with themes of nature and love, (3) friendliness and kindness, strict rules (the alcoholic beverages and short dresses are forbidden) can be simplified by Siwan people, and (4) distinctiveness, for example, wearing traditional Siwan dress (focus group interviews, observations in Siwa and hotel guest questionnaire). Here, Siwan staff may be aware of being hospitable and not only service provider because as regarded by (Blank, 1989; UNWTO, 2006), the supplying community is a hosting community and, as such, it may be able to deal psychologically and physically directly with tourists. Since the community is serving tourists and providing them with enjoyment, its hosting must be positive and cheerful.

Consistent Siwan menus which depend on the old home cooked recipes made with fresh ingredients may be applied in Siwan hotels. There are two main qualities: (1) menu items, dates, olives and homemade bread may be provided at every meal, (2) expressing Siwan heritage aspects, for example, they can be made from handmade Siwan cloth and some items can be handmade written in Siwan language (hotel guest questionnaire and observations in Siwa).

The steps of tea tradition may be applied in Siwan hotels. This tradition includes preparing strong tea at the end of each meal. The first tea poured goes back to the teapot. Everyone take a very small clay glassful, which is sipped quickly. The next tea is brewed with of

a long sprig of peppermint, and this is most refreshing at the end of the meal. Large clay cups of local beverages such as Hibiscus and gommar may be used. Additionally, Siwan clay plates and palm baskets may be used, especially; all chinaware used in Siwan hotels does not represent the heritage of Siwa (hotel observation).

Table setting in all Siwan hotels is not ideal or complete. So, they may better create their own way of table setting. For example, putting all spoons and knives in a clean plate in the middle of the table and serving all food and beverages orders in one time. For napkins, they may reflect some Siwan touches such as the names of some Siwan vegetables and fruits. Restaurant tables may reflect some Siwan decor (observations in Siwa and hotel observation).

The incoming profit from package tours may be mostly consumed and invested outside the peripheral economy. Additionally, individual peripheral tourism projects usually own neither the skills nor the resources for successful marketing. Especially, marketing is a requirement to overcome lack of support from the government (Hohl, Tisdell, 1995; Müller, Huuva, 2009; Sharpley, 2002). At present, as explained above, package tours are the major market in Siwa and the marketing of Siwan hotels is weak. However, Siwan hotels may play their organizational role in promoting Siwan festivals and preparing seminars about detailed Siwan heritage (providing traditional food, providing dishes for special occasions, local handicrafts and the chance to interact with local people which represent the most favourite tourist activities in Siwa oasis).

Additionally, hotels can play a role in preparing heritage trips for tourists and all hotels may have brochures which reflect Siwan heritage, especially, most hotels do not have brochures. All Siwan hotels may have their own internet sites which relate different aspects of Siwan traditions to the services that they offer (hotel guest questionnaire, hotel observation, focus group



interviews and observations in Siwa). As a result, that will strengthen their marketing. Such marketing policies can be sponsored by a local chain of Siwan hotels.

All hotels may reflect Siwan decoration, especially; half of them apply modern decorations. The furniture in most hotels is modern. However, they may be Siwan. All hotels may apply the traditional ways of lightening such as oil lamps, especially, most lightening is modern. The designs of hotel parts such as restaurants and guest rooms may be traditional. The quantity of handicrafts does not mean good or bad reflection of Siwan heritage. However, the meaning and use of them are the factors of Siwan heritage reflection. Hotel amenities may be Siwan, for example, olive oil soap, candles, gas bottle boilers. Linen and towels may reflect some Siwan handmade crafts. All hotels may have phone, internet, fire extinguishers, first aid, safety deposit boxes health and safety guidelines. All hotel parts may reflect Siwan heritage because they are able to convey experiencing aspects of the local culture during stay in Siwa. Tourists may be provided by pre-modern Siwan life styles in almost all hotel parts except the public areas. Tourist attraction factors (providing Siwan experiences, satisfying tourists' interest in Siwan cultural heritage, traditional construction, relaxing atmosphere and natural scenery) may be considered in Siwan hotels (observations in Siwa, hotel observation and hotel guest questionnaire).

### **5.7 Heritage-hospitality guidelines**

Responsible hospitality requires the offering of a safe and pleasant environment for patrons. Hotels, as an example of hospitality, are a fundamental part of a tourist's visit to a destination and the services provided by them can make or mar a visit. Guidelines will be suggested to support the relationship between heritage and hospitality in hotels.

In order to be put in place successfully, heritage-hospitality nexus must be planned and managed to improve the quality of hospitality and investment in heritage. If an appropriate plan is devised and implemented, it can enhance the experiences of visitors, respect the quality of life of residents and protect the local culture.

Heritage-hospitality guidelines are statements that, if followed, will help the creation of a balance between authenticity and commercialization in hotels. Such guidelines aim to simplify the complexity of relationships between heritage and hospitality by suggesting a set of appropriate practices. They are designed to assist hotel owners, managers and staff by pointing out actions that will foster a positive heritage-hospitality nexus. The adoption of the guidelines will help to avoid potential errors associated with a rapid pace of development and will help to defend heritage applications in hotels from the variety of pressures that can damage both hospitality and heritage.

#### 5.7.1 Hospitality rules for the operation and management of hotels

Cleanliness is a well-known hospitality requirement. According to this rule, rooms, lobbies, restaurants, door handles, chairs, tables and other hotel parts may be maintained at a reasonable standard of cleanliness. Furniture items and other surfaces may be kept clean. Hands may be washed after undertaking cleaning activities. Public washrooms and food consumption/service areas may be cleaned regularly. Every washroom may be equipped with soap and paper towels. Supervisors may undertake regular monitoring to ensure that hygiene standards are strictly enforced. Toilets of the guest rooms may be cleaned at least once each day. Floors and floor coverings (carpets or rugs) may be vacuumed using a cleaner that does not throw dust into the air. For restaurants, operators may follow the guidelines and instructions on food safety and food premises hygiene.

Laundering is another hospitality requirement. According to this rule; laundries may be washed at least daily. This process may involve cleaning all surfaces and all laundry machinery including washers, dryers and ironing presses, with detergent and warm water. Linen (sheets, pillowcases, cotton blankets) may be washed in hot water (70 to 80°C) and detergent, rinsed and dried, preferably in a dryer or in the sun. They may be ironed at high temperatures (60°C) and they may be changed at least twice a week and whenever a guest has checked out. So, there should be plentiful supply and they may be spotlessly clean. Woollen blankets may be washed in warm water and dried in the sun, in dryers on cool temperatures or dry-cleaned.

Maintenance, housekeeping and medical services are requirements of hospitality. Maintenance of all sections of hotels may be of acceptable standard, and may be on a continuing basis, taking into consideration the quality of materials used as well as their upkeep. Housekeeping may be of a standard to ensure that all rooms are well-kept. A vermin control program may be regularly maintained in all areas of the hotel. A regular and hygienic garbage disposal system may be required. A medical clinic to service guests and employees may have a doctor on-call. In addition, hotels may have adequate first-aid equipment, phone, internet, fire extinguishers, safety deposit boxes and health and safety guidelines.

## 5.7.2 Heritage-hospitality rules on the operation and management of hotels

### 5.7.2.1 Principle concepts

Diverse cultures and heritage applications in hotels mean that there will be different expressions of heritage details (e.g. menus, designs, amenities and marketing strategies). The selection of both tangible and intangible heritage expressions is an important. Ideally, expressing as many local heritage aspects as possible may be applied and preserved in the hotels of one area. For example, heritage may differ from place to place in the same area. Investment in diversity

will help to conserve a wide variety of heritage attributes, conveying their details which are, mostly, rich in heritage meanings. One way of applying diverse heritage characteristics is through the creation of a local hotel chain. Agreements concerning the heritage aspects that can be conveyed by each hotel in the chain will be required to realize diversity. Such agreements concerning the identifications of heritage attributes and the ways of implementation may be drawn up in the licensing of hotels. Demonstration of application of the heritage-hospitality concept could even be a condition for acquiring a building permit for new hotels.

Authentic/accurate heritage applications in hotels mean providing hotel guests with representative and rich personal experiences through conveying accurate heritage details. The main factors of such authenticity are related investment in local people and use of local products. Such authenticity will simultaneously satisfy the preferences of hotel guests, invest in local people who are the heritage-makers, and support the use of local products. Especially, from tourists' point of view, participation of local people represents the offering of an authentic experience. Local people are capable of conveying the reality of their local situation. For example, when local employees wear local dress and use objects in a traditional way, features of heritage are conserved and shared, and tourists may be encouraged to ask about such distinctive products and may buy them. Thus, the objects are not displayed chiefly for commercial consumption, although that may be an outcome. However, local staff may be aware that they may be hospitable and not only providers of essential services. Thus, local people may need to be trained in the diverse aspects of heritage tourism, cultural heritage and the authenticity of tourism experiences.

Local hotels, especially in peripheral areas, can strengthen their marketing strategies through using travel agencies to strengthen demand for heritage tourism, playing an

organizational role in promoting festivals and preparing seminars about local heritage, preparing local heritage trips for tourists, and expressing aspects of local heritage and the services through their internet sites. A local hotel chain may be able to sponsor such marketing efforts.

#### 5.7.2.2 Local people

Heritage can unify peoples in a specific area. They are often similar in their traditions and culture. If they work together in hotels, it may not be difficult to create a harmonious working environment as they can create their own network of information. A trained, motivated team which works well together can make life easier by ensuring that appropriate action will be taken at all times even when the boss is not around. Local people need to be encouraged to following some major heritage-hospitality principles: (1) staff may be given particular responsibilities and an adequate number of trained, experienced, courteous and efficient local people may be employed. They may wear clean uniforms of local design at all times. The front-line staff may have a good spoken knowledge of English. Those speaking only the local language may be responsible for the kitchen and gardens; (2) the significance of a steady and consistent approach may be impressed on all employees. This the approach involves the preservation of heritage through reflecting the lifestyles of local people; (3) problem situations may be discussed at staff meetings in order to learn from experience how they might be better handled with the benefit of hindsight, (4) staff know how to react when faced with a difficult patron: tact, diplomacy and non-aggressive body language may be encouraged; (5) regular patrons by may be known and addressed by name and their preferences (such as favourite drink) may also be known. This will contribute to the formation of a welcoming atmosphere and the forging of a professional link with staff and management, (6) personal hygiene may be strictly enforced (washing hands frequently, covering nose and mouth with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing, and changing

and washing uniforms at least daily); (7) feedback from staff may be encouraged and awareness programs may be prepared to show the importance of working in hotels. Such programs may include: (a) improving income and living standards; (b) preservation of local heritage and traditional crafts, customs and social values; (c) avoiding or stabilising emigration of local people; (d) supporting area infrastructure and facilities; (5) improving physical and psychological health; and (6) improving the area's economy.

#### 5.7.2.3 Information and photographs

Room tariffs may be prominently displayed in each bedroom and prominent notices for all services offered by the hotel, including traditional food and beverage outlets and hours of operation, fire exit guidelines and house rules for guests (area traditions, prohibited acts and practices) may be displayed prominently. A photo archives of the area, include photos of different heritage aspects, may be displayed. This archive can be displayed at the front desk or in the hotel's restaurant. Additionally, local music may be relayed; for example in the hotel lobby and restaurant.

#### 5.7.2.4 Design and furnishings

Hotel building(s) and architecture may reflect the area's heritage through use of local building materials and architectural styles. All hotel parts may have adequate locally-made furnishings and local designs. Floors may be made of local flooring materials; walls may be locally designed and kept clean and pleasing to the eye. Lighting arrangements and fixtures may be so designed as to respect local aesthetics and traditional workmanship, as well as functional excellence. Conference rooms may be used to promote and market different heritage aspects of the area. Furnishings and designs may draw upon the area's heritage. Heritage building designs

can reduce air-conditioning costs: local designs may create natural ventilation through holes or small windows in the building walls. In peripheral areas, swimming pools can be natural springs.

Hotel locations and sizes are not basic factors in conveying heritage through hotels, although they may influence the means and quality of heritage reflection. Hotel sizes may determine the need for parking lots. However, if hotels have parking lots, they may apply local building materials. Hospitable application of clothing decorations and colours means transferring such items in hospitable ways. For example, they can be conveyed through scarves and ties as souvenirs for hotel guests. Heritage can even play a distinctive role in settling bills; for example, locally-made bags could be used as a way of getting cash as an optional form of payment.

#### 5.7.2.5 Food and beverage

The kitchen, pantry and cold storage may be professionally designed to ensure efficiency of operation and may be well-equipped and well-maintained. The kitchen may be adequately equipped with local cooking utensils. It may also be provided with facilities for storage and refrigeration of foods, for disposal of garbage and for cleaning of dishes and cooking utensils. Hospitable application of food and beverage traditions include both hospitably enhancing the way(s) of conveying food and beverage traditions while offering unique local products that may be explained by local people

Local menu applications represent a heritage experience through two main factors: menu items and menu designs. Menu items may include local ingredients and recipes. Menu designs may convey some features of local heritage; for example, they could be made from pieces of local hand-made cloth. Additionally, the local language may be used in expressing some names for local food and beverages. The crockery may be of traditional design and of local materials.

There may be an ample supply of it. Crockery may not be chipped, cracked or grazed. The silverware may always be well-plated and polished.

#### 5.7.2.6 External facilities and amenities

Locally-made signboards may be prominently displayed outside of the establishment, clearly showing the name accompanied by some local symbols or designs. Hotels may have a common outdoor area for guests (e.g., a roof garden or a spacious common terrace). Such common areas may reflect the heritage through design and furniture. As a general hospitality application, it is common to see recreational facilities attached to hotels (e.g. tennis and golf). However, they may be complemented by facilities that share the area's traditions and authentic heritage, perhaps through the participation of hotel guests in making local crafts. Such opportunities can entertain young guests and allow them learn how to use local materials and create local handicrafts.

### **5.8 Chapter Summary**

This chapter analyzed and commented upon both the literature and the empirical data collected during the field research, aiming at identifying answers to question put forward at the beginning of the research. Question has been answered directly through the contextual analyses. Research discussions have presented the theoretical and practical implications of findings relating to the research question. It was found that present Siwan hotels successfully reflect Siwan heritage through only the sketchy tangible heritage 'buildings and furniture'. However, they may consider more detailed heritage aspects (mostly intangibles) which are mainly required by hotel guests. Especially, Siwa oasis grants Siwan people different types of unique heritage and the current generations who are still respect such heritage. As a result, it is suggested that a



synergistic relationships between heritage and hospitality may be created through both hospitably modified Siwan heritage aspects and originally applied Siwan heritage aspects.

## **Chapter 6: Conclusions**

This chapter reviews the goal of this thesis which has five research objectives. Major insights are summarized next. Contributions of the study are then discussed and opportunities for future research are also presented.

### **6.1 Review of Research Question**

The word 'heritage' caught worldwide attention, particularly in the mid-1980s in association with the UNESCO World Heritage Convention (Cheung, 1999). The growth of interest in heritage as a means of accessing the past involves the identification of places that link the appeals of the past through heritage products and the experience of modernity that influence the nature of heritage consumption. Heritage filters the past into symbols of identity, linking us with forerunners and ancestors, with our personal earlier selves, and with promised descendants (Breathnach, 2006; Lowenthal 1994 cited in Waitt, 2000).

Hospitality has two main approaches: semantic and evidential (Brotherton, Wood, 2001). However, few hospitality academics have considered hospitality and hospitableness from historical, cultural or anthropological perspectives (Lashley, Morrison, 2001). Although, the link between heritage and hospitality is old, it has rarely been investigated. So, it is important to explore the concept of 'heritage hospitality' as a new concept. Heritage hospitality represents a managed heritage-hospitality link through the combined application of traditional heritage and traditional hospitality in, for example, hotels. It can be used to provide a balance between commercialization and authenticity in hospitality and heritage productions. It draws attention to the details of hospitality and heritage provision in hotels. It encourages exploration of such questions as 'Who are serving the guests?' and 'Are they local people or outsiders?'. It

encourages managers to consider the relationship between local, including indigenous, peoples and hotels, especially in hotels which aim to mirror expose their visitors to aspects of local culture. There is much research about indigenous peoples and heritage tourism that is undertaken from other perspectives. Also information is available on specific hotels, especially famous hotels, concerning details about aspects of heritage that their visitors can enjoy. However, such descriptions are usually idiosyncratic and are not commonly linked to broader themes such as heritage and hospitality, authenticity and commercialization. In fact, although there is a large hospitality literature, it focuses on details on the efficient commercial operation of hotels and restaurants, visitor motivations and satisfactions, and seldom discusses aspects of heritage in the ways that have been introduced in this thesis. Thus, it has been argued that the possible links between heritage and hospitality deserve greater attention than has previously been the case. This is a relationship that deserves wide academic attention, with practical implications, especially in developing countries where related literature is particularly sparse.

In responding to the above research needs and opportunities, a broad goal for this study was established: to undertake research that will encourage the creation of a balance between the commercial operation and provision of authentic experiences in hotels through greater attention to the heritage-hospitality nexus. Exploration of relationships between indigenous peoples and hotels, heritage and hospitality, hotels and heritage tourism, and the application of the 'heritage hospitality' concept and the present status of heritage application were identified as five more specific research objectives through which the research goal could be addressed. A research question was then developed for research objective to guide the research process.

The question was explored through field research undertaken at selected hotels in Siwa oasis in Egypt. The topics and research question addressed in the Egyptian case study was as follows:

What links exist, if any, between heritage and hospitality and how can such links be enhanced through hotel management? This research question involved exploring: the current application of heritage attributes in hotels, possible heritage characteristics that may be applied, the role of hotels in overcoming the threat of losing cultural heritage, the importance from the tourists' point of view of experiencing heritage inside hotels, the relationships between indigenous peoples and hotels, ways of applying heritage hospitality concept in hotels, and the flexible and inflexible relationships between heritage and hospitality that exist in such hotels.

In order to explore these topics, field observations, a questionnaire survey, key informant interviews, and a focus group discussion were conducted. In other words, a mixed methods approach was chosen for this research. For quantitative data, SPSS was used to analyze hotel guest questionnaires. For qualitative analysis, the decision to use content analysis was based on research objectives and questions. The researcher conveyed her message through: (1) format of communication (texts and sound recordings) and (2) layout of communication content (counts of keywords and phrases and grouping words). So, both empirical and subjective research approaches were used. The researcher identified what she wanted to accomplish through her research prior to entering the field and the research questions were used to guide the collection of data. This research followed inductive approach (using specific examples to make a point). In order to conduct the proposed research efficiently, numerous practical challenges had to be met (no opportunity to observe all internal components of hotels, problems in organizing interviews

with hotel general managers, no external funding , long distance to Siwa oasis, lack of published information, and the arid atmosphere).

## **6.2 Major Insights**

Major insights related to the five research objectives (relationships between indigenous peoples and hotels, heritage and hospitality, hotels and heritage tourism, the possibility of applying the ‘heritage hospitality’ concept and the present status of heritage application in Siwan hotels) and associated research question will now be summarized.

The present status of heritage application in Siwan hotels has been documented in this study. Although Siwa oasis is rich in both cultural and natural heritage, Siwan hotels utilize only one aspect of the cultural heritage: tangible cultural heritage. Furthermore, they convey it most frequently through a restricted application i.e. the use of local building materials. They neglect to draw upon and expose visitors to the dynamic intangible heritage by sharing local music, folktales, ballads, songs, ways of entertaining guests, ways of staff communication with guests and ways of welcoming guests. The greater use of intangible cultural heritage is imperative for the preservation of Siwan heritage, deepening the visitor experience and creating greater profits through extending the stay of hotel guests.

Siwan hotel managers may recognize that heritage is a way to link the past to the present and can have future business implications. A more balance connection between the past and present can be achieved through the greater application of heritage hospitality. The greater employment of Siwan indigenes and their dynamic traditions could be an efficient means of achieving a better balance. Thus, Siwan hotel operators may invest more in quality heritage presentation in order to contribute to the preservation of Siwan heritage and to earn more money.

Siwan hotels can play an important role in preserving Siwan heritage. They are organizations that provide comfort and entertainment for their guests and the provision of opportunities to experience aspects of Siwan heritage is compatible with these requirements. There are many ways of doing this, from building styles and materials, décor and cuisine, to the promotions of festivals and short seminars in Siwan hotels. Siwan hotels consider on managers essentially consider only the economic value of heritage. However, they can simultaneously increase this value and preserve Siwan heritage.

Most hotel guests in Siwan hotels are on holiday. They are looking for new experiences and this can be realized through experiencing the dynamic aspects of human heritage. However, such opportunities are seldom considered by Siwan hotel managers, although hotels could be enlivened by greater use of local heritage, e.g. local music, songs and crafts. Siwa oasis has the characteristics of many peripheral areas: although not easy to get to, once reached it is a cheap and distinctive destination. Although tourism in Siwa depends substantially on package tours, Siwan hotels have no current role in lengthening the stay of hotel guests or in promoting such package tourism. Although most hotel guests in Siwa are satisfied with their exposure to aspects of local heritage, they usually stay for only a short time. This is because of the limited activities and local contact in Siwan hotels.

Siwan people could play an important role in Siwan hotels. They could energetically share and revive Siwan heritage. They could interact with hotel guests through, for example, welcoming them in a traditional manner and by wearing a traditional dress. They are crucial to the successful application of the heritage-hospitality link in Siwan hotels. Siwan people currently play a limited role in Siwan hotels. They are not generally welcomed as hotel employees and, when employed, they are often in menial positions and have limited contact with hotel guests.

Siwan locals own commonly have distinctive qualities, such as high self-esteem and strong family links, and they could be trained to work in hotels and, thereby, to preserve and share their own heritage.

An enhanced heritage-hospitality link will occur through recognition that: (1) hospitality provision could be a distinctive and friendly way of being hospitable through investing in different aspects of heritage; (2) the current limited use of heritage in hotels can be turned to positive attribute through investing in heritage; (3) hotels are organizations that control numerous factors relating to exposure to heritage, and, in many cases, adoption of aspects of local ways is an efficient way to invest in heritage; (4) in this context, authenticity means accuracy in presenting the past in the present. Additionally, both tangible and intangible heritage experiences can be provided; (5) provision of authentic aspects of heritage in simple and accessible ways may be more important than hotel locations and prices; (6) the provision of authentic souvenirs (e.g. a small wooden bottle of Siwan olive oil) could help to enhance and deepen hotel guests' experiences, by add distinctiveness and a richer exposure to authentic local lifestyles; and (7) hotel profitability and heritage preservation can both be realized through investing in the uniqueness of heritage and low cost.

There is great flexibility in the application of heritage hospitality so that different hotels may do this in different ways. However, an important requirement is the involvement of local people. Such flexibility includes, for example: (1) different hotel locations, sizes and surroundings; the hotel standard is less important that the desire to convey aspects of heritage; (2) variations in use of some traditional instruments (e.g. clay ovens). Clay ovens can be used in desert hotels where there is ample space. However, hotels in downtown can bring food cooked in

clay ovens from some traditional Siwan houses; and (3) adding more hospitable ways to introduce some Siwan traditions, e.g. food and beverage, superstitions and dress.

However, the requirements of authenticity place limitations on the heritage–hospitality link. They include: (1) applying exact and diverse aspects of tangible and intangible heritage; (2) employing Siwan people who are able to convey accurately Siwan traditions and ways of life; (3) considering food and beverage traditions, such as home-made recipes and the traditional steps in making Siwan tea, and creating Siwan table settings (serving all food and beverages orders at one time), (4) participating in marketing strategies through, for example, promoting Siwan festivals and preparing heritage trips for tourists, (5) appropriate use of Siwan heritage products, e.g. palm food baskets could be on tables and not hung on walls. Local employees can explain the use of such products, (6) designs and amenities in Siwan hotels may convey Siwan heritage (e.g. oil lamps, olive oil soap, candles, gas bottle boilers) but it will also be necessary to provide basic hotel facilities (e.g. phone, internet, fire extinguishers, first aid supplies, safety deposit boxes and health and safety guidelines).

### **6.3 Contributions**

This study has addressed issues of heritage and hospitality in hotels in Siwa oasis, Egypt. Local lifestyles were observed in the oasis. All Siwan hotels were examined but emphasis was placed on hotels which reflect some aspects of Siwan heritage. In addition, implications for achieving a balance between commercialization and authenticity in hotels were drawn from the empirical results of the study. Thus, the study makes both academic and practical contributions to knowledge and these will be now summarized.

#### **6.3.1 The heritage-hospitality nexus and its academic and practical implications**



From an academic perspective, this research represents a significant contribution to gaining better understanding of the relationship between heritage and hospitality, through application of the concept in Egypt. This is a novel concept. It is the first example of such an investigation in Egypt, where the entirely privately-financed hotel projects cater chiefly to the international coastal-resort market. Little attention has been paid to the Saharan oases in the west of the country. And yet they are rich in cultural heritage. The oasis region currently offers only limited commercial accommodation (Hosni, 2002). The research constitutes a step towards changing the prevailing view of hotels as simply places to stay overnight, and eat and drink. It also a corrective to an approach that seldom acknowledge the relationship between hotels and cultural heritage.

Most studies and projects in western Egypt focus on ecotourism and selling the local products to a larger market in Egypt or internationally. This study of hotels and heritage tourism is the first that has been undertaken in Siwa. The study evaluated the current application of both tangible and intangible heritage in hotels, and suggests how aspects of heritage could be applied in hospitality outlets. It also indicated the hospitality ‘points’ that could be used to mirror the heritage or the traditional hospitality of any community. For example, the offering of food and beverages is an important task of the hospitality industry, and the offerings may be safe, and available in sufficient quantities, and provided with local flair. If local people use specific ways to making such food, is it possible to use the same ways and implements but at a larger size?

This research contributes to the hospitality literature by addressing the relationship between commercialization and authenticity in hospitality. The aim is to achieve a balance through implementation of heritage hospitality which is a new concept that combines aspects of traditional hospitality and heritage.

The key problem with the ‘semantic and evidential’ approaches to hospitality is that they are not only different, but that they also are applied together on an unequal basis. The semantic approach may appear more clearly than the evidential in past hospitality stories and examples, such as in the ‘guest houses’ for Christian pilgrims in Europe in the Middle Ages, which later evolved into wayside inns for travelers. This example tends to apply hospitality as a humane or social phenomenon. However, the evidential approach may appear more clearly than the semantic in current hospitality examples, such as international hotel chains which whose properties have consistent features, and which focus on commercial profit rather than the generic understanding and application of hospitality. This example locates hospitality as a commercial or economic phenomenon. As a result, the word ‘hospitality’ is often replaced by the terms ‘hospitality industry’ or ‘hospitality management’.

The hospitality industry is very difficult to define precisely. It is usually taken to include hotels, restaurants and other types of businesses concerned with the direct provision to consumers of food, beverages and lodging. It can also be defined as the supplying of paid accommodation, food and drink for people away from their home. Another definition of the hospitality industry is that it is an industry that is formed of businesses which offer accommodation, food and drink and conferences to tourists, travelers and local inhabitants (Brotherton, 1999; Brotherton ,Wood, 2008; Medlik cited in Mill, 2008; Pizam, 2009). However, there are no remarkable differences in these relatively similar definitions. They refer to hospitality as an industry, including the commercial production and sale of goods and services. For example, there is a growing body of literature on the development of an industry - such as easy cleaning materials, food distribution techniques, mechanization of the front office and selling and pricing techniques – rather than an emphasis on hospitality.

Ingram (1999) suggested that the hospitality industry is significant but that it is inadequately researched, disjointed but increasingly controlled by smaller players, operationally centered but requiring a more tactical focus, unable to define its product exactly, usually managed by managers with particular skills, famous for low productivity and, thus, requiring higher levels of performance, commonly unenthusiastic about training staff, and not capable of using the abilities of its employees entirely. Thus, it is a complicated industry. However, it is a problem that there is not only insufficient research on the hospitality industry, but also that the research focus is on commercial hospitality management, which emphasizes, for example, service quality management, employee relations, customer and employee transactions and the development of customer loyalty (Lashley, 2007).

Studying hospitality as a commercial phenomenon is interesting in itself but is mainly important for individuals intending to provide commercial hospitality and tourism services. It is also important to study other aspects of hospitality, including the private/domestic and social/cultural domains. For example, small hotels, bed and breakfast accommodation, guest houses and farm stay properties are all instances of micro-businesses which engage in host and guest transactions as both private and commercial activities. A key issue for the commercial sector is the degree to which commercial hospitality provides authentic hospitality, driven as it is by hidden motives and the intent to extract money for the provision of hospitality to guests (Lashley, 2007).

There is a tension between authenticity in hospitality and the commercialization of hospitality. This important issue of the relationship of commercial hospitality to authentic or original hospitality can be an antidote to the current over-commercialization of hospitality. In addition, the choice of small hotels, as an example to control both the commercial and social

aspects of hospitality, may reflect the desire to experience the simple and cozy atmosphere that results from the hotel surroundings and exposure to the traditions of local people. However, the point is not only to lessen the commercialization of hospitality and to increase authenticity, but also to find a synergistic relationship between commercialization and authenticity. A way to achieve a synergistic relationship between commercialization and authenticity in hospitality is to display *heritage* through the provision of *traditional hospitality* to guests. Heritage hospitality means applying both heritage and traditional hospitality. Authentic heritage can convey both tangible and intangible heritage to guests without change or enhancement. For example, if there is specific tradition concerning drinking a local drink, it can be applied as it is. Traditional hospitality means applying both the social and commercial concepts of hospitality. There can be a mutual relationship between heritage and hospitality organizations, for example, in hotels. Hotels can help to embody the past in the present. And the employment of heritage can help hotels to increase both their economic and social values. Heritage provision and hospitality are both social and economic activities. Heritage relates the past to the present and the future. Traditional hospitality creates a link between past social understanding with current commercial understanding and future profitability. These links can be used to contribute to the formation of more sustainable hospitality.

This research adds to the literature on peripheral areas and the provision of commercial accommodation in such places, hospitality-heritage links and authenticity. Peripheral areas have the opportunity to invest in structures made of local building materials, that are often inexpensive, and local tangible heritage features that may attract more tourists. The relationship between the site and its hotels is symbiotic. The site grants hotels their locations and the scenery and other tourist opportunities around them. However, hotels attract more visitors to their sites

through providing additional reasons to stay. These reasons can include exposure to tangible and intangible heritage, through employing local building design and conveying local traditions.

Peripheral hotels can benefit from the relatively high level of spending of cultural tourists in heritage areas, through increasing heritage activities and investing in both tangible and intangible heritage. Peripheral areas usually offer a limited range of activities in comparison to cities where numerous activities are available and the role of hotels may shrink to being merely a place to eat and sleep. Hotels, in peripheral areas can strengthen the range of attractions available to their guests by providing them with deeper heritage experiences, especially in places where most visitors are on holiday.

Hospitality is not only the supplying of a tangible product. Hotels may follow the main elements of the semantic definition of hospitality by welcoming guests with kindness and friendliness. However, the word ‘distinctiveness’ can be added and this can be achieved through investing in local heritage and traditions. Often, in hotels, tangible heritage is viewed as being only the building and furniture. However, for example, tangible souvenirs can be a manifestation of the heritage-hospitality concept. Additionally, many hotel guests, especially in peripheral areas, enjoy experiencing aspects of intangible heritage (songs, folktales, traditional way(s) of welcoming and staff wearing traditional dresses) inside hotels.

Authenticity is important to the enhancement of the link between heritage and hospitality. In this research, the employment of local people who are able to represent and share aspects of their culture was viewed as being a key means of implementing the ‘heritage-hospitality’ concept, creating synergistic relationship between heritage and hospitality. However, it is necessary to combine both old and modern practices carefully. It is necessary to involve both hotel guests and local people in activities related to heritage in order to ensuring authenticity and

quality in tourists' experiences. "Authentic reproductions", such as reproduced chinaware instead of locally-made tableware, may cost more and distort heritage. Hoteliers may understand that the means of application of authenticity may differ from place to place and even within the same area. A sense of authenticity can be achieved providing hotel guests with simple authentic local experiences, such as by welcome of guests in the local ways, by providing opportunities for interaction with local people, by the involvement of hotel guests in lively heritage - related local activities, by providing local food and beverages, as well by the use of local crafts and building materials. Such enhanced relationships can be created regardless of location (bad or good) or hotel prices (low or high). This means that it may not be difficult to enhance the heritage-hospitality link in hotels in peripheral areas. However, it does require awareness of local authentic heritage features and an ability to convey them. Here, the main concern is the lively interaction of hotel guests with local people who are bearers or interpreters of heritage, for example, through the application of folktales, sayings, ballads and songs which can be used to enhance the heritage-hospitality link.

Hotels are organizations which control many factors (staff, staff uniforms, brochures, food and beverages, building(s), designs, decor and architecture styles) that can effectively express heritage if applied accurately in ways that are similar to the original life ways of local people. Hotels, in peripheral areas, may consider: (1) small but effective tangible and intangible heritage embellishments, and (2) the heritage-hospitality concept, the application of which can support the preservation of heritage because it places local heritage in a broader structure. It can help to situate existing and new hotels in ways that will preserve the place and the local culture, thereby satisfying and then increasing tourist numbers, and differentiating such hotels from other hotels. There may be no negative effects resulting from applying local traditions in hotels. As a

result, hotels, in peripheral areas, may clarify the rules that may be followed in order to support their traditions; for example, forbidding alcoholic beverages and inappropriate styles of dress.

It is common to see traditional architecture and hand-crafted furniture in hotels all over the world. It is common for hotels operators to focus on the economic features of heritage as money-maker, as they understand and apply it. Although there may be a lack of awareness concerning the application of heritage for commercial purposes, it may lead to positive outcomes but it does depend on how heritage is respected and the nature of investments in it. Positive outcomes can be achieved through striving for a balance between commercialization and authenticity through the presence of local people (authenticity providers) and their interaction with tourists. This may encourage people to stay longer (a commercial achievement) in peripheral areas. The greater use of intangible aspects of heritage, in particular, may help to lengthen the stay of tourist through facilitating interaction with local people and their traditions.

There is often a limited link between local people and hotels. Local people, in peripheral areas, may be involved in building and operating hotels. They are able to preserve local traditions, for example through wearing local dress and welcoming guests in their traditional way(s). Hotel guests view that strengthening the link between heritage and hospitality can be achieved by local people who are able to generate dynamic expressions of heritage when interacting with guests. Employing and training local people in hotels can be a successful way of sharing heritage features inside hotels and can result in the strengthening of both the supply of and demand for heritage tourism products. Although it may be easier to bring in trained staff from elsewhere, it may be better to train local people because this will help to achieve a balance between commercialization and authenticity. So, hoteliers may consider the significance of the greater involvement of local people who are able to convey features of heritage in their

properties. By working in hotels, local people could preserve and share dying traditions and, at the same time, earn money. A balance between gaining money and preserving local culture can be achieved through investing in unique local heritage elements at low costs. Conversely, hotel managers may not bring in non-local workers but may draw upon the resources of the periphery. Local singers, dancers and musicians have a role in conveying the cultural experience of the periphery and its traditional and current lifestyles to tourists, and deepening the heritage experiences of tourist.

There are two aspects of heritage-hospitality link: flexible and inflexible. Flexible heritage-hospitality items are those that can be modified to meet the basic needs of tourists, such as provision of safety deposit boxes and internet access. This enhances the provision of hospitality. However, where aspects of cultural expressions are modified, this may be accompanied by explanations to hotel guests. Hotel locations, surroundings and sizes should not greatly affect heritage expressions in hotels, although they may have implications for the methods and quality of heritage expression. Food traditions can be expressed in a hospitable manner. However, they may adhere to the unique local traditions and be accompanied by the clarifications of local people. Some local traditions can be clarified to hotel guests through, for example, writing them on a traditional media (local stones, local tree leaves, and local pieces of clothing). Dress decorations which tell a local story can be reflected in a respectful manner through using such decoration on, for example, scarves as souvenirs for tourists.

Inflexible heritage-hospitality relationships include those that are applied as they are or according to meet tourists' needs or preferences, especially the application of heritage in different parts of the hotel. There could be firm application of local traditions generally, in terms of their diversity and accuracy, as well as in detailed presentations such as menus, designs,



amenities and marketing strategies. Diversity means that there is a wide variety of choices that can be made in both the tangible and intangible heritage that can be drawn upon. In this way, all types of heritage can be presented and preserved. Such chain may make an agreement of what heritage aspects that can be offered by each of them. Agreements may be drawn up in the licensing of hotels concerning what aspects of heritage will be employed and how they will be implemented. In order to apply the concept of heritage hospitality, respect for heritage may be a condition acquiring a building permit for new hotels, especially in peripheral areas such as oases.

Accuracy is an attribute of authenticity and it is also required to provide tourists with both representative and rich personal experiences and to preserve local heritage. It is important for the heritage - hospitality link because it can satisfy the preferences of hotel guests while investing in local people, who are the heritage-makers, and local products. It may not be difficult to do this in peripheral locations where there are indigenous people. In the minds of tourists, involvement of indigenous people symbolizes the offering of an authentic experience.

Local menus may be used in hotels in peripheral areas because the eating of local food is a heritage experience. Such menus may depend on traditional ingredients and recipes. Menus may reflect some aspects of local heritage; for example, they could be made from local hand-made cloth. Additionally, the local language may be used in expressing some names for local food and beverages. Additionally, locally-made chinaware may be used and table settings may follow the local conventions.

Package tours are a major market in many peripheral areas (Hohl, Tisdell, 1995; Müller, Huuva, 2009; Sharpley, 2002). However the marketing of hotels in the periphery is often weak, travel agencies can be employed to strengthen demand for heritage tourism. Nevertheless, it has been argued that hotels have a role in deepening heritage tourism supply. They can play an

organizational role in promoting festivals and preparing seminars about local heritage. Additionally, hotels can play a role in preparing local heritage trips for tourists. Internet sites may relate aspects of local heritage and the services that are offered so that they can be accessed. This will strengthen marketing and, where they exist, such marketing policies might be sponsored by a local hotel chain.

Hotels may convey authenticity through employing local products according to their real uses. When local employees wear local dress and use objects in a traditional way, expressions of heritage are preserved and shared, and tourists may be motivated to ask about such unique products and may buy them. Thus, the items are displayed primarily for commercial consumption, although that may be the outcome. Local staff may be aware of that they may be hospitable and not only providers of basic service. Thus, local people may need to be trained in the different aspects of heritage tourism, cultural heritage in peripheral areas and the authenticity of tourism experiences.

Hotel managers, in the periphery, may consider how they can provide local experiences to satisfying tourists' interest in local cultural heritage and natural scenery, in a relaxing atmosphere. Additionally, they may invest in local heritage, in all parts of the hotel (such as decoration, furniture, lightening, design of hotel parts, meaning and use of handicrafts, amenities, linen and towels). However, basic hotel services will also need to be made available, such as phone, internet, fire extinguishers, first aid, safety deposit boxes and health and safety guidelines.

#### **6.4 Future Research**

The relationship between heritage and hospitality is as old as travel itself. However, the heritage-hospitality concept is a new and important concept that may be recognized by scholars internationally and Egyptian hotel managers. However, it is dangerous to generalize from a

single case so, more research is required in other places in Egypt and elsewhere, to further understand the concept, leading to improved management through application of the heritage-hospitality concept.

There is little in the hospitality literature concerning the application of aspects of heritage in hotels. So, the undertaking of comparative studies would be a good beginning through which to identify successes, failures and good practice. For example, comparative studies Spanish *paradores* and Japanese *ryokans* would enrich the heritage and hospitality literature.

The Siwa case study was constrained by the resources and connections of the author. Thus, inputs were not obtained from all stakeholders. This study did not include the opinions of professionals from central government bodies and schools of hospitality and tourism, and heritage and fine arts experts who may have ideas for implementing the heritage-hospitality approach. In this research, information was collected primarily at the local level.

Informed application of a heritage-hospitality approach is predicated on an understanding of local culture. It follows that research is needed to understand the cultural heritage, especially the intangible heritage which is commonly less well documented, of places where the approach is to be applied.

It may also be worthwhile to explore the curricula of hospitality programs in colleges and universities to explore current access to heritage information and where the heritage-hospitality concept and approach might be introduced, ultimately leading to recommendations concerning how training for the delivery of heritage-hospitality can be provided at the local level in places like Siwa.

## **6.5 Concluding Remarks**

To achieve the goal of creating a balance between commercialization and authenticity in hotels, five research objectives were identified: to explore relations between local people and hotels, between heritage and hospitality and between hotels and heritage tourism, to examine the possibility of applying the 'heritage hospitality' concept and, finally, to assess the status of heritage applications hotels in Siwa, Egypt. The study has revealed the potential utility of the heritage-hospitality concept as a means to achieve a balance between commercialization and authenticity in simultaneously preserving heritage and gaining profits in hotels. This research contributes the new concept of heritage-hospitality and provides empirical research that furthers understanding of the concept. It is expected to inspire more research on ways to balance commercialization and authenticity in hotels, particularly in developing countries like Egypt.

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**Appendix: Research Instruments**

**Siwan hotels observation check list:**

**Hotel name:-----**

<b>Basic information</b>	<b>Description</b>
Ownership	
Size	
Age	
Location	
<b>Basic facilities</b>	<b>Description</b>
Phone and internet services	
Fire extinguisher	
First aid facilities	
Luggage racks and carts	
Safety deposit box	
Parking lot	
Health& safety guidelines	
Swimming Pool	
Special characteristics	
<b>Tangible heritage characteristics</b>	<b>Description</b>
Architecture	
External building	
Decorations	
Furniture	
Brochures	
Artifacts	
Staff dressing	
Hotel surroundings 'e.g. gardens'	
Chinaware	
Lightening	
Coffee& Tea cups	
Utensils for food and beverages preparation	
Restaurant design	
Guest rooms design	
Guest room amenities	
Linens& Towels	
Bathroom amenities	
<b>Intangible heritage characteristics</b>	<b>Description</b>
Music	
Folktales	
Ballads	
Songs	

Ways of entertaining guests	
Ways of staff communications with guests	
Ways of welcoming guests	



## **Questionnaire for foreign and domestic guests in a sample of ten Siwan hotels**

### **“Trip” information:**

1- Is this your first visit to Siwa oasis?  Yes  No

If no, then how many times (including this one) \_\_\_\_\_

2-How did you get information about Siwa oasis?  Friends/Relatives  Travel agency

Internet sites  Others, please specify\_\_\_\_\_

3- What is the main purpose of your visit to Siwa?  Business  Personal  Visiting Friends/Relatives

If personal, then, was your trip:  arranged by yourself  on a package tour

4. How did you get to Siwa?  Public bus  Private car

5- Proposed length of stay in Siwa (excluding travel): \_\_\_\_\_nights

### **“Lodging” information**

1-Is this your first visit to this hotel?  Yes  No

If no, then how many times (including this one) have you stayed here \_\_\_\_\_

2-Proposed length of stay in this hotel: \_\_\_\_\_nights

3-How did you get information about this hotel?  Friends/Relatives  Travel agency

Internet sites  Others, please specify\_\_\_\_\_

4-If you visit Siwa again, would you stay in this hotel?  Yes  No  Don't know

Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

### **“Interest in culture” information:**

1-How important is it to you that you experience aspects of the local culture during your stay in Siwa?



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Others, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

2- In your opinion, which of the following aspects of Siwan traditional customs are present or absent in this hotel?

Traditional building	Present	Absent
Traditional Foods	Present	Absent
Traditional furniture	Present	Absent
Traditional artworks	Present	Absent
Traditional music	Present	Absent
Traditional songs	Present	Absent
Traditional stories	Present	Absent

Others, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

3- Would you like to have the opportunity to learn about the following aspects of Siwan heritage while in this hotel?

Folktales	Very Much	Probably	Don't care	Probably not	Definitely not
Sayings	Very Much	Probably	Don't care	Probably not	Definitely not
Ballads	Very Much	Probably	Don't care	Probably not	Definitely not
Songs	Very Much	Probably	Don't care	Probably not	Definitely not

4- How do you agree with the following statements about enhancing or strengthening the relationship between heritage and hospitality in Siwan hotels:

Providing a learning environment through interaction with Siwan peoples	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Providing a learning environment through participating in activity-related Siwan heritage	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Ensuring authenticity of crafts	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Ensuring authenticity of building materials	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
The welcome of guests with the unique Siwan ways	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Providing traditional meals using local ingredients	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

--	--

**Preferences of heritage application in Siwan hotels**

1- In which parts of the hotel would you prefer to experience the Siwan heritage components?

The whole hotel	Strongly disagree agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly
External building	Strongly disagree agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly
Lobby	Strongly disagree agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly
Guest rooms	Strongly disagree agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly
Public areas	Strongly disagree agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly
Throughout the hotel	Strongly disagree agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly

Others, please specify \_\_\_\_\_  
Why? \_\_\_\_\_

2-What do you think of respecting Siwan traditions inside Siwan hotels

Restricting alcoholic beverages	Strongly disagree agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly
Avoiding short dresses	Strongly disagree agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly
Separating men and women in public areas	Strongly disagree agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly
Male guests served by men staff	Strongly disagree agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly
Women guests served by women staff	Strongly disagree agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly
Staff wearing traditional Siwan dress	Strongly disagree agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly

3-What do you think of providing some traditional ways of Siwan pre-modern life such as

Using karsheef, a traditional building material, as an alternative to using air conditioners	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Providing some Siwan traditional snacks, for example, Siwan date cookies as an alternative to European snacks provided by room service	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Providing candles as an alternative to lamps in guest rooms	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Sitting on the floor, for some banquets, as an alternative to sitting at the tables	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

4-What kind of menu would you prefer while staying in Siwan hotels?

Consistent Siwan menu	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Seasonally changing Siwan menu	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Mix of international Siwan items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree

Others \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

**“Demographic” Information:**

1- Age:  18- 24  25- 34  35- 44  45- 54  55- 64  65 and above

2- Gender:  Male  Female

3- Your Place of Origin (Nation / Province): \_\_\_\_\_

4- Monthly Income in dollar:  less than 1,500  1,500 - 2,999  3,000- 4,499  
 4,500 - 6,000  higher than 6,000

5- Education:  up to Primary level  up to Junior High School  up to Senior High School  
 up to University/College  Master Degree or above

6-Occupation:  Student  Teacher  Company employee  Government employee  
 Retired  Others, please specify\_\_\_\_\_

### **Key informant interviews Questions**

To what extent do you think that visitors experience Siwan culture and heritage while actually staying within your hotel?

Why do you say this?

What aspects of Siwan heritage do visitors experience within your hotel?

What aspects of tangible heritage are used in your hotel?

- Why?

What aspects of intangible heritage are used in your hotel?

- Why?

- What are the advantages of using these aspects?

- What are the disadvantages of using these aspects?

What is the aim of applying Siwan heritage in your hotel?

- Attracting more tourists
- Preserving Siwa's traditions
- Satisfying the demands of the market
- Reduced costs by using local materials
- Others, please specify-----

Are there any problems with exposing visitors to Siwan traditions within a hotel setting?

How can a balance be achieved between managing the hotel as a money-making establishment and managing it as a representative of Siwan culture?

Please compare your own situation with that in other hotels in Siwa?

Do you have plans to enhance or reduce heritage application in your hotel? Yes No

If so, what are they?

**Focus group Questions:**

What links, if any, exist between Siwan peoples and Siwan hotels?

Why do you say that?

What do you think are the most effective ways to share aspects of Siwan culture and heritage inside Siwan hotels?

How do you think Siwan hotels could strengthen the demand for heritage tourism products in Siva?

How do you think Siwan hotels could strengthen the exposure of visitors to heritage tourism?

What other contributions do you think that hotels could make to the preservation and sharing of the traditions of Siwa oasis?

How useful and important do you think that the idea of heritage hospitality is preserving and celebrating Siwan traditions?

Why do you say that?