

Preface

While non-market valuation techniques have been applied in thousands of studies of environmental goods worldwide over the past 40 years, the interest in applying these techniques to cultural heritage goods is quite recent. Throsby and Winters (1986), see table 15.1, seems to be the first study applying these environmental valuation techniques to performing and visual arts, while a contingent valuation study of the Nidaros Cathedral in 1991 (Navrud and Strand, chapter 3) seems to be the first study of cultural heritage buildings, monuments and artifacts. During the 1990s the number of studies have increased to about thirty, but we are still very much in the initial phase of applying these valuation techniques to cultural heritage. Since many of these studies were unpublished, we got the idea of collecting these studies in a book, to present a state-of-the-art review of cultural heritage valuation and draw some conclusions from this initial phase of applications. We presented our idea to many of the contributors to this book at a meeting during the First World Congress of Environmental and Resource Economists in Venice in June 1998, and they were all very enthusiastic about the idea. Edward Elgar later that evening endorsed the idea. We were all inspired by the ambience of Venice, which turned out to be the perfect place to launch this book project!

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