Production, Transmission, and Consumption of Red Tourism in China: A Model of the Circuit of Red Heritage and Tourism

by

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ABSTRACT

Because of its ability to harbor social values, norms, and beliefs, heritage has always been utilized as an ideological vehicle. One prominent example of politicizing heritage is Chinese red tourism, comprised of state-promoted tours to revolutionary memorial sites. It is expected to generate political, economic, and social benefits, particularly to reinforce the legitimate leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. Statistics show that dramatic market growth in red tourism has occurred over the past decade. Yet it is still heavily driven by the government and thus whether long-term sustainability can be achieved is still questionable.

This dissertation explores the dynamics of red tourism from the perspective of a meaning-making process, where tourism discourses circulate among the processes of production, transmission, and consumption. The results reveal that higher-level government primarily assumes the leading role, whereas local government is largely excluded from strategy making processes and primarily responsible for implementation and operation. Some dissonance exists between higher and lower-level governments in their goals and involvement in red tourism development. Second, intermediaries are not altruistic and attempt to maximize their own benefits. While site interpreters may provide officially authorized narratives, their primary focus is hosting higher-up administrative visitors. On the contrary, tour guides are more customer-oriented, which may lead to officially undesirable interpretations. Third, driven by multiple motives, tourists have increasingly diverse attitudes towards red heritage and participate in various political and non-political activities. A considerable degree of congruence was found between tourists'

participation, motivation, memories, and perception. Quantitative results indicate that the majority of tourists have learned about the political significance and/or content of red heritage, and developed more positive attitudes towards, and support for, the CCP and the government, to a certain extent.

This dissertation contributes to current research by adopting a systematic and emic perspective to explore the dynamics of red tourism. Several conceptual frameworks were developed inductively to describe the meaning-making process. Mixed methods were used to learn about tourists' consumption and perceptions of red heritage. Implications regarding enhancing the effectiveness of the meaning-making process, limitations of the study, and potential directions for future research are also discussed.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

> *"He who controls the past controls the future. He who controls the present controls the past" (Orwell, 1949, p.119).*

1.1 Introduction: Overview and Significance of Research

Because of their ability to carry values, norms, and beliefs, history and heritage have always been rewritten or obliterated to serve political and social ends, such as shaping and controlling image and identity of self and place (Henderson, 2007; Light, 2000). In fact, the questions of "who are we" and "where do we fit in" are more and more common in today's world (Palmer, 1999). At the national level, the importance of national identity has been ubiquitously recognized, as it plays a key role in the formation and growth of nations (Smith, 2001), and is central to most of the current struggles and conflicts (Palmer, 1998). Yet the recent trend in globalization, shifting boundaries, and increasingly integrated economic and political entities and confederations, can potentially dilute people's sense of national identity. Thus, it is important to have a better understanding of the ways in which national identity is constructed and maintained.

One of the most direct ways of utilizing history and heritage to enhance national identity is to explore and convert heritage resources into tourism products. Previous research has found that tourism products can sustain attendant political structures and thus are always selective and value-laden by nature (Li, Hu, & Zhang, 2010). In fact, politicizing a nation's heritage to serve national ends is common all around the world and

has been studied comprehensively in different contexts (Henderson, 2007; Sofield & Li, 1998; Timothy, 2011). Timothy (2007) outlined three types of political use of the past: societal amnesia (the intentional forgetting), promoting devotion to leaders and patriotism, and spreading propaganda to foreign visitors.

To obtain geopolitical goals, soft power is projected into tourism products and discourses. Coined by Nye (1990), soft power refers to the ability to obtain preferred outcomes by attraction and persuasion, rather than coercion and payment, indicating the ability to entice and attract people. Former Chinese President Hu Jintao pointed out in 2007 that China needs to increase its soft power, particularly during the trasitionary and restructuring period. Externally, Chinese cultures and heritages are intensely utilized to produce an attractive national image to international audiences, reflected by the ambitious expansion of Confucius institutes, international radio, and television broadcasting in recent years (Nye, 2005). In the tourism scenario, dramatic efforts have been made to promote China's overall image, culture, and civilization through inbound tourism, where soft power is manifested by high-quality, low-cost services and facilities (Kwek, Wang, & Weaver, 2014). Internally, national heritage is an instrument that governments use to communicate with and attract domestic audiences. One prominent example is Chinese red tourism, which is comprised of current state-promoted tours to revolutionary memorial sites, such as revolutionary museums, memorial halls and monuments commemorating significant and heroic revolutionary figures and victorious events related to the Red Army, the People's Liberation Army (PLA), and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) (Li, Hu, & Zhang, 2010; Rioux, 2008). In this way, the legitimate leadership of the CCP and

Chinese national identity are expected to be reinforced and enhanced. It represents a much stronger political overtone than other types of heritage tourism, as the content of red heritage itself is inherently political.

As one outcome of a nationwide education campaign about how to preserve the progressive nature of the Chinese Communist Party in 2003, the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA), which is an agency in charge of tourism directly affiliated to the State Council, began to develop and promote red tourism (Gu, Ryan, & Zhang, 2007). The first National Red Tourism Development Plan (NRTDP) was launched by the central government in 2004. Since then, dramatic market growth in red tourism has occurred (Li & Hu, 2008). Statistics show that in 2007, the number of "red tourists" reached 230 million, a 17% increase compared to that of 2006 (National Tourism Administration of the People's Republic of China, 2008). In 2010, there was a tremendous increase in the number of red tourists and tourism receipts—430 million domestic visitors and US$15.7 billion in tourism revenue (Xinhua News, 2011). Red tourism in 2013 set a new record of 786 million domestic visitors and US$33.1 billion in revenue (Ifeng News, 2014). The red fad, such as red songs, red books, red poetry, red movies and so forth, is currently resurging all around China, contributing in large part to the success of red tourism.

Although red tourism statistics have shown how noticeable and impressive the development of red tourism industry has been in the last decade, to a large extent, it is the central government that spends tax payers' money on subsidizing schools, government departments, and state-owned companies to encourage people to participate in red

tourism. Sometimes, such subsidies are even misused as one ostensibly legal channel for lining the pocket of some corrupt officials (Li, Hu & Zhang, 2010). Therefore, it is necessary to conduct empirical studies to investigate what is really occurring. For example, to what extent such forms of communist heritage can help to achieve political, social, and economic goals set up by the Chinese government. The particular interest is how red tourism can have cognitive and perceptive impacts on tourists and thus contribute to shaping national identity and enhancing nationalism.

From the perspective of cultural studies, this dissertation explores how the political, social, and economic meanings embedded in red heritage circles in an ongoing dialogue between producer, transmitter, and consumer. The structure of this dissertation is outlined below.

Chapter 1 consists of three parts. *First*, a brief review of communist heritage tourism in the former socialist countries in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and China is provided to offer a general understanding of the research context. *Second*, literatures of ideology, nationalism, heritage tourism, representation and interpretation, and related research models/frameworks are briefly reviewed to identify the research gaps and develop the conceptual framework for this study. More detailed reviews of those concepts, such as nationalism in the Chinese context, and tour guiding and interpreting practices, are provided in detail in the relevant subsequent chapters. *Third*, previous research about government, intermediaries, and tourists is reviewed to identify more specific research gaps and objectives for each entity.

Chapter 2 discusses the research objectives and research methods used to assess each stakeholder. The use of both qualitative and quantitative methods is justified based on the nature of the research questions.

Chapter 3 examines how governments at various levels are involved in red tourism development by constructing red stories and developing red tourism. Specific attention is paid to the developmental model and progress of red tourism, and the roles and goals of the meso and micro-level governments.

Chapter 4 analyzes how intermediaries reinforce and transform political discourses assigned by the Chinese government through their interpretations. Comparisons are conducted to explore the dissonance between the official and intermediaries' personal versions of interpretation, and potential variations between two major types of intermediaries, *tour guide* and *site interpreter*, in terms of content and approach. The underlying factors accounting for the dissonance and variations are discussed at both macro and micro levels, including institutional arrangements, onsite environmental settings, characteristics of the tourist, job skills, job attitudes, career orientation, and self-perceived roles.

Chapter 5 attempts to understand how tourists consume and perceive the tourism discourses presented by the government and intermediaries, and whether or not red tourism can have cognitive and perceptive impacts on tourists. In this way, in-depth insights into the decoding stage of the meaning-making process are provided.

Chapter 6 provides a synthesis of the research, summarizes the major findings of each entity, demonstrates the contributions of this dissertation to academic research, and provides practical implications for the tourism industry. The research limitations and potential directions for future research are also discussed.

1.2 Literature Review

1.2.1 Communist Heritage in CEE

After WWII, the world was divided by the two superpowers that were competing with each other to gain more influence on the world. The 40-year Cold War between the US and the former Soviet Union transformed the entire world through their conflict until the 'Autumn of Nations' in 1989 when the Soviet Union collapsed. Immediately after the downfall of the Socialist Camp, many West European tourists flocked to these former socialist countries (Caraba, 2011), such as Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Romania, indicating a huge tourism market for these Central and Eastern European Countries. Previous research has found that the major travel motives of these Western Europeans and Central and Eastern Europeans were distinctive. Western Europeans seek to satisfy their curiosity and to experience the communist atmosphere (Light, 2001). Sometimes, they even regard communist heritage tourism as a form of *post-modern tourism*, which aims to reject traditional mass tourism and support new destinations and experiences (Light, 2000).

For Central and Eastern European domestic/regional tourists, however, emerging nostalgia for the past is the major driving force for visiting former communist buildings/places (Light, 2001). Such varying interests among different markets also have resulted in some conflicts in the process of developing communism-based heritage tourism. An example is the conflict in CEE between the desire to portray the "Europeanness" and return back to the European mainstream, and the behavior of keeping the 'socialist past' to attract West European tourists, whose gaze upon these heritage has been instrumental in transforming these "unwanted" heritages into tourism products (Light, 2000). More specifically, on the one hand, the image of "Europeanness" presents many positive values and thus can help these countries shed the stereotype of "poor, old, primitive, and communism" (Young & Kaczmarek, 2008). On the other hand, how to come to terms with this period of history, which left many distinctive material legacies, is the dilemma these countries have been facing. Three methods to deal with the socialist past in CEE have been generalized in previous research: an emphasis on the pre-socialist "Golden Period", drawing on the socialist period to emphasize their anti-communist credentials, and actively including acknowledgement of socialist past in highly-contested ways in formation of contemporary identities (Young & Kaczmarek, 2008).

Communist heritage-based tourism has also emerged in China. As well, the majority of "red tourists" in China are domestic, compared to the predominance of foreign tourists in Eastern Europe.

1.2.2 Research Context of Red Tourism in China

1.2.2.1 The Policies of Heritage, Culture and Tourism Development in China

A review of the policies of heritage/culture and tourism development can help generate an in-depth understanding of red tourism in a wider context of social and political processes. Because of the political need to reject the cultural past as a whole and replace it with a new Chinese socialist culture in the early 1920s, a large amount of rich heritage was destroyed (Sofield & Li, 1998). During Mao's regime, even academic disciplines were categorized into either revolutionary or counter-revolutionary. Under such a framework, many social science subjects concerned with heritage were attacked for their bourgeois roots and "corrupt" capitalist origins (Sofield & Li, 1998). Accordingly, heritage was manipulated negatively to deny the past and historical traditions rather than being visited and appreciated. As a matter of fact, for the first 30 years (1949-1978) after the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PR China), both domestic and international tourism were unaccepted as appropriate forms of economic activity and were used only as political propaganda tools to spread the message of socialism. For example, from 1954 to 1978, the official travel service organization only hosted 125,000 foreign visitors, who were 'friends of China', to see the successes and monuments of Mao's regime (Richter, 1989). In common with other communist states, tourism in China was held completely in the hands of the state machinery (Sofield & Li, 1998).

The year 1978 marked a turning point in China's modern history, as Deng Xiaoping introduced the open-door policy and began to rebuild the economy, established on principles of a market mechanism. To restore national identity after the trauma of the 10-year Cultural Revolution, to reaffirm the primacy of socialism, and to justify the legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), various heritage resources were revitalized and protected (Sofield & Li, 1998). For example, the Heritage Conservation Act in 1982 indicated that it is important to strengthen the conservation of China's heritage, support nationalism, promote revolutionary traditions, and build up socialism and modernization (Heritage Conservation Act, 1982). As a result, heritage/cultural tourism became an acceptable form of development, gradually.

Tourism development in China can be categorized into two phases: the first phase, also known as "cultivation" (1978-1991), was heavily characterized by a socialist planned economy, whereas the second phase (1992-the present) has featured a more free market economy where private tourism sectors have been more and more involved in the industry (Sofield & Li, 2011). In 2009, tourism was proposed by the central government as a pillar industry which includes economic, political, social, cultural, and environmental contributions to national development (Huang, 2010). No other socialist country has elevated tourism to such a high and officially-recognized status. Despite the dramatic transformation of tourism, communist heritage-based tourism, known as "red tourism" in China, is still weighted down with strong political undertones. For instance, tourism planning remains a top-down exercise even though there is a significant devolution of

power from the central government to the provincial, prefecture, and county-level governments (Airey & Chong, 2010).

1.2.2.2 Red Tourism in China

Differing from the current communist heritage tourism in CEE and even other forms of tourism in China, this so-called "red tourism" in China is still predominantly government-driven, like heritage tourism in the socialist era in CEE prior to the 1990s (Light, Young, & Czepczynski, 2009). From the supply side, the National Red Tourism Coordination Executive Team (NRTCET) has assigned 12 major red tourism regions with distinctive themes, 30 recommended routes, and 100 key red tourism scenic sites. The NRTCET also offers a series of support for red tourism development, such as government special funding for infrastructure construction. From the demand side, the central government has employed various strategies to boost demand, such as school trips (often compulsory as part of the educational curriculum), subsidized excursions, and organized visits to red destinations (Light, Young, & Czepczynski, 2009; Yin, Zhu, & Gan, 2005), and offering considerable discounts for groups of teenagers, students, soldiers and the elderly, from transportation and accommodation to entrance fees (Caraba, 2011).

The full nation-state involvement in red tourism could be explained with both external and internal factors. From the external perspective, the nationwide movement of red tourism has several purposes. First, as aforementioned, red tourism is used to resist foreign hostile forces overthrowing the socialist regime and reinforcing the legitimate

leadership of the CCP. Second, it aims to reduce regional development gaps as "most of these red heritage sites are located in poorer, land-locked provinces and tourism can bring economic profits for local communities" (Caraba, 2011, p.33). Third, alleviating tensions between socialism, modernization, and traditional culture through red tourism is highlighted where the rigidity of socialist ideology was an obstacle to modernization, and traditional culture was the greatest obstacle to socialism (Sofield & Li, 1998). Finally is the reconstruction of a national identity against the current moral decline among Chinese citizens as tourism is able to "help in defining and asserting notions of fellowship and belonging among the individuals and groups who make up a nation's population" (Li & Hu, 2008, p.160).

The reasons for the serious social issue of moral decline in current China are very complex. Yet it can be attributed to at least two factors. *First*, due to the nature of socialism as a political system based on a radical break with the past and with its eyes firmly fixed on the future (Light, Young, & Czepczynski, 2009), there was a movement to reject the cultural past as a whole and replace it with a new Chinese socialist culture, which began in 1921. As a result, much elitist heritage, such as historic buildings, temples, tombs, and monuments was destroyed (Sofield & Li, 1998). Especially, the 10-year cultural revolution during Mao's regime (1966-1976), which aimed to "inculcate the younger generation of Chinese with Mao's ardor for totalistic iconoclasm" through attacking the four olds—old thoughts, old culture, old customs, and old habits (Sofield & Li, 1998, p.369), destroyed precious heritages, which were titled "feudal superstitions", even if there were many positive sides of traditional religions and philosophies. Second,

via a three-decade national economic reform and development, China became one of the most remarkable new economic entities in the world. However, the fast-paced economic development and declining efforts to build a national ideology in a more acceptable way have caused people to focus more on 'getting rich quickly' and thus resulted in a dramatic decline in traditional ideologies, including traditional communist ideologies, among its people, especially among the younger generations. Such a vacuum of Chinese traditional and communist beliefs was not only seen as a menace to the leadership of the CCP, but also the moral corruption which has caught public attention on a large scale after a series of immoral incidents in recent years. For example, the recent incident of *Yue Yue*, a 2-year old girl hit by a car twice and ignored by 18 people who passed by, even made the central government admit that the Chinese moral compass has been compromised. Therefore, the authorities expect to rebuild the 'red spirit', which is a combination of the elements of classic communist ideology, Chinese traditional virtues and patriotism (Li & Hu, 2008).

Intrinsic factors for nation-state involvement in red tourism have also been discussed by Li, Hu, and Zhang (2010), such as poorly constructed infrastructure and other tourism facilities/services in "red tourism" destinations, which are usually in relatively inaccessible mountainous and remote terrains; the immature tourism industry in red destinations due to the underdeveloped local economy; the lack of proper planning of red tourism at various scales; and a lack of financial ability to invest in tourism.

The intense government involvement in planning, promoting, investing, human resource training, and price management contradicts with the new trend of decentralizing the power of policymaking from the central government to local levels and integrating tourism into a socialist market where infrastructure and facilities are privatized. These emerging conflicts and battles between commercial development and ideological control of the party state are dilemmas that the CCP is facing at present. As mentioned earlier, the economic achievement of red tourism can be easily measured with statistics. However, it is comparatively harder to evaluate political and social outcomes as they are vague and intangible.

Most research only demonstrates the necessity of ideological control and the way through which dominant ideology is embedded in heritage discourse, that is, how government makes the story. Yet little attention has been paid to how intermediaries, as the story tellers, interpret the story, and tourists, as the story receiver, consume and perceive these underlying meanings. In fact, red tourism is sometimes considered merely a kind of mandatory tour which "forces" people to be involved politically but rarely has significant impacts on the tourists. Furthermore, previous research has demonstrated that red tourism could become a camouflage for other forms of tourism. Many tourists visiting these political "holy lands" in China admitted that their primary motive was not to commemorate the past of the CCP but to participate in ecotourism, sightseeing, and entertaining experiences (Li, Hu &, Zhang, 2010). Since the interface between market forces and the dictates of the nation-state is key to understanding the outcomes and

dynamics of red tourism, a closer look at heritage producers, transmitters, and consumers is necessary.

Considering that red tourism is a cultural and political arena for discourse and meaning construction and reproduction, this dissertation explores how the associated political, social, and economic meanings circulate within the production-transmission-consumption dialectics.

1.2.3 Previous Research on Communist Heritage Tourism

A few studies on communist heritage tourism have been conducted in both CEE and China. While in CEE, particularly in countries like Romania, Poland, and Germany, focuses are primarily on identity building (Light, 2000, 2001; Hall, 1999; Young & Kaczmarek, 2008), problems of heritage interpretation (Light, 2000), and the relationship between tourism and the legacy of communism (Light, 2001). Research on red tourism in China is more from the perspectives of marketing strategies and development models (Yin, Zhu, & Gan, 2005). These include reimaging red tourism as an interesting and interactive social activity to replace its stereotype of tedious mandatory patriotic education (Liu & Sheng, 2010), analyzing the market characteristics and consumption behaviors (Huang, 2007), and developing scales of tourist satisfaction in red destinations (Cai, 2006).

Regarding tourism themes, while red tourism in China is more related to the Chinese communist revolution, communist heritage tourism in CEE focuses more on the

communist regime and its downfall. Correspondingly, the interpretations of communist heritage are completely different between these two regions. It tends to glorify the communist past and present in China, whereas there are mainly negative views of the communist period in CEE. For example, based on the case study of a concentration camp during the Nationalist regime, Li, Hu, and Zhang (2010) discussed technique, strategy, concept, and themes of the interpretation to demonstrate how great communists have sacrificed themselves both mentally and physically to obtain the final victory of the CCP. Interestingly, a few studies about Chinese communist heritage have been done by western researchers. For instance, from the point of view of designers, Wagner (1992) discussed the ideological implications of the Chairman Mao Memorial Hall in Beijing and analyzed the linkage between religious/secular pilgrimage and revolutionary tours. Although there are significant differences in communist heritage tourism and its relevant research between CEE and China, both research streams are related in terms of being predominantly descriptive and/or conceptual. Empirical research with direct participants and stakeholders in communist heritage tourism is lacking.

As mentioned earlier, red tourism planning is heavily controlled and dominated by the state, yet to achieve the intangible official goals, plans need to be implemented at the local level; in other words, the lofty ideological goal needs to be realized from theory to practice. From this angle, red tourism can be regarded as a local product shaped by multiple agents and influenced by provincial-local conditions (Rioux, 2008). In addition, researchers argue that it is crucial to understand how a sense of nationality is constructed at the grassroots level that links individuals to a particular cultural tradition (Breuilly,

1985). This study attempts to explore red tourism empirically at both national and local levels with respect to how the meanings and ideology of red heritage are generated, disseminated and circulated, and to what extent the information is changed/lost or reproduced/reinterpreted through comparing the processes of production, transmission, and consumption.

1.2.4 Ideology and Nationalism

1.2.4.1 Ideology

Operating to give the impression of a fundamental consensus of views, ideology has been intensively studied in scholarly work, yet academic consensus of its meaning and scope has not been achieved due to its ambiguity (Holm, 1991). Marx saw ideology as a selective view of reality and representative of the ideals and values of the ruling classes. Gold (1994) defined it as a frame that helps to make sense of, and rationalize, experience. Holm (1991) argued that ideology is a government tool, an aspect of human consciousness, and a circular relationship between official ideology and ideology in society, rather than just a set of ideas or a world view employed to justify the use of political power.

Generally speaking, there are both narrow and broad definitions of ideology, while the former is from the perspective of power, the latter is related to socially-located knowledge (Bennett, Grossberg, & Morris, 2005). No matter which perspective is adopted, however, one thing that can be confidently asserted is that ideology is never a

static concept or a linear chain of cause-and-effect linking production to consumption. Instead, it is a socially-reproduced and reconstructed process through an ongoing struggle (Gold & Gold, 1995). The concept of *yishi xingtai* (ideology) is very broad in the Chinese context, including both political thoughts and guiding principles (Rioux, 2008). In fact, red tourism is built upon the seemingly contested ideologies of capitalism and socialism, described as the issue of ideological instability in previous research (Hu, 2010). From this point of view, red tourism can be deemed a tough process of ideological reconstruction where "the revitalized patriotism is a newer officially-sanctioned nationalism" (Rioux, 2008, p.138).

1.2.4.2 Nationalism

As a political ideology, nationalism has been defined from different perspectives, such as a doctrine (Kedourie, 1971), a state of mind and an act of consciousness (Kohn, 1961), and an anthropological phenomenon (Anderson, 1991). Given that nationalism is quite a muddled term (Hutchinson & Smith, 1994), this study does not debate over the definitions of nationalism, national identity, and the associated ambiguity and uncertainty related to them. Rather, it attempts to clarify the sense in which it can be used in this dissertation. The ideology of nationalism contains several elements which are intrinsically interacted with each other, such as a sense of belonging, security, national pride, attachment to the nation, and national identity (Guo, 2004).

This research does not distinguish each of these but considers them as a whole set of "values, symbols, memories, myths and traditions that compose the distinctive heritage

of nations and the identifications of individuals" which are reproduced and reinterpreted continuously (Smith, 2001, p.18). It needs to be pointed out that: *first*, same as ideology, national identity is neither static, fixed, or unilinear. Instead, it is a dynamic process that is constructed by both authorities and the gentry. *Second*, the foundation of nationhood is not necessarily a factual history, but rather a sentiment or felt history as a nation is actually conceptualized as imagined communities where individuals imagine their fellow compatriots (Anderson, 1991). *Third*, it can be influenced by various factors, such as history, language, political affiliation, race, and religion (Palmer, 1999). Because of ideological instability and fragility, the CCP has been making considerable efforts to establish "red spirit" among its citizens. Yet the outcome of this national movement has not been evaluated empirically.

1.2.5 Heritage and Heritage Tourism

Heritage refers to an inheritance of a legacy, including cultural and natural environments that people inherit from previous generations. Cultural heritage involves tangible heritage sites (e.g. monuments and historic buildings) and intangible cultural forms (e.g. works of art and rituals), which are connected to the cultural experience of humankind and universal value from the viewpoint of history, art, and science (Jokilehto, 1999). Natural heritage indicates public awareness of the importance of natural objects, areas, and environments that bear cultural meanings (Butler & Boyd, 2000).

The significance of heritage and heritage tourism has been documented. For the state, heritage tourism is not only used as an economic development tool but it is also

manipulated for ideological reasons (Ateljevic, 2000; Timothy, 2011). For tourists, heritage tourism provides opportunities to experience nostalgia and authentic pasts, enhance self-development, and learn about cultures and history (Prentice, 1993). For local communities, heritage offers a means of making sense of themselves in terms of who they are, what they do, by which they relate themselves to the rest of the nation (Rioux, 2008). Thus, it is inappropriate to regard heritage tourism as merely economic, cultural, political, or social; we need to be aware of the multifaceted nature of heritage tourism. This study transcends the traditional binary opposition of production and consumption, and integrates them into a circuit of heritage model where they feed off each other in continuous cycles.

Three fundamental issues of heritage are summarized by Rioux (2008). First is heritage authorship, namely, whose heritage it should be, who is involved in the process of valuing, selecting and interpreting the content and the way of history is presented. Traditionally, governments, experts, and professionals are viewed as authors of heritage. Yet with the progress of democracy and marketization, more and more formerly marginalized interest groups are empowered and engaged in interpreting history (Rioux, 2008), such as local residents and tourists. Due to this complex authorship, it is inevitable that there are some heritage contestations existing between multiple groups of interest, among various parties within a single group, and among several histories occurring at the same time and place (Timothy, 2007). Second, heritage evaluation is how heritage is valued and what the assessment criteria are. Capability in revenue generation and ideological control used to be the dominant criteria in cultural terms, yet in recent years

the cultural and social functions of heritage are gaining importance. Third, symbolisms and meanings, or the way in which physical entities of heritage are imbued with meanings and communicated.

This study approaches the issue of authorship from the perspective of governments at both meso and micro levels, intermediaries (tour guides and site interpreters), and tourists. It investigates the ways in which the symbols and meanings are (re)produced, interpreted, transmitted, perceived, and reflected, and then evaluates the outcomes of this political, social, economic, and individual meaning-making process.

1.2.6 Representation and Interpretation

Interpretation is "an education activity which aims to reveal meaning and relationships through the use of original objects, by first-hand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information" (Tilden, 1967, p.8). Interpretation not only transfers information, but also educates audiences formally and informally through provoking personal awareness and perceptions of meanings (Uzzell, 1989). Macdonald (2006) suggested that we should not produce a sacralizing gaze but a calculated gaze that intentionally neglects, trivializes, and documents the unwanted past. Hence, interpretation is not inextricably chained to an absolute reality but shifting, negotiated and partial (Norton, 1996).

Previous research on interpretation focuses on several themes. The first is message encoding and transmission. A series of relevant questions are asked, such as

who is doing the encoding? How is the past encoded and framed? What feelings and knowledge are produced? (Carvalho & Burgess, 2005; Chronis, 2005; Curtin & Gaither, 2005; Knudsen, 2010; McLean, 1998). Second is communication competency. Several characteristics of effective communication and interpretation have been identified, such as approachability, attentiveness, language adaptability, assertiveness, related for visitors, being well organized, and having a theme (Leclerc, 1999; Moscardo, 1999; Tilden, 1967). Third is presentation methods, including providing sensual, tactile, and aesthetic performance (Chronis, 2005), making personal linkages with the past (Chronis, 2005; Li & Hu, 2008), and emphasizing us and the Other (Norton, 1996). Fourth is factors that influence interpretation. Tour guides' interpretation is determined by both external and internal factors, such as markets, the nature of excursions, the nature of the group, the wishes of employers, tour guides' positions, and stylistic and personality variations (Carvalho & Burgess, 2005; Gelbman & Maoz, 2011; Hu, 2007; Salazar, 2007). Fifth is representation techniques. With the growth of the experience economy, heritage representation techniques have been gradually updated and become more and more hedonic and experiential-oriented, transforming from printed materials, such as banners and brochures, to more experiential and interactive media, such as videos, audio, recordings, role play games and so forth. While communist heritage and socialist revolutionary ideologies are primarily interpreted and disseminated by official authorities and their cultural brokers, the folk version of stories about the communist past cannot be neglected. The vernacular interpretation usually applies myths, legends, and rituals, indicating a level of ideological uncertainty and confusion (Rioux, 2008). This study

views interpretation as a dynamic system and explores how both state and local governments make the story, tour guides tell the story, and tourists consume and perceive the story.

1.2.7 A New Perspective on Cultural Studies

The approach of most previous tourism research is rooted in the Frankfurt School and neo-Marxism where the former emphasizes the logical and rationality of commodity, with the latter conceptualizing tourism as a cultural industry based on the commercial and institutionalized production system (Britton, 1991). Yet tourism is not simply a commercial product; rather, it is a cultural, social, political and economic arena where complex negotiations, ideological controls, and contestations are produced and intimately intertwined. Therefore, integrating tourism in the wider structures of economy and society can better reveal "its roles in capitalist accumulation, its economic dynamics, and its role in creating the materiality and social meanings of places" (Britton, 1991, p.452). The perspective of cultural studies can help to mirror and express the social and institutional relations, values, meanings, and powers of communist heritage (du Gay, Hall, Janes, Mackay, & Negus, 1997). Culture used to be regarded as only "superstructure", depending on, and reflecting the primary status of, the material base and thus unlikely to provide valid and real knowledge (du Gay et al., 1997). Yet in recent years, culture became a research hotspot and is considered constitutive of the social world as economic or political processes. Social meaning is central to cultural studies, a necessary precondition for functioning social practices. Most research questions relevant to this

topic include how the meanings are produced, shared, contested, and can reflect the play of power and the resistance to power (du Gay et al. 1997). Current research places much more weight on the mechanisms by which meanings are produced and circulated (du Gay et al. 1997).

Tourism involves ideas and beliefs negotiated and redefined by social actors and fulfils certain social and cultural needs (Squire, 1994). Cultural studies approaches tourism from a comprehensive perspective focusing on wider cultural and social structures. Thus, it can offer a useful way to conceptualize and contextualize tourism and tourist experiences. One such holistic conceptualization is the circuit of culture model, which is rooted in a Marxist conception of the circuit of capitalism and later reconstructed by Johnson in the 1980s (Figure 1.1). A key point of this model is that the cultural process consists of a complex and interdependent set of distinct, but not discrete, moments and thus views social meaning making in a more integrated way (Johnson, 1986). Based upon relationships between producers and consumers of cultural forms, this model summarizes the four processes of cultural transformation theoretically: production, text, readings, lived cultures and social relations.

First, production entails the logistical constraints surrounding formation of representations as well as how they come to be ideologically informed (Curtin & Gaither, 2005). Producers encode their products with meanings and disseminate the message to their target markets (Hall, 1980). The process of culture production can be influenced by internal organizational culture and structure, globalization, social relations, power,

religion, gender, and ethnicity (du Gay et al., 1997; Graham, Ashworth, & Tunbridge, 2000; McLean, 1998; Pritchard & Morgan, 2001). Second is *readings/consumption*. In the service industries, the process of production cannot be fully realized until the moment of consumption (du Gay et al., 1997), yet these two processes do not exist in binary opposition. Instead, they are combined to form discourses of complex meanings (Taylor, Demont-Heinrich, Broadfoot, Dodge, & Jian, 2002). Thus, consumption itself becomes a form of production of social meanings (Mackay, 1997). Producers need to continuously gauge and interpret changes in meanings as products are consumed. Third is *text*. Human geographers have broadened the scope of texts, which include visual/audio materials, landscapes, and institutional structures (Aitken, 1997; Barnes & Duncan, 1992), such as newspaper, tour guidebooks, websites, morphological characteristics, and underlying meanings of landscape. Texts are initially written by producers and then interpreted differently by readers who assign their own meanings to them (Chronis, 2005). The transformed meanings of the text enter into an existing cultural reservoir of discourses and function as raw materials for future production. Texts function as a carrier to spread the message, and the final research goal is not the text itself but the social life of subjective forms at each moment of their circulation (Johnson, 1986). Fourth is *lived culture and social relations* where transformed meanings of the text enter the existing cultural reservoir of discourses and then become raw materials for fresh production. For example, Squire (1994) found that through tourism, Beatrix Potter, an English author, became part of a wider symbolic system and correspondingly, textual meanings were modified and integrated into local cultures.

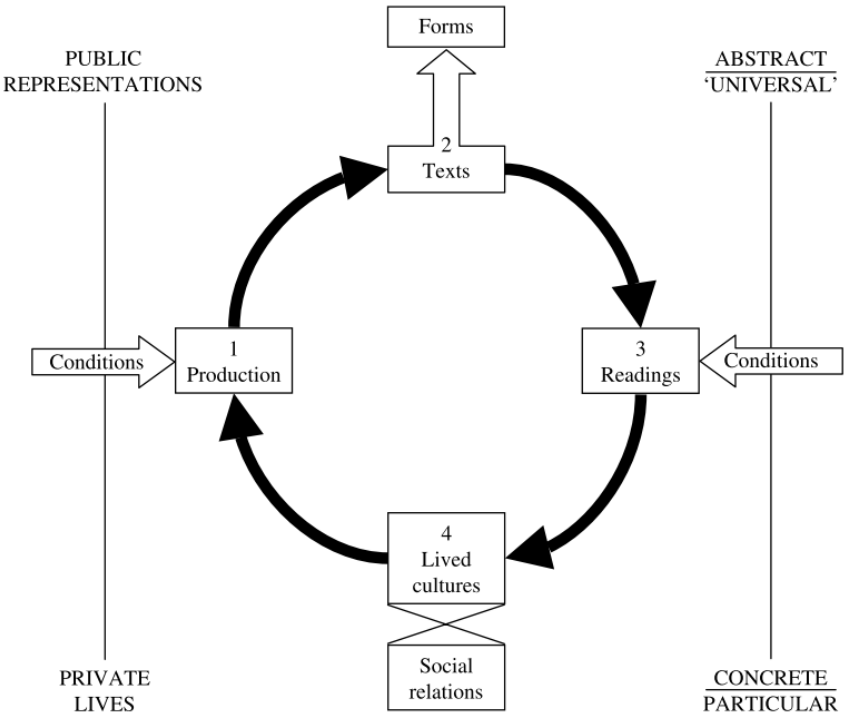


Figure 1.1 The Circuit of Culture (Johnson, 1986)

The circuit of culture model has been applied widely in different fields to understand meaning-making processes. Carvalho and Burgess (2005) adopted this model to analyze the media construction of risk through time. Yet the authors argued that in its original formulation, the circuit of culture is not able to address issues of reflexivity and that political and economic contexts, scientific knowledge claims, and popular understanding of environmental risks change over time. Therefore, they developed a diachronic model of circuit of culture to improve the power of explanation. Curtin and Gaither (2005) applied the circuit of culture to develop public relations theory, wherein public relations practitioners serve as cultural intermediaries to form information at the juncture of production and consumption within the context of the wider cultural economy.

The first piece of work to apply the circuit of culture in tourism was Squire's (1994) article, *Cultural Values of Literary Tourism*, which considered tourism a social construct and applied this model to assess how meanings of Beatrix Potter inspired tourism as a form of cultural communication in England and how shopping and souvenir purchases contributed to perpetuating and redefining the value system. The results revealed that Beatrix Potter is not only an author illustrator, she has been transformed into a commercial product and understandable in economic terms. Norton (1996) used this model to explore the reproduction of environmental discourse and discussed the encoding and decoding strategies employed by tourism marketing managers and tourists for place construction and negotiation. Chronis (2005) proposed a co-construction model of culture to illustrate the way in which a text is co-constructed by both marketers and consumers through negotiation and embodied performance. Different from the original model, which assumes the initial production is launched by a single producer, this model considers a simultaneous interaction of producers and consumers at the marketplace (Chronis, 2005).

After slightly adapting the circuit of culture model, this study develops the circuit of red heritage and tourism model by adding a new process of transmission (Figure 1.2). The reason is that intermediaries play such a pivotal role in red tourism that ideological meanings are always transmitted and interpreted by them, such as tour guides and museum docents. Four major meaning-making processes in the circuit of red heritage and tourism are identified: professional, personal, social, and institutional practices. First, as story makers, both state and local governments select and articulate specific meanings,

professionalize and control tour guides, and encourage uniformity and standardization of the narratives to promote consensus approaches to history and to deal with conflicts and social differences (Dahles, 2002). Second, rather than being passive and gullible sponges who readily absorb the intended readings of marketing/ideological texts (Norton, 1996), tourists perceive and experience the content and way that red heritage is selected, glossed, and interpreted by both the government and tour guides and then reconstruct their own underlying meanings (personal meaning-making practices). Next, individuals' subjective perceptions and experiential reflections enter into the existing cultural reservoir of discourses (social meaning-making process), in this case, primarily referring to red spirit, collective nationalism, and national ethos. Finally, the updated reservoir of discourse in turn influences the official policy formulation and implementation (institutional-making process).

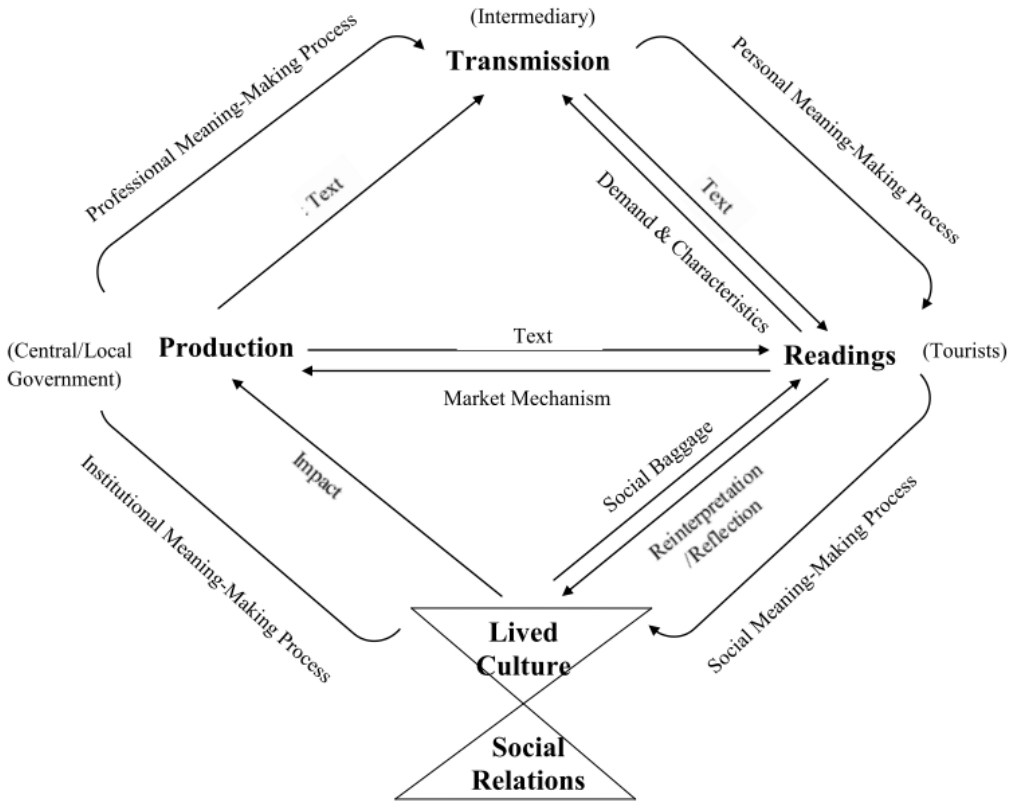


Figure 1.2 An Adapted Model: The Circuit of Red Heritage and Tourism

Interplays among the four entities are also represented in the model. For example, except a one-way ideological transmission from government and tour guides to tourists, the demand and characteristics of tourists can also conversely influence the content and style of tour guides' interpretations and the official heritage narratives. For example, due to market-driven trends, producers began to adopt "experiential views" to redesign the red tourism product and make it more interactive, experiential and entertaining. In China, tourist can rent or buy a Chinese Red Army uniform and hike the bumpy trail in Jing Gang Mountain, which was used by Comrade Mao Zedong and Comrade Zhu De to carry food on their shoulders. Experiencing the then harsh living conditions is much more persuasive and effective than textual or oral interpretations. Another example is that

tourists can eat red food in local restaurants, such as coarse sweet potato porridge and wild potherb or leaf soup, to experience how red soldiers relied on their strong will to cope with many difficulties and finally defeated the enemy and achieved the revolutionary victory under extremely tough circumstances. In addition, the existing social reservoir contributes to constructing people's social baggage, which then helps to shape audiences' preferences and heritage values.

This study examines governments, intermediaries, and tourists as examples to analyze how political, social, and economic meanings circulate at the three stages of production, transmission, and consumption. Although social relations and lived culture are not considered in this study, due to the length of the research, it merits future scrutiny to investigate how the meanings at the individual level can contribute to the formation of social meanings and how the reservoirs of discourses and meanings in turn function as raw materials for fresh cultural and heritage production. The following part discusses previous relevant research and research gaps of these three entities/stakeholders.

1.3 Relevant Research and Research Gaps of the Three Stakeholder Groups

1.3.1 Government

In previous research, the roles of government in red tourism have been identified as explorer, coordinator, marketer, educator, investor, and regulator (Hu, 2010; Li, Hu, & Zhang, 2010). More detailed responsibilities include facilitating policymaking, formulating planning to guide industry practices, providing training programs and

organizing interpreter competitions, just to name a few. In terms of meaning-making, a great deal of research has been done with regard to how the state constructs nationalistic discourse to fulfill ideally-designated missions of political legitimacy, social unity, and cultural coherence through analyzing the texts and iconography of tourism marketing, brochures, photographs, and souvenirs (Jenkins, 2003; Norton, 1996; Otto, 2008; Prichard & Morgan, 2001), yet inadequate attention has been paid to the potential mismatch between production and consumption. Such a mismatch indicates that values, memories, traditions, and myths are not universally accepted and recognized and even contradict with the official doctrine, and thus presents a crucial challenge to the state. This study not only considers how the state constructs, controls, and transmits ideological meanings in red tourism, but also how effectively such a political mission has been implemented by exploring tourists' perception and understanding. Besides, most relevant research is conducted at the national level, namely the state involvement in red heritage tourism as aforementioned. Little effort has been made to look at how local government, as the front-line player of red tourism, the go-between of the central government and folk force who bears the responsibility of mediation and negotiation, implements the lofty goals set up by the central government. This is another research gap this dissertation aims to fill.

1.3.2 Tour Guides

Various roles of tour guides have been identified and classified since the early 1980s when Holloway (1981) approached this research topic from the sociological point

of view. The multiple roles of tour guides include pathfinder, interpreter, educator, gatekeeper, motivator, group leader, animator, and facilitator (Cohen, 1985; Gelbman & Maoz, 2012; Gurung, Simmons, & Devlin, 1996; Pearce, 1984; Poudel, Nyaupane, & Timothy, 2013; Weiler & Davis, 1993).

Researchers categorize these roles on the basis of different perspectives. For example, Cohen (1985) used a two-dimensional leadership-mediatory sphere and outer-and-inner direction to classify the roles of tour guides as instrumental, social, interactionary, and communicative. From the angle of stakeholders, Hu (2007) summarized the functions of tour guides as experience management (focus on tourists), resources management (focus on destination places), and local economic promotion (focus on local communities). A new emerging research perspective in recent years is the politics of interpretation since researchers realized that only defining tour guides as mediators of local culture fails to capture the political component of guiding (Dahles, 2002). Relevant studies have investigated power relationships, ideological manipulation and transmission, and tour guides' position strategy (Dahles, 2002; Knudsen, 2010; Salazar, 2007; Li, Hu, & Zhang, 2010).

Despite a considerable amount of research of the roles of tour guides, less attention has been given to the dynamics of roles and interpretation variations. Cohen (1985) discussed the dynamics of role transformation conceptually regarding how the roles shifted among the quadrants from original to professional, from leadership to mediating, and from an outer-directed to an inner-directed sphere. Yet empirical studies

of understanding the underlying factors that can shape the dynamics of intermediary' roles and interpretations, rather than classifying them into static categories discretely, are lacking.

1.3.3 Tourists

The tourist has been the object of scholarly attention in heritage tourism for decades. Previous research has found that heritage tourists usually tend to be middle-aged, married with older children, highly educated, employed full-time, and in the higher income and higher social-class category (Craik, 1997; Herbert, 2001; Light & Prentice, 1994; Prentice, 1993; Urry, 1994). People are motivated to visit heritage sites for diverse reasons, from entertainment to education and learning (Jansen-Verbeke & Van Rekom, 1996; Prentice, 1993). Subjective experiences and perceptions of tourists have also been explored, such as satisfaction (Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Hu, 2010; Pizam, Uriely, & Reichel, 2000; Westbrook & Oliver, 1991), nostalgia (Li & Hu, 2008; Hu, 2010; Knudsen, 2010; Young & Kaczmarek, 2008), and perceptions of authenticity (Chhabra, Healy, & Sills, 2003; Timothy, 2007; McIntosh & Prentice, 1999).

Causal relationships between variables have been explored, reflecting a substantial North American tradition in tourism and recreation studies (Hu, 2010). Despite a massive body of research about heritage tourists, inadequate attention has been paid to how individuals are impacted by tourism and remake the symbolic meanings sold to them. In fact, regarding the interrelationships between tourism, culture, and society, the research focus is nearly always on producers rather than consumers, and

conceptual/descriptive rather than empirical, thus failing to account for the polysematic and inter-textual decoding of tourist places (Cohen, 1988). Given that the nationalistic movement has entered a new phase where both "top-down" and "bottom-up" official ideology dissemination are emphasized, there is an urgent need to understand how individuals decode the symbolic meanings as tourists themselves should be the ultimate power that will decide on what to experience and what feelings to be derived from that experience (Jamal & Hill, 2002).

1.4 Conclusion

Despite the fast-growing market, whether or not red tourism has contributed to establishing the "red spirit" and how red heritage and the underlying ideological meanings circulate within (re)production-transmission-(re)consumption dialogues have not been studied empirically. From a holistic point of view regarding the circuit of red heritage and tourism, this dissertation aims to answer the research question from the perspectives of both meso and micro-level governments, intermediaries, and tourists, and explores how red stories are made, told, and consumed and perceived in the context of tourism. The research will have important political and managerial implications for governments at various levels, local communities involved in communist tourism, and tourism business towards ideological construction, development strategies and red product design. A detailed research design is provided in Chapter 2.

Chapter 2

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

2.1 Research Objectives and the Analytical Framework

From a holistic perspective, this study is designed to investigate the exploitation of communist heritage as a strategic mechanism for developing red tourism in China. To meet the research goal, relevant research objectives of the three entities, namely, government, intermediary, and tourist, are proposed as follows.

Research Objective 1: Government (Construction & Development)

The government plays multiple roles in red tourism development. This study examines its roles in meaning construction, that is, how government (re)constructs political, social, and economic discourses embedded in communist heritage and develops red tourism at various levels. Interviews and focus groups with government officials at prefectural, township, and village levels, and analyses of tourism policy/planning documents, are conducted to explore the underlying ideology and driving forces of red tourism. In addition, the major roles that governments play in China's red tourism development are mapped along the political hierarchy from the perspectives of *power* and *guanxi*, two decisive social concepts in China. While the major government roles are identified from both top-down and bottom-up directions, the underlying factors that can shape these roles and the associated issues are also discussed. Through the comparisons between higher and lower-level governments, the research provides insights into how the

lofty and intangible goal is implemented into practice at the local level and whether there are some variations in this top-down meaning-construction process.

Research Objective 2: Intermediary (Interpretation & Variation)

As a key front-line player who bridges the visitor and the visited, intermediaries assume many responsibilities and roles expected and assigned by various masters. Particularly, in the context of communist heritage tourism, the middleman shoulders the responsibility of ideological reinforcement and transformation assigned by the Chinese government, which has been investing enormously into the project of red tourism to achieve its political, social, and economic ends. Yet just as any other professions, intermediaries are non-altruistic individuals who have their own agenda and attempt to maximize personal benefits. Anchoring tour guiding and interpreting practices in a larger political, social, and economic context, this dissertation conducts comparisons between *tour guides* and *site interpreters*, two major types of intermediaries in a red destination in China, with regard to interpretation ways and the underlying factors that shape the similarities and differences in the conduct of guiding and interpreting.

Research Objective 3: Tourist (Consumption & Perception)

Since China is stepping onto a new stage of nationalism where tourists are creative individuals who use images and messages to construct their own understanding and reflection of communist heritage (Hu, 2010; Norton, 1996), merely looking at how the government's use of communist heritage as an instrument for spreading ideological

propaganda is inadequate to evaluate the effectiveness of this national campaign. Therefore, it is necessary to hear consumers' voices and understand their roles in the construction of ideology. The social situation analysis framework is applied to deconstruct the social situations on red trips into seven components: goal, rule, role, sequences, language, cognitive structure, and environmental settings. Next, how Chinese domestic tourists perceive each component related to red heritage and their travel experiences are examined. A questionnaire was developed based on the qualitative results to explore patterns of how tourists consume and perceive red heritage.

More specifically, the analytical framework, which includes research objectives, methods, and focuses of this study, is presented in Table 2.1 to illustrate how the research was conducted. The following section gives a brief explanation of the respective research methods that are utilized in this study. Each subsequent chapter provides a more detailed account of the methods used to acquire and analyze data for each research objective.

Table 2.1 The Analytic Framework of the Circuit of Red Heritage and Tourism in China

	State and Local Government	Intermediary	Tourist
Objectives	Construction & Development	Interpretation & Variation	Consumption & Perception
Methods	Interviews, focus groups, and document analysis	Observations, interviews, and focus groups	Observations, interviews, focus groups, and surveys
Focuses	●The goals of red tourism development ●The developmental model and progress ●Government's roles	● Interpretation (content & approach) ● Tourist-intermediary interaction	● Components of social situations: goal, rule, role, sequences, language, cognitive structure, and environmental setting

in red tourism development at both meso and micro levels	● Influencing factors of interpretation and interaction	● Qualitative research ● Quantitative research (cluster/factor/Chi-square analysis, MANOVA)

2.2 Research Method

2.2.1 Observation and Interview

2.2.1.1 Participant and Non-Participant Observation

Participant observation has been used in sociology and anthropology for a long time to provide rich and detailed contextual information, and is commonly employed in tourism studies related to tour guides or guided tours (Beeftink, 2011; Dahles, 2002; Delamont, 2004; Holloway, 1981). Lofland and Lofland (2005) listed several elements of social life that are appropriate to observe, including practices (various kinds of behaviors), encounters (interactions among people), and roles (the positions people occupy and the behavior associated with those positions). Observations in this study include two perspectives. First, the interpretation of intermediaries, how tour guides and site interpreters introduce heritage objects and interact with tourists with respect to selection of heritage objects, choice of words, expressions, comments, jokes, remarks, and speech rhetoric are examined. Second is tourist experiences. Going to social situations and observing them as completely as possible can offer better triangulation with the survey method and thus generate a more holistic picture of tourists' behavior and attitude. The author observed the components of social situations as much as possible, including tourists' activities, which can reflect on their motivation. The author joined two group

tours to observe the aforementioned content during fieldwork. Considering financial and temporal limitations, and to generate richer data, non-participant observations were also conducted onsite where the author acted as a complete observer without participating.

2.2.1.2 Interviews

As a way to co-create meanings with interviewees by reconstructing perceptions of events and experiences, interviews are among the most familiar strategies for collecting qualitative data (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). This dissertation attempts to understand the dynamics of red tourism from an emic perspective. Interviews were conducted with government officials, local residents, tour guides, site interpreters, and tourists. Both individual in-depth interviews and focus groups were conducted, allowing the author to delve deeply into social and personal matters, as well as to understand a wider range of experiences. Interviews were terminated when theoretical saturation point was reached (Creswell & Clark, 2007).

Diverse disciplinary perspectives have resulted in a wide variation among interviewing approaches, such as structured and semi-structured interviews (Britten, 1995). A semi-structured approach was used for this study, as the author aimed to maintain flexibility to tailor the interview to each participant. The detailed process of participant selection and specific interview questions are discussed in the subsequent chapters.

2.2.2 Content Analysis

Content analysis is often used as a qualitative research method for compressing a massive body of text into fewer content categories systematically and objectively based on explicit rules of coding, and thus helps to make valid inferences from a text (Berelson, 1952; Stemler, 2001; Weber, 1990). Content analysis has been widely applied in social science research, especially in the field of communication studies, for a long time. A few notable examples extracted from Berelson's (1952) work include disclosing international differences in communication content, determining the psychological state of persons or groups, detecting the existence of propaganda, describing attitudinal and behavioral responses to communications, reflecting cultural patterns of groups, institutions, or societies, and just to name a few.

Content analysis in this research consisted of two levels: text and context. At the textual level, the research focused on morphological characteristics, structural organizations of texts, actors, linguistic and rhetorical issues, discursive strategies, and ideological standpoints (Carvalho & Burgess, 2005). At the contextual level, a series of analyses of cultural, political, and tourism policies and important events were conducted to generate an overview of the macro environment of red tourism.

2.2.3 Survey

The questionnaire in this study was developed based on the results of qualitative interviews with tourists, as there is little empirical research of tourists' experiences in the

context of red tourism. Despite the fact that some components, such as goal/motivation and perceptions, have been investigated in previous studies (e.g. Hu, 2010), the remaining variables have not been explored adequately. The combination of both qualitative and quantitative techniques may assist in relating theoretical questions of tourism as cultural communication to empirical contexts (Squire, 1994). This theoretical triangulation allows us to formulate relevant questions and discover "what were truly concerns to a particular population" (Kutner, Steiner, Corbett, Jahnigen, & Barton, 1999, p.1350).

2.3 Study Site

Fieldwork for this study took place from September 2012 to December 2012 in Gutian, Fujian Province, China (Figure 2.1). Gutian is a small town of 227 square kilometers and includes 21 administrative villages, among which six are located in or near the central area of the town (tourism area). Due to the temporal and financial limitation, this study only includes the tourism zone. The six villages were not studied individually, instead, they were roughly divided into two types: those that have benefited significantly from tourism and those that have been essentially left out.

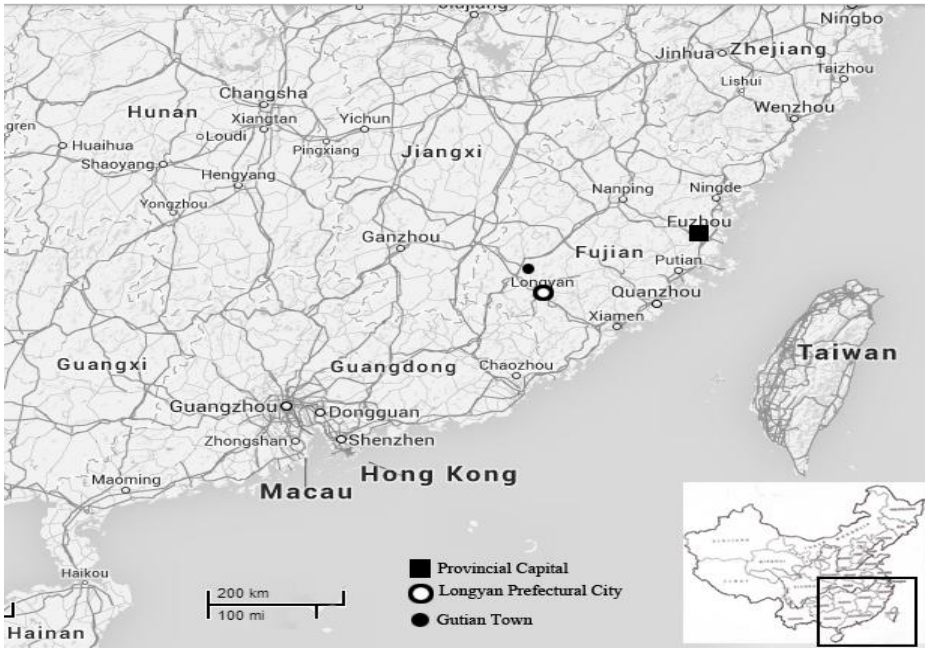


Figure 2.1 Gutian Town, Fujian Province, China

It is famous as the site of the 1929 Gutian Conference, the ninth meeting of the CCP, where many crucial decisions that had far-reaching influences on enlarging and strengthening the CCP and the Red Army were made. These included the affirmation of Mao Zedong's leadership of the Fourth Red Army, the correction of mistaken ideas in the party since the 1927 Nanchang Uprising, and the plan for the strategy of "encircling the cities from the countryside and finally seizing national political power". Therefore, Gutian is regarded as a revolutionary "holy land" decorated with the mantra "the revolutionary victory started in Gutian."

With the launch of reformist and open-door policies in 1978, new businesses began to flourish in Gutian in the 1980s. The most prominent was the cement industry, making Gutian the first town of the old revolutionary bases to reach a RMB 100 million

(US$ 16.4 million) GDP in the early 1990s (Zhu, 2011). However, a slump occurred in the mid-to-late 1990s because of the government's strict regulation of industrial pollution. The year 2004 was a turning point for Gutian's shrinking economy in that the strategic plan of the cross-strait economic exchange with Taiwan was proposed by the Fujian Provincial People's Government and later approved by the central government. Gutian benefits from this initiative, attracting investment from Taiwan in the eco-agriculture sector because of its favorable climate, ecological conditions, and proximity to Taiwan.

Aside from flourishing eco-agriculture, tourism began to boom in recent years, reflected by various titles Gutian has received, such as *the National 4A-Rated Tourist Destination*, *the National Classic Red Tourism Destination*, and *the National Famous Historical and Cultural Town*. In addition to the 1929 Gutian Conference site, the city possesses other revolutionary heritage resources, including the Memorial Museum of the Gutian Conference, Xiecheng Dian where Mao Zedong wrote one of his magnum opuses, "*a single spark can start a prairie fire*", the site of the Former Special Committee of the CCP in western Fujian Province, the site of the Former Military Headquarters and the General Political Department of the Fourth Red Army.

The rapid progress of tourism in Gutian is not only attributed to its rich communist heritage, and natural and cultural resources, but also because of visits by national leaders, which have drawn enormous nationwide attention to this small town. Some of the most important ones include former President Jiang Zemin's visits in 1989, and former President Hu Jintao's visit in 2010. An unprecedented increase in the number

of tourists has occurred since President Hu's visit. Official statistics show that in 2008, the number of tourists reached 0.73 million and tourist receipts were RMB 180 million (US$ 29.5 million). In 2010, the period from January to April alone witnessed tremendous growth in tourist arrivals—0.31 million visits, an increase of 115% on a quarterly basis (Longyan City Tourism Bureau, 2011).

Several tourism and development plans were completed successively by governments at the provincial, prefectural, county, and township levels. Policies were made to ensure local tourism development, with regard to exploiting resources, attracting investment, and optimizing administrative systems. All plans emphasized the concept of '*big red tourism'*, that is, combining red and green (red and nature-based tourism), red and folk (red and folk cultural tourism), and red and historic (red and heritage tourism).

The interface of government-led tourism development, marketization, and pluralistic development under the umbrella of big red tourism, provides an interesting research context to study the underlying political, economic, social, and cultural dynamics embedded in red tourism development and its circulations among the processes of production, transmission, and consumption.

Chapter 3

STORY CONSTRUCTION AND RED TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

In this chapter, in-depth insights are provided to understand the story-making, the first stage of the circuit of red heritage and tourism model, where the governments select and articulate ideological discourses, professionalize and control tour guides, and encourage uniform and standardized narratives of communist heritage. The aim of this chapter is to explore how governments at various levels get involved in red tourism development through constructing red stories and developing red tourism. Specific attention is paid to the developmental model and progress of red tourism, and the roles and goals of meso and micro-level governments. It is expected that this study can add to current research on political dimensions of tourism.

3.1 Introduction

Despite the importance and universality of heritage politicization via tourism, this is insufficiently charted territory from a research perspective. There is an increasing number of relevant studies in recent years, yet the political dimensions of tourism and heritage are still incidental to economic, social, or environmental considerations (Hall, 1994). On the other hand, traditional research on politics tends to neglect the important role of tourism in today's modern society in that tourism has not been widely accepted as a serious research field (Hall, 1994). One reason is that decision makers are unwilling to acknowledge the political nature of tourism and thus official interest in conducting research into the politics of tourism is meager (Jafari & Ritchie, 1981), although it is

beginning to grow (Timothy, 2007). This chapter contends that without in-depth analyses of tourism politics, the dynamics of tourism development and related impacts cannot be well understood and the science of tourism will remain incomplete. Political dimensions of tourism research, as previous research indicated, lies in the aspects of power, government roles, tourism policies, the political economy, and the ideological nature of tourism (Cheong & Miller, 2000; Hall, 1994; Matthews & Richter, 1991).

At the core of tourism politics is power, that is, who gets what, where, how, and why (Elliott, 1987). Choosing a particular development objective represents selecting a set of vested interests and values, which are the outcomes of the political wrestling process where multiple stakeholders struggle for power (Cox & Mair, 1988). Since power governs the interactions of individuals, organizations, and agencies, it is a vital construct for studying decision making and the implementation process of tourism development. In the Chinese context, the central government possesses the most predominant power to formulate red tourism policy and forge its practices nationwide.

To achieve the intangible official goals set by the central government, administrative actions need to be taken by subordinate/regional governments. To understand how the lofty goals of red tourism are realized from policy to practice along the political pyramid structure, a closer look at how government is involved in constructing tourism discourses and developing red tourism at various levels is needed.

3.2 Literature review

3.2.1 Government Involvement in Tourism

Although there are variations in the degrees and ways of government involvement among different countries, the necessity of its involvement in tourism is widely recognized. First, due to the commercial attribute of the private sector, conflicts exist between short-term benefits and long-term objectives (Jenkins & Henry, 1982). For example, while many individuals or small tourism businesses may focus on how to benefit from tourism financially, they may not necessarily agree that it is their responsibilities to concern and cope with what is happening overall to the local environment (Bramwell & Alletorp, 2001; Middleton & Hawkins, 1998). The tendency of tourism to overproduce external costs and underproduce external benefits, sometimes obliges the government to take responsibility for controlling and monitoring the scope and pace of tourism development (Bramwell & Alletorp, 2001). In addition, tourism is a highly fragmented sector of political, economic and social facets, where various organizations get involved and issues and conflicts emerge and intertwine with each other (Qin, Wall, & Liu, 2011). As the administrative entity with the legislative power and mandates to represent the broader interests of society, governments have the legitimacy and capacity to facilitate and coordinate multiple stakeholders to minimize negative impacts and lay the groundwork and enable macro-environmental conditions for development (Bramwell, 2011; Ruhanen, 2013).

In developed countries, governments are prone to take on the policing role and acts less as adviser and consultant, it is individuals and/or corporations that are most accountable for environmental and cultural concerns about tourism development through industry self-regulation. A few policy instruments include financial incentives, education, persuasion, rating scheme, and regulations to prohibit or require certain courses of action (Bramwell & Alletorp, 2001). In developing countries, however, the private sector is always regarded as small-size, economic-orientated, immature, and inexperienced (Qin et al., 2011). As a result, government usually takes the leading role as entrepreneur or development broker to initiate 'pioneer' activities, and make and implement tourism master plans.

Despite widespread agreement that the absence of a central authority in the tourism sector will lead to misdirection, and a lack of coordination and cohesion, government involvement has been criticized for its red-tape regulations, inefficiency, mismanagement, financial inabilities, and backward-looking strategic views (Akama, 2002; Dredge, 2001). Consequently, it is contended that governments should veer away from direct participation and focus on providing an enabling environment for the private sector to thrive (Javier & Elazigue, 2011). In practice, tourism's success is nearly always a mix of government involvement and private operations. Although the general trend is featured by less government intervention and more industry self-regulation where the public-domain functions are gradually handed over to the private sector, the author argues that it is difficult, if not impossible, for the Chinese government to largely disengage from red tourism development since this form of tourism is not merely economic, social, and

cultural activities, but most importantly a political project per se, where the ideological reinforcement and value socialization are top priority. Thus the transformation from hierarchical control to decentralization can hardly happen in the Chinese context.

3.2.2 The Roles of Government in Tourism Development

Governments at all levels, be they local or national, have policies for tourism and get involved in tourism development in certain ways and to a certain extent. Since such involvement is amorphous and can permeate many aspects of society, ranging from deliberate legislative provision to benign neglect (Choy, 1992; Elliott, 1987; Jenkins & Henry, 1982), this study attempts to explore the tip of the iceberg by exploring the major roles that government plays in red tourism development.

The roles of government in tourism have been studied in both developed and less-developed countries for more than three decades. Its initial role(s) is described as infrastructure and facility provider who serves "roads, rates, and rubbish" (Ruhanen, 2013). Gradually governments take the lead and adopt the role of entrepreneur, such as in formulating policy frameworks, developing and initiating plans, and operating and providing tourism and hospitality services. In Western societies, since the late 1970s, the functions that once were performed by governments have been largely privatized and commercialized to reduce public debt and encourage competition (Davis, Wanna, Warhurst, &Weller, 1988; Hall, 1999).

Accordingly, power and resources are transferred to the private sector, with public organizations diminishing their planning, policy, and development roles while increasing their marketing, promotion, partnership, and networking duties. There is an increasing awareness among professionals, however, that marketing without product can be a contradiction. As a result, while some have entered the supply side, others hold back (Getz, Andersen, & Sheehan, 1998). In addition, the roles of national or regional tourism organizations sometimes may conflict with each other. For instance, as a marketer, a tourism organization would promote the industry; as a regulator, on the other hand, its roles include restricting and even punishing members of the industry (Choy, 1993). Therefore, even within developed countries, the general roles of government and the extent of involvement vary considerably. By the same token, although governments in developing countries usually assume the developmental and operational roles in general, there is no consensus regarding their concrete roles and the associated ways and degrees of their involvement, not only between countries, but also within a country, given the differences in a government's hierarchies, and the varying economic, social and political importance of tourism in local development.

Scholarly work on the roles of government and public institutions have been done at various scales, ranging from prefectural, provincial, national, and international levels. While most of this research deals with tourism in general, some draws attention to specific types of tourism, such as sport tourism (Hinch & Higham, 2011), sustainable tourism (Bramwell & Alletorp, 2001; Ruhanen, 2013), heritage tourism (Qin et al., 2011), and specifically red tourism (Hu, 2010; Li et al., 2010). Many studies conducted

longitudinal comparisons by depicting the historic trajectory of government roles in a certain period of time corresponding to different developmental stages. For example, based on a case study of Australia, Hall (1999) described the changing roles of government from a public administrative model to a corporatist one by reducing its participation in planning, policy and development, enhancing its marketing and promotion functions, and engaging in a greater range of partnerships, network and collaborative relationship with stakeholders. Akama (2002) used Kenya as an example to analyze the roles of government in tourism in the Third World along with its economic, social, and political transformations from the 1960s to the 1990s. Horizontal comparisons have been carried out as well. For example, Choy (1993) compared public tourism organizations in five top Asian Pacific destinations (Hawaii, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand and Japan) in organizational status, administrative structure, similarity of activities, and funding expenditure. Most studies consider multiple government roles, whereas relatively few studies concentrate on one or two particular role(s). For instance, Airey and Chong (2010) probed the policy-maker role of the Chinese national government in the progress of tourism development. By exploring the interactions and dynamics of several government departments and agencies during the national policy-making process for China's tourism sector since 1978, an in-depth insight into power structure, and organizational values and interests was provided. Despite the fact that merely describing the roles of government without considering their interrelationships might be problematic as these roles are not mutually exclusive, research into their interactions is still lacking. A few exceptions include Dredge's (2006) work,

which sees the imbalance between the roles of government as the executor of local interests and the state stooge of lower-order governments.

Theory-based analyses are rare. Bramwell and Meyer (2007) and Dredge's (2006) work, which applied network theory to understand government roles from a relational perspective, are exceptions. Several quasi-theoretical frameworks have been used by a few scholars to frame their studies. For instance, Zhang, Chong, and Ap (1999) applied Hall's (1994) four components of tourism policy issues—*demands*, *decision*s, *outputs*, and *impacts*—to identify the Chinese government's role in tourism since 1978.

A review of previous studies shows a noticeable gap in research scale in that most relevant studies are conducted at a macro level. Little effort has been made to look at how micro-level government, as the front-line player of red tourism, the go-between of higher-level governments and folk forces, implements the lofty goals set up by the central government. This is another research lacuna this paper aims to remedy.

3.2.3 The Influencing Factors of Government Involvement

To understand government involvement in tourism, it is necessary to consider the underlying factors that can shape its involvement. Various economic, political, and social factors have been discussed in previous studies, involving the economic significance of tourism (Kunst, 2011); the nature of tourism (Qin et al., 2011); resources, capitals, and capacities (Javier & Elazigue, 2011); and power, ideology, and values (Hall, 1994). Zhang, Chong, and Ap (1999) explored how developmental stages can influence

government involvement by identifying different roles that the Chinese government has played in international tourism during four historical stages in recent decades. These include the period before the open-door policy (prior to 1978), the first period of tourism development with a balance of the political and economic (1978-1985), the second period of tourism development with the economic having dominance over the political (1986-1991), and the period of the socialist market economy (1992-present).

Merely considering the developmental stage, however, is not enough. The underlying driving forces of social development that are embedded in political systems are worthy of deeper analysis. Hall's (1994) model of the tourism policy-making process indicates that values, power arrangements, and institutional arrangements are the three major components of the policy environment that have most significant impacts on actors in the policy arena. The following part discusses the association between *government involvement* and *power*, as well as *guanxi (networking)*, another important factor of social development and communication in the Chinese context.

As power determines the selection and exclusiveness of values and interests, and thus alternatives for tourism development, it can shape the nature and manner of government involvement. For example, Airey and Chong (2010) analyzed the low administrative status of the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) in tourism policy-making from the perspective of power structure. Furthermore, network theory has often been adopted to depict a clearer picture of formal and informal structures of public and private governance (Dredge, 2006; Hall, 1999). In a simplified formal public-private

network, producers require planning and regulatory environments; government is expected to attune to the needs and interests of industry; and community seeks access to policy and decision-making processes. In China, however, the formal network mechanism might be weakened by invisible and informal personal and social interactive network, known as *guanxi*. While *guan* means "gate or barrier" or "to close", *xi* refers to "family or department" or "to tie/connect" (Li, Lai, & Feng, 2007). *Guanxi* can be literally translated as "networking", "relationship", or "connection" of individuals and organizations (Yang & Wang, 2011). It has salient implications for shaping collective actions and social practices in China, especially at the grassroots level (Wang, 2013). Certainly there are many factors that can influence government involvement in tourism. This study adopts only two factors, *power* and *guanxi*, due to the length limits as well as the points of view that *power* is the essence of politics (Hall, 1994), and *guanxi* has been a foundational social mechanism in Chinese society for thousands of years. A brief literature review of power and guanxi is provided below.

3.2.3.1 Power

Power, the ability to carry out one's will and exercise control over others (Dahl, 1961; Gaventa, 1980), has been studied for centuries by various schools from different angles. While the Hobbesian school adopts the centralized paradigm and considers power hegemonically in terms of sovereignty, the Machiavellian view is more decentralized and regards power as a means rather than a resource (Foucault, 1979, 1980; Weber, 1947). These two lines are extended by subsequent researchers respectively. For example,

Weber (1947) inherited the Hobbesian school and integrated it with organizational thinking. In his opinions, the power of bureaucratic systems is the source of mechanization and routinization of human life. Foucault (1979, 1980) somewhat continued the Machiavellian line and argued that power is not position, commodity, prize, or conspiracy, but activation of political technologies. Thus, it is mobile, asymmetrical, and non-egalitarian (Sadan, 2004). Such a quick glimpse of power already reveals that it is a contested concept. This study does not attempt to give a universally accepted definition of power. Instead, to facilitate analyzing how power influences government involvement in the context of tourism development, it is reified with various forms, including public input from local residents, influence upon tourism policy-making processes, capabilities to capture resources, and land/property ownership, to name a few.

Possessors of power can be individuals or organizations/associations (Dahl, 1961), depending on where power comes from (sources of power) and when and where power relations occur (the context of power relation) (Clegg, 1989; Foucault, 1979, 1980). Elliott (1987) contended that formal systems, such as documented roles, do not always reveal actual power relations; power is manifested with the elements of informal systems, such as values, meanings, norms, and authority, and is sustained by specific patterns of resources distribution and competition. This point of view is supported by other scholarly work that accentuates the covert/invisible source of power, such as knowledge, social life and social relationships (Bramwell & Meyer, 2007; Clegg, 1989; Mann, 1986).

Rather than viewing it as a one-way street, Giddens (1982, 1984) proposed the duality of power structure where power is not only created by humans, but in turn, influences and limits them. Gradually power can transcend the boundaries of organizations and locations, and circulate in all domains of the social discourse (Foucault, 1979, 1980). A few frequently discussed topics in studies of power include silent agreement, obedience, and resistance (Clegg, 1989; Gaventa, 1980; Mann, 1986). The associated underlying factors are discussed from the perspectives of indifference, fear, weakness, and costs of resistance (Clegg, 1989; Gaventa, 1980; Mann, 1986).

In tourism studies, power has been explored in the context of actor interactions, power configurations, and network relations (Timothy, 2007a). Traditionally, tourism is considered a two-part social system of interaction between hosts and guests (Smith, 1989), where power flows from tourists to destination residents. As a result of the results of these interactions, tourists are often considered mindless and hedonistic consumers. Cheong and Miller (2000) applied the concept of relational power advocated by the Foucauldian School and challenge that power is not always identified with the tourist, and the exercise of power is not one-sided. Accordingly, they proposed a tripartite system of tourists, locals, and brokers, which can provide an analytical base to examine how power is enacted discursively in tourist spaces among these participants. Opposite the traditional view, tourists are identified as power targets since they land on unfamiliar political and cultural territory and have to adjust to the situation with justifications, behaviors, and gestures (Cheong & Miller, 2000). Based on a case study of the Old Order Amish community in Iowa, USA, Chhabra (2013) extended Cheong and Miller's (2000)

work and identified tourists and hosts as Foucauldian targets, and brokers as power agents. As well, Yang, Wall, and Smith's (2008) work on ethnic tourism development in China found local ethnic minorities are power targets as they have limited control over tourism resources and development, which is not only demonstrated by the fact that their culture and heritage are forcedly transformed into marketable products, but also the power imbalance in administrative involvement between Han (the ethnic majority group in China) and minority officials.

Power in a network/relationship emphasizes not only the role of the individual, but also one's place/position within such a system. Therefore, the roles of different level governments need to be considered in the political hierarchy. This study integrates power and guanxi, two highly correlated constructs that serve as the predominant forces of shaping social practices in China, to explore how they can contribute to forging the interactions among different levels of government and the local community in red tourism development. In this way, power flow can be identified within the subsystem of individual tourism actors/brokers, in this case, the government.

3.2.3.2 Guanxi

Having deep cultural and historical roots in Confucianism, *guanxi* is the predominant social interaction and trade model in Chinese society by which social actors are able to enroll, persuade, or negotiate with other potential participants (Wang, 2013). It is often used as an alternative path to formal bureaucratic processes and procedures, reflecting institutional unreliability and immaturity (Guthrie, 1998; Wang, 2013). As a

result, its practice may conflict with rational-legal systems as it can subvert the bureaucratic hierarchy of the authoritarian state (Yang, 1994). Therefore, the way that guanxi interacts with the rational-legal system and bureaucratic structure is vital in understanding how the political system is changing in the reform era of Chinese society (Guthrie, 1998).

Some correlated concepts of guanxi include *social capital*, *mianzi* (face or external prestige), *lishangwanglai* (reciprocity), *renqing* (indebtedness), and *xinren* (trust) (Yang, 1994; Yang & Wang, 2011). These concepts are intertwined and overlapping with yet distinct from each other as they may carry different degrees of emotional, psychological, and instrumental weight, and function at different scales. For instance, while affection is primarily relevant to the degree of emotion, understanding, and connection, *renqing*, established through the exchange of gifts for events, is about the sense of obligation owed to others. Accordingly, sincerity-based trust is more related to affection, whereas ability-based (or cognitive) trust is more associated with renqing (Chen & Chen, 2004).

These concepts are in no way unique to Chinese society, as social connections are universal in all human societies. Different from Western concept of network, however, Chinese guanxi network is prone to be more personal, affective, dyadic, and particularistic (Chen & Chen, 2004; Wang, 2013). Accordingly, Western social networks focus on network structure and an individual's positions in the network, whereas Chinese research of guanxi emphasize the content and process of dyadic relationships. When

necessary, an individual's interpersonal guanxi can be converted to organizational connections and further facilitate gaining scarce resources and enhancing business performance. In this way, personal guanxi networks can be expanded to every nerve ending of the social body, therefore helping to establish the Chinese gift-giving economic system and guanxi-based governance (Wang, 2013; Yang, 1994; Yang & Wang, 2011).

Guanxi has been classified into a range of types based upon various criteria, such as sources (e.g. family and business ties), purpose and function (e.g. expressive, obligatory, instrumental, and mixed guanxi), scope (e.g. dyadic and networking), and closeness (e.g. family, familiar persons, and strangers) (Hwang, 1987; Jacobs, 1982; Li et al., 2007). Despite the distinctiveness of guanxi types, the commonalities lie in the exchange of materials and feelings. In fact, postnatal guanxi, opposite of the guanxi based on kinship and clan relations, is often cultivated and maintained purposefully. To understand how guanxi is established, Chen and Chen (2004) constructed a guanxi development model with three sequential stages of initiating, building, and using. In the first stage, the goals are identified and guanxi bases are created for the purpose of further development. Following the process of familiarization, personal interactions are intensified to improve the quality of guanxi in terms of building trust, affection, and obligations (Chen & Chen, 2004). Lastly, guanxi partners utilize guanxi to receive and give favors and solve difficult problems. Meanwhile, guanxi quality is reevaluated and adjusted during this dynamic process. Operating principles of each stage include mutual self-disclosure, dynamic reciprocity, and long-term equity. Increasing attention has been given to guanxi in recent years, such as its antecedents (e.g. decision-making uncertainty

and perceived similarity) and consequences (e.g. relationship quality, interdependence, and sales growth) (Lee, Pae, & Wong, 2001; Luo & Chen, 1997; Park & Luo, 2001). Yet the associations between guanxi and tourism have been explored only sparsely in recent years (Geddie, DeFranco, & Geddie, 2002; Lew & Wong, 2004; Li, et al., 2007; Pan & Faulkner, 2002). Based on a comprehensive review of papers on the subjects of guanxi and relationship marketing, Geddie et al. (2002) identified several relevant constructs of marketing in the hospitality industry and found four of them were associated with guanxi (bonding, empathy, reciprocity, and trust). Lew and Wong (2004) discussed the relationship between social capital and overseas Chinese tourism to China from the perspective of guanxi. Pan and Faulkner (2002) examined the role of guanxi in business transactions in the Australian-Chinese tourism sector and proposed crucial factors that influence establishing, developing and maintaining the relationships between Chinese authorized travel agencies and Australian inbound tour operators. Li et al. (2007) used a case study of a tourism village in China to illustrate how guanxi can influence resident involvement in tourism development. Their findings show that while guanxi can function to bring core stakeholders (e.g. government, community, and developer) together, it can also create a "guanxi elite", which allows only a few residents to enter the circle, thereby excluding most community members. Despite increasing efforts to apply guanxi in tourism studies, a notable research gap still exists, as Yang (2001) noted. Current research primarily concerns the pragmatic utility of guanxi rather than its construct building and operationalization and thus appears to be static. This study locates power and guanxi in the political hierarchy and investigates how the interactions of these two

constructs and political systems can contribute to shaping the patterns of government involvement in red tourism.

3.3 Study Method

Guided by the principals of constructivism, an interpretive research design was used to collect qualitative data. Four in-depth, semi-structured interviews and three focus groups were conducted with officials and personnel of village, township and prefectural governments, ranging from 25 minutes to 94 minutes with an average length of 46 minutes. In total, fifteen informants were involved, among which five were from the prefectural government, four were from the township government, four were from Wulong village and Xibei village (type I village), and two were from Rongwu village (type II village) in the tourism area. To map the roles that the micro-level government plays when interacting with local communities, four interviews and five focus groups and semi-focus groups with local residents were conducted to unveil the dynamics of interactions. Four informants operate family inns and/or rural restaurants. Seven do not participate in tourism-related business, and four are government officials. Of the five focus groups, two (semi-focus groups) were informal conversations/interviews guided by the research themes and completed when officials dropped by local villagers' houses. In fact, previous studies have pointed out that these “guided conversations” can be loosely structured to create an informal and relaxed atmosphere and reduce respondents’ wariness, and thus gain a reasonable closeness to ordinary conversations (Bramwell & Meyer, 2007; Hammersley, 1992). This is particularly important in the Chinese context,

where ordinary people are not used to expressing their opinions publicly. The sizes of the five focus groups ranged from two to five participants. The average length of the second group of inquiries was 40 minutes, with the minimum of 7 minutes and a maximum of 80 minutes. The interview questions contain the geographic, demographic, and economic profiles of Gutian; the trajectory and status quo of local tourism development; the major responsibilities of local government; and the meanings of red tourism for the interviewees. Several official work reports and planning documents were content analyzed with a focus of the government's participation and major roles in tourism development. Results of interviews and focus groups were triangulated with that of the document analysis to enhance the research validity since tourism plans may be little more than token documents in many developing countries (Elliott, 1987; Timothy, 1999).

The initial contacts of local government personnel were approached through the author's personal guanxi network. A snowball sampling method was then utilized to recruit more key informants. Although convenience samples were used, there is no reason to believe that they are significantly biased in any way. In fact, due to the dominant influence of guanxi in China and the political sensitivity of Gutian, snowball sampling may provide more reliable information, as guanxi can facilitate developing mutual trust between interviewees and interviewers. Some local officials even gave the interviewer some "kindly suggestion" regarding the research feasibility: "do you want to write about the truth? The truth is very boring...your topic is kind of sensitive... if you want to write it thoroughly, you will confront many political issues... it is hard for you to do it..." (Shi, interview, October 2012; Wang, interview, October 2012).

3.4 Results

3.4.1 Development Impetus and Model

To map the roles of different level governments along the political hierarchy more precisely, it is necessarily to have a closer look at the impetus, models, and stages of red tourism development in Gutian. This is because the developmental dynamics not only contribute to forging the way that governments get involved in the red tourism project, but also how they are influenced by the latter.

One common theme throughout all the interviews and focus groups was President Hu's visit on Chinese New Year 2010, which not only has far-reaching promotional effects, but also serves as the primary impetus for local development. "Since his visit, lots of funds have been literally poured into Gutian" said a local government official, "when compared to Gutian, Caixi (a nearby village) does not necessarily have less political significance... yet Gutian is much more famous because of his visit...every conference is important, isn't it? But because of his visit, it became VERY important..." (Shi, interview, October 2012). This somewhat embodies the notion that the Chinese political system is still largely characterized by a feudal hierarchy, which has deep roots from the Imperial periods (Yu & Wu, 2011). Despite a series of tourism and development plans that cost millions of Chinese yuan, visits by high-rank leaders are unquestionably the most dominant driving force that far outweighs other factors, as "paper documents may look good, yet it depends on whether the leaders want to launch it... it depends on whether leaders attach enough significance to it..." (Wang, interview, September 2012).

The plans usually absorb leaders' suggestions, advice, and more often requirements. For example, leaders' requirement to preserve Gutian's idyllic landscapes is reflected by the construction standard mentioned in several development plans that the style of new buildings must be in harmony with the protected sites. A few measurements include adopting the traditional Hakkasan style of architecture (e.g. pitched roof) and enforcing height limitations (less than 12 meters), to harmonize the buildings with local natural landscapes (Gutian Township People's Government, & Shanghang County Urban-Rural Planning & Development Bureau, 2008). Not only are high-ranked leaders' speeches/opinions see as hard guidelines for local construction, but their visits always propel the construction of infrastructure and facilities and are thus greatly appreciated by local residents. "...Before President Hu's visit, the road was repaved and the highway was built... we really appreciate his visit, spending spring festival with us...otherwise Gutian is just a place where even birds do not stop by and poopoo (a god-forsaken place)" (Lai, interview, September 2012).

While the top-down developmental model is efficient in terms of improving infrastructure, it can also exclude local residents from directly participating in tourism in a consultative manner. Several local residents admitted that they had no idea about current and future projects and plans, and expressed their anxiety about the developmental uncertainty. Yet they belittle themselves as "ordinary people" who do not need to know "the stuff of the higher authority" (Xie, interview, October 2012). This shows these villagers admitting and accepting their powerlessness in terms of a lack of

knowledge and political/social/economic position, consistent with Mann's (1986) and Timothy's (1999) findings about causes of powerlessness.

One way for villagers to alleviate their anxiety is to transfer ownership of their property. This can be demonstrated by land owners' preference for selling their fields rather than leasing available land lots to other farmers, for the ambiguity of land expropriation plans. Not only ordinary residents, even local governors lack power to make and implement the plans of their own town.

One approach for township government to deal with the uncertainty of future development is to restrict (re)construction and even remodeling of residential buildings to decrease the cost of potential land expropriation and house demolition in the near future. Two things can account for the powerlessness of the township government. First, frequent visits by national leaders, on one hand, have brought about "celebrity" endorsements and made Gutian popular overnight. On the other hand, however, it disempowered the township government to some extent. A local government employee used reconstructing the road in front of the Gutian Conference site to illustrate this inferior status. "Neither the township or county government can decide how to rebuild or fix it. Even President Huang (one of the highest officials in Longyan Prefectural Area) cannot give the final verdict...because it is always visited by national leaders. This leader has this suggestion; that leader has that suggestion...that is why even President Huang cannot decide...we need to listen to the greatest leader. Who is the greatest one? The

(national) president. But President Hu has just visited Gutian, and who knows when he or the next one will come here again?" (Zhang, interview, September 2012).

Second, Gutian is undergoing large-scale administrative restructuring, which will integrate Gutian into Longyan Prefectural City along with other towns as a new administrative district. Consequently, development plans have been rewritten many times by various government departments and/or public institutions, consuming huge sums of money, human resources, time, and energy. Another prominent example is the process of applying for the title of *National 5A-Rated Tourist Destination*. When the author revisited Gutian for the second time in mid-October, 2012, just two weeks after the first visit, vivid changes near the conference site were obvious: verdant plants were dug out, hiking trail pavers and tarred road surfaces were smashed and removed. Several local governors noted this and commented on the serious issue of repetitive construction and huge waste. Notwithstanding wide recognition of this problem, all plans and government work reports still emphasize the principles of "large-scale, high starting point, and elegance" as the guidelines to "quickly strengthen and expand the brand of red tourism" (Longyan City Tourism Bureau, 2011). Certainly, the scale effect has played a crucial role in China's recent economic rise in the past three decades. Nevertheless, one of the root causes of such large-scale reconstruction may lie in rule of men and/or feudal hierarchy where "leaders launch the political-performance projects to impress their superiors... grassroots-level leaders show it to county-level leaders; county-level leaders show it to city-level leaders; city-level leaders show it to provincial leaders; and finally provincial leaders show it to impress national leaders... this is the political system" (Shi, interview, October

2012). For residential buildings along the main street, special funds are allocated for mandatory facade remodeling with uniform styles. This free project is, however, viewed as "just a face project of the government" in that "merely the external side facing the street is tiled," commented a local inn owner (Lai, interview, September 2012).

While the top-down developmental model is dominant in the process of strategic decision-making, democratic awareness is increasing gradually with regard to business operations at a grassroots level. For example, a villager-driven association of agritainment and tourism in Wulong village was established four years ago with the purpose of achieving the economics of scale. Yet many critical managerial issues, such as the opaque and unpublished accounts, corruption, and little profit sharing, made many members drop out to the point where it was dissolved. Although it did not function well as expected, it still somehow reflects the recent trend of bottom-up development at the community level.

The selection of a developmental model also depends on the degree of political and public attention drawn towards the village. For the places that attract more attention, such as Xibei village and Bajia village, which are located in the central area of the town, Wulong village where President Hu visited, and Laifang village where a new tourist information center will eventually be built, top-down development is most likely to be adopted. On the contrary, for the lesser-known villages, there tends to be a more laissez faire pattern where administrators "force" these villages to adopt community-based development models to show participation in tourism development. In such situations,

village headmen always act as the leaders, entrepreneurs and negotiators who present the developmental ideas to governors to gain their support.

For example, the headman of Rongwu village proposed the idea of "grand migration," according to which all villagers will move to the backside of the hill and demolish their homes to make way for a large-scale shopping mall. A collective investment scheme would be adopted to allow all villagers to benefit from either commerce or real estate. While the creativeness and boldness of this initiative were affirmed by town leaders, the feasibility and the vast efforts required remain major concerns. Interestingly, while some villagers strongly support the headman's proposal, many other villagers do not necessarily favor developmental autonomy and expressed their feeling of unfairness of the inferior status of Rongwu village. "I wish our village can be like Wulong. In fact Wulong village used to be very very poor... no one has expected that it can be like today... I wish we could also have government's guidance, leading, and inclination like it did" (Xie, interview, October 2012).

3.4.2 Developmental Stages

The boundaries of the development stages of Gutian tourism are vague, as it is a hybrid with characteristics of multiple stages depicted in Butler's (1980) destination lifecycle. Strong external driving forces from the higher-up government was the impetus for this rapid development. The fluctuating curve of Gutian's development is associated with visits by national leaders and Chinese Central Television (CCTV)'s Heart-to-Heart Art Troupe for the past two decades. Particularly, as mentioned earlier, former President

Hu's visit in 2010 set off a new upsurge of construction and development, supported by the statistics listed in Chapter 2 (Figure 3.1). A former Wulong village official compared the office building of the village party branch to demonstrate the fast changes within the past three years. "It was too shabby and small to sit and work there...but now it is probably the best one in Fujian Province... it is gardenesque styled with great facilities...there is even an exhibition hall and tourist management center..." (Hua, interview, September 2012). Strong financial and political support from the superior government was the impetus for Gutian to skip the exploration stage and move directly into later stages. While rapid development including physical construction (e.g. infrastructure and facilities) is indeed impressive, soft construction (e.g. business and service awareness and skills, concept of sustainable development) pales in comparison. "It takes time to enhance mass consciousness and educate people," said a former village official, "it cannot happen in one stroke" (Hua, interview, September 2012).

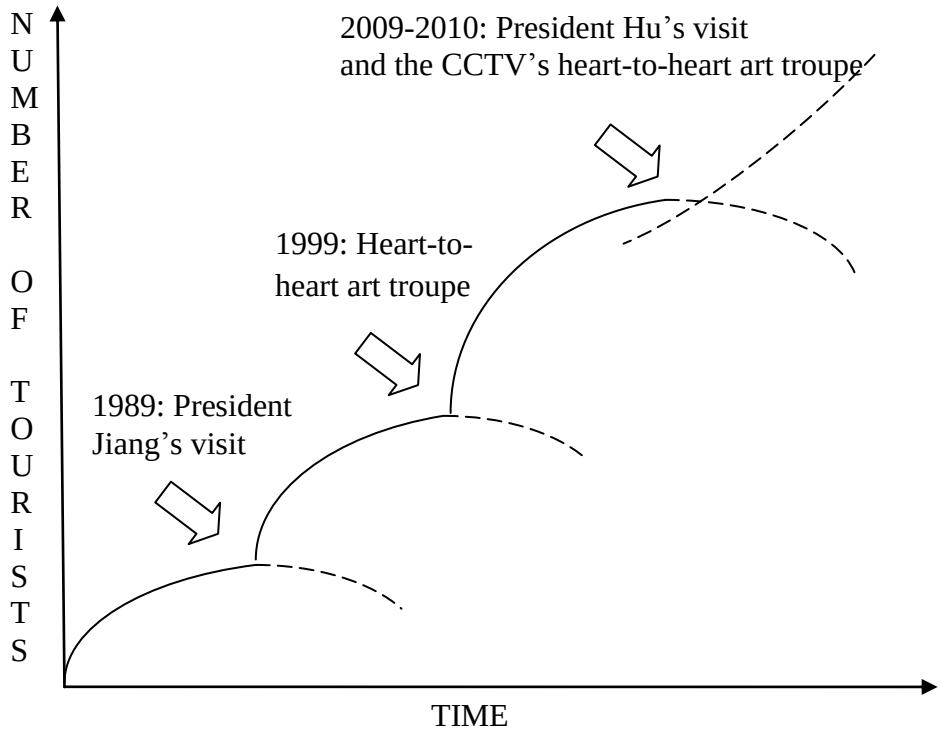


Figure 3.1 Rapid Development in Gutian

While the fruits of rapid development have been harvested, bitterness also remains. Despite the new prosperity as noted by increased greenery, more private vehicles, newly paved roads, and new houses, Gutian is actually experiencing a tough period of structural transformation from a secondary economy to a tertiary one. Restrictions on manufacturing, which used to be the mainstay, have blown a huge strike to the local government's fiscal capabilities. Surprisingly, the seemingly flourishing tourism industry with exponential growth rate is actually unprofitable. The small size of Gutian, the relevantly monotonous types of tourism resources, and the short distance to Longyan City, make Gutian a day-trip, even a half day-trip destination, resulting in low tourism profits. Currently the local government relies largely on funds from above,

representing an injection model rather than a self-sustaining model. This has caused a strong contrast in that while the central government has been allocating considerable amounts of funds to Gutian, most ordinary people hardly see the benefits of tourism. This phenomenon is common in many young tourist destinations where tourism provides a considerable stimulus to the local economy, yet it does not automatically lead to economic prosperity (Greenwood, 1989). Therefore, the existing government-community conflict resulting from the developmental imbalance and unfairness has been exacerbated.

In its rapid progress, which is permeated with power struggles, Gutian's local government has yet to adjust its roles and responsibilities in the bureaucratic system. As well, it needs to enhance its administrative capacity to confront new challenges and issues. The following sections discuss the pattern of government involvement at the meso and micro levels from both top-down and bottom-up directions along a political hierarchy (Figure 3.2).

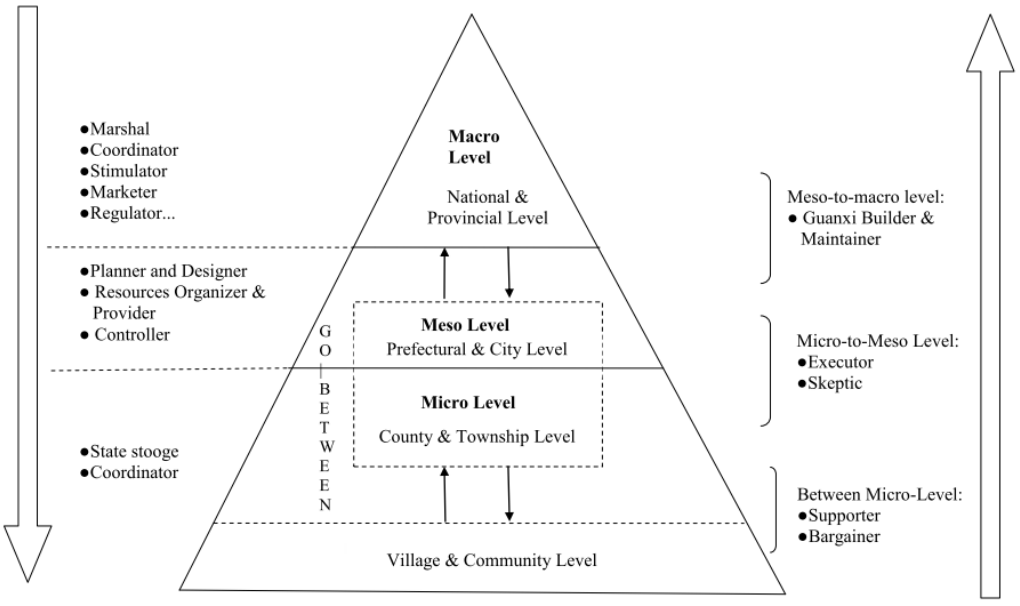


Figure 3.2 Government Involvement in Gutian's Red Tourism Development

3.4.3 Government's Roles and Goals in Red Tourism Development

3.4.3.1 The Roles of Meso-Level Government in the Top-Down Direction

Tourism Planner and Designer

Several tourism development plans were made by prefectural, county, and township-level governments, government agents, and other public institutions. These plans identify the strategic orientation of Gutian in the development of the whole Longyan Prefectural Area is red (tourism), along with three other major industrial zones of green (ecotourism), blue (hot spring), and golden (mining industry) in this region. The spatial and functional layout of Gutian is identified with distinct themes in these plans, such as idyllic scenery zone (preserving current rural landscape), the central town zone (repairing and remodeling Gutian's image), new residential zone (relocating residents), and tourism/leisure/ vacation zone (exploring leisure and tourism products). After the first three phases of restoration and (re)construction, which cost almost RMB 0.3 billion (US$ 50 million), single tourist attractions were connected to form a comprehensive framework of tourism products and new itineraries (Longyan City Tourism Bureau, 2011). Family inns are thematized with red subjects, such as paintings and ornaments of distinctive red features, numbering hotel rooms with names of military units, and labeling menu dishes with red terminologies. While redness is used for packaging and branding

tourism products, local governors also realized that more efforts are needed for deeper resource mining beyond the level of current “red washing”.

Several government departments are responsible for designing onsite displays and the content of interpretation, including the prefectural and county tourism bureaus, the Memorial Museum of the Gutian Conference, and the Party History Research Office of Longyan City. While the first two institutions are the direct designers and authors of interpretation textbooks, the research office takes the consultative role and provides a framework from a scientific perspective, including discussing and confining the content of displays and interpretation at a macro level, and offering historical relics for duplication.

In terms of promotion, the government utilizes multiple channels to conduct marketing campaigns, including tourism websites (e.g. the Website of the Red Tourism Union of the Central Soviet Area *http://www.zg1929.cn/*), red-themed movies and TV shows (e.g. *Gutian 1949,* the *Cradle of the People’s Republic of China*), festivals and special events, and tourism fairs. Transregional collaboration with neighboring cities and provinces is also accentuated to maximize the promotional effects. The concept of smart tourism is proposed as well, reflecting the trend of digitizing tourism information in an ever mobile world. All of these marketing activities are proceeding vigorously, yet a crucial problem exists in the relevantly weak destination brand and identity of Gutian.

Successful branding strategies can bridge gaps between a destination’s strengths and visitors’ perceptions, avoid homogenous competition, and thus turn a destination into

a place where people want to visit (Morgan, Pritchard, & Piggott, 2002). While the branding effect is not evident for Gutian as a whole, a handful of individual tourism operators have developed some degree of awareness of branding. The results of focus groups of family inn owners revealed their awareness of brand image and customer loyalty, "we do not want to accept walk-in customers as we need to guarantee the very freshest ingredients in our dishes... we cannot screw up our brand...we need to have a long-term relationship with our customers so that they will come back" (Liao, interview, December 2012; Zhong, interview, December 2012).

These initiatives reveal that tourism discourses are controlled by brokers that have higher political positions, who function as power agents with respect to designing tourism representations (Doron, 2005). These agents can influence tourists' (targets') behavior and choices in terms of gaze (what to see) and geographic mobility (where to go).

Despite tremendous input into the planning process, however, these plans were criticized by several grassroots officials for being inconsistent and changeable, lacking long-term vision and scientificity, and being used primarily for politicians' own political leverage. Apparently, there is dissonance between higher-level and grassroots governors relating to local development; however, "if the superior presses down the actions, you have to do it..." (Zhang, interview, September 2012). Local governors' voices are not reflected by tourism plans, as their political subordinate status excluded them from the circle of administrative decision-making. Although the Gutian government has authored several plans, it essentially inherits and concretizes the guidelines or general plans made

by the higher-ups. Moreover, the so-called "experts" who made the tourism development plans did not spend enough time in the field to gather background information, rather "they just copied and pasted here and there" said a local high-ranking official (Wang, interview, October 2012). Elliott (1987) and Timothy (1999) contended that, in many developing countries, it is common for tourism plans to be token documents that have little effect on policy, as it is easier to produce paper plans than to implement them against political interests.

Resources Organizer and Provider

Macro and meso-level governments provide and organize resources to facilitate local development through red tourism. As mentioned above, millions of dollars have been allocated to Gutian, most of which were spent on improving infrastructure and facilities. While funding is not perceived as a problem for Gutian, developmental barriers exist in the collaboration and cohesiveness of local communities, reflected by a citation from an interview of a local township governor: "last year the county leader asked us 'do you want the 10-million project?' ...all the township leaders kept silent... if you receive the money, you need to consider whether it can be spent... it means you need to do land expropriation again which is really headache" (Chen, interview, October 2012).

At the prefectural level, several preferential policies regarding transportation, service quality, and the accommodation star classification system were devised to help tourism development. For example, according to the *Work Report of Red Tourism Development of Longyan City* (Longyan City Tourism Bureau, 2011), rewards are

provided for best tourism practices. RMB 3 billion and 1 billion will be awarded to the attractions that successfully pass the assessment of National 5A and 4A-Rated Tourist Destinations respectively. RMB 1 billion will be given to the county which earns the title of "County of National Excellent Tourism". These policies, have shaped the direction of local tourism development and explain why the well-built infrastructures and facilities were replaced with new ones within a short time, failing to consider the issue of sustainability. In other words, the local government (power agent) utilizes their political power and spends abundant public funds for (re)constructing infrastructure and facilities that can be used for the official's personal political leverage and help to attract the attention and gain prizes from higher officials.

At the administrative and managerial level, national tourism experts are invited to join the forum and symposium of Longyan's tourism and economic development to contribute new and innovative ideas. At the practical level, free training is also organized by the tourism bureau and the agriculture bureau for tourism practitioners to improve their service and business skills. For conference site interpreters, who are civil employees, relevant government departments organize strict training, involving massive memorization, strict onsite performance assessment and offsite written exams, and continuous learning about relevant official publications of the Gutian Conference.

Controller

Under the guidance of government, measurements were carried out to guarantee the quality of tourism products and services. The quality management system ISO9001

was implemented for the lodging sector in Longyan Prefectural Area. The Development and Administration Committee of Gutian Tourism was established to regulate and strengthen tourism operations. Extremely austere traffic regulations are applied to meet the criteria of a 5A-rated tourist destination. During fieldwork, more traffic police were sent by Shanghang County to monitor traffic violations. To alleviate environmental pressures, out-of-town vehicles were not allowed to enter Wulong village. While these seemingly 'sustainable' and 'environmentally-friendly' regulations and monitoring make the business landscape appear more organized, they were actually considered barriers to local business success by several agritourism operators in Wulong village. "It is around one kilometer from the entry of our village to my house... honestly, our business is much much worse off after they blocked cars...before that there were lots of self-drive customers...but now, ai (sigh)" (Zhong & Liao, interview, December 2012). Although the system of village self-government was initiated in the 1980s in China, this statement somewhat echoes the criticism of grassroots democracy in Chinese society, which is described as "existing in name only, powerless and incapable" (Kelliher, 1997, p.66).

Even though red tourism serves as an umbrella concept for local development, it has strong political overtones since ideological indoctrination remains the mainspring. Obviously, government serves as the gatekeeper in the process of ideological transmission. Except the consultative role that PHRO plays as mentioned earlier, it supervises the interpretative content to guarantee the credibility and avoid potential controversial opinions. "We need to make sure some materials, such as personal memoirs, do not conflict with formal and official history", said the Head of the PHRO (Chen,

interview, September 2012). This reflects that higher-level government (power agent) possesses power to determine message dissemination and the selection and exclusiveness of values and interests.

3.4.3.2 The Roles of Micro-Level Government in the Top-Down Direction

State Stooge and Coordinator

At the micro-level, the government acts primarily as state stooge and coordinator. Land expropriation is the major focus of town administrators. Land-expropriated households either relocate or resettle nearby or in a new residential area, or they receive financial compensation. Considerable compensation fees have significant effects on the community. To begin, it dramatically influences local people's values that many people are now "waiting for, relying on, and requesting and bargaining for higher compensation" (Chen, interview, October 2012; Hua, interview, September 2012; Huang, interview, September 2012; Shi, interview, October 2012). Massive land expropriations have diminished farming activities, resulting in severe structural issues in the local labor force. Owing to the small scale and seasonality of tourism, it is not easy to distribute and transform lost agricultural jobs into service-sector positions, which may pose a potential threat to the social order and security as "they may drink today and fight with others tomorrow" (Huang, interview, September 2012). A local officer expressed his concerns about this issue, "the government can send out more police or even army to Gutian... but so what? The government needs to set up a long-term effective mechanism rather than suppressing violence with violence." Most ordinary people have not yet witnessed the

domino effect of this industrial transformation; thus, most interviewees described the local social order as remaining safe and organized. Lacking democratic experience, planning expertise, awareness of public involvement, and long-term vision and sustainability concerns, local residents (power target), who are already excluded from public participation, lose what limited power they do have to negotiate with the government.

The approach that villagers adopt to express their discontent is either covertly complaining about it or overtly protesting political decisions (Lukes, 1974). In the case of land expropriation, while most people support or at least accept it "as long as they get reasonable compensation" (Ma, interview, November 2012), some households protest resettlement and refuse to move aside for new development. Several officers and residents attribute this behavior of "racking their brains to dig up money from the government" to the degree that "they held out until at the last minute they got more compensation than others" (Ma, interview, November 2012). Although the compensation standards were established later, there are still households trying to bargain for higher compensation. "We have a set of standards to evaluate his property, such as the diameters, breeds, and land areas," a local official noted about a farmer who refused to give away his wood fields which blocked the newly designed hiking trail, "we can give him RMB 400,000-500,000, yet he asked for almost 10 times more"(Wang & Chen, interview, October 2012). It reflects that power does not flow one-way. One entity/actor, in this case, local residents, can be both power agent and target. While many of them follow the expropriation regulations and policies passively as the target, some of them can resist and

reverse such power flow as the agent by overt protest and negotiation. The direction of power flow, therefore, depends on power resources (e.g. political power from the hierarchical system and civic power from self-defense awareness), actors' willingness and ability to apply power (e.g. motivation, rationality, knowledge and experience), and other contextual settings.

Prior to the forced evictions which are commonly reported in the Western media, the process of land expropriation in Gutian appeared to be relevantly more democratic and fairer, given that some government officials went to the holdout household to negotiate and persuade them to accept the proposed compensation. During this process, grassroots officials always utilize preordained guanxi (e.g. kinship, friendship, and community relationship) as a means of negotiating with these villagers. The trust embedded in such guanxi is much more stable and reliable than general trust in a larger collectivities in Chinese society, and possesses high level of affective attachment and sense of obligation (Chen & Chen, 2004; Yang & Wang, 2011). Accordingly, local officials, many of whom are also local residents or have established relationships with local communities, would ask the holdout households to do them a "favor" and give them "mianzi" (face or external prestige) due to their "steady" relationships, reflecting a strong sense of shared group identity and reciprocal exchange of favors. Here, the preordained and personal guanxi is purposefully used when non-routine problems and difficulties cannot be resolved through normal and formal channels in an official and business scenario. This seemingly democratic trend, however, can also be interpreted as a cosmetic token as one government official later admitted that expulsion was necessary

and that it would eventually happen, with the worst result being "going to court, which would rule in favor of the government" (Wang, interview, October 2012). The fear of threatening politicians' power during decentralization may account for the tokenistic participation (Joppe, 1996; Ruhanen, 2013).

Another major role that local government plays is mobilizing the masses to join in red tourism development. "Most Wulong villagers, especially the communist members, are very supportive of it," said a former village official, "therefore it is developing rapidly" (Hua, interview, September 2012). "Even if they do not support it, what we want to see is at least they are not against it," a local civic employee revealed. The local government strives diligently to maintain the stability of local communities in an ever-changing system. In fact, three employees in the office of the township government who have access to core leaders observed that these stability maintainers "primarily want to get through their tenure smoothly rather than launching new and innovative development projects...because they are burning out... so much workload in hosting the higher-ups...(township) leaders lack the energy to consider how to develop Gutian better" (Chen, Chen, & Zhang, interview, November 2012). This statement is corroborated by a high-ranking officer in Gutian: "political tasks are overwhelming... and too much attention has been drawn from all levels of government...it is very exhausting... " (Shi & Chen, interview, October 2012). This reveals the dissonance between local administrative capacity and the new roles emerging in the development process, as well as the officially-set goals and administrators' personal preferences.

3.4.3.3 Between the Micro-Level: From the Village to the County/Township Government

Supporter and Bargainer

As mentioned above, the role that communities play in tourism development depends heavily on the level of development, which is largely associated with political attention from upper-level governments. Based on resident interviews, the more developed villages are prone to be followers and supporters. Such advocacy can be justified not only by the realized positive impacts of tourism, especially in environmental and economic aspects, but also the dreams of a better life advocated by village officers. Village officers extol the notion of a red "holy land" and "eco-Gutian" to gain citizen support, resembling a certain degree of grassroots democracy. "We went to mobilize the villagers... people are very positive and active, especially our party members, old party members... all are very supportive" (Hua, interview, September 2012; Zhang, interview, September 2012). During lobbying, the attitudes and capabilities of village headmen largely determine the attitudes of other villagers. In the aforementioned example of the grand migration, this rapid development was proposed by the headman of a less-developed village, a local entrepreneur who casts himself as someone who "does practical things for the people". He has gained the respect and support of the community. His entrepreneurial capability and spirit of adventure, and residents' trust give him the power to make people believe in and follow his proposed plan for future development. Here the sources of his power, as Weber (1947) discussed, not only come from the rational-legal, but also from the charismatic and the traditional. In addition to the roles of follower and supporter, it is interesting that in the less- developed villages, the township

government also assumes the roles of a bargainer who will protect villagers' best interests. Village headmen usually feel obligated to lead villagers in earning more money and improving their quality of life. This perceived obligation is grounded in a sense of clanship based on blood ties and patrilineal kinship (Xu, Perkins, & Chow, 2010). Sometimes, these obligations even surpass their ideological orientation. "I do not care who the ruling party is... no matter if it is the CCP or the Kuomintang Party... as long as my people can have a good life" claimed a village headman (Xie, interview, October 2012). Rather than this being "radical", cooperative approaches to negotiation are normally adopted to combine political performance and assure the quality of life (QOL) for local residents. For example, one village headman approached a township president and requested policy changes and funds for development that were not only good for villagers' quality of life, but also the governor's political performance. He noted, "President Wang, if you want your political performance, you must start from my village..." (Xie, interview, October 2012). In this case, except common social identifications between the village headman and local governors, collaborative guanxi is created through anticipation and promise. These potential guanxi partners share similar aspirations, ideals, or values, express common intentions, and begin to engage in a wide variety of transactional activities. Such intense interactions can make mutual guanxi move from the outer circle to the inner circle, as described in Chen and Chen's (2004) guanxi net. While huge sums of resources are injected into only a few core villages for various reasons, such win-win negotiation scenarios can sway the township administrators' favor away from the villages that always seem to be favored by the

central government. This situation reveals that the intimate guanxi between the township government and the core villages can be ascribed to the intensive, and sometimes even excessive, attention from higher-up superiors whom the township government strives to impress and appease. On the other hand, the guanxi between the township government and secondary villages is purposefully cultivated and maintained based on the principles of reciprocity and cooperation, echoing Chen and Chen's (2004) model of guanxi development, which has three sequential stages: initiating, building, and using.

3.4.3.4 At the Micro-to-Meso Level: From the County/Township Government to the Prefectural/ City Government

Executor and Skeptic

At the micro-to-meso level, the township government plays the role of executor of local interests, requesting resources from the superordinates, especially with regard to infrastructure. Yet the dilemma the township government faces lies in the popular opposition to land expropriation. As a result, upper-level leaders scold township governors for ineffective spending, while negotiating with dissonant residents and enforcing expropriation rules, which local politicians find very exhausting. Owing to the awkward position of being sandwiched between the superordinate and folk forces or between the top-down hierarchical power and the preordained guanxi with local communities, the township leaders hesitate to apply for funds for unsupportive communities (usually the secondary villages) since it requires a large amount of guanxi, energy, and responsibilities.

Some governors are skeptical about red tourism development and expressed concerns about its viability. According to them, despite its ostensible prosperity, Gutian actually lacks supporting industries due to the decline in agriculture, albeit still immature and unprofitable tourism industry. Despite of the considerable amount of money provided by the national and provincial governments, some local officials worry that "it is easy to use it up if villagers do not make good plans of how to spend the money" (Chen, Huang, &Wang, interview, October 2012). Meanwhile, tourism in Gutian is still too sparse to absorb excess labor, as mentioned earlier, and thus poses a threat to existing labor structures and social stability. There is a structural vacuum of local industries during the process of industrial transformation. The local government, which plays the leading role, is aware of these problems and challenges. Yet, because of its inferior and powerless position, it has to maintain good guanxi with higher officials (power agents) by following orders and satiating them with seeming prosperity—a pattern that mirrors strong characteristics of a feudal hierarchy (Li et al., 2007). The skeptics' opinions circulate mostly within lower-level governments, rather than percolating into the upper-levels. Such non-participation and strict obedience seem to manifest a sort of fear and weakness among lower-level administrators, as they consider the costs of non-compliance (Mann, 1986; Sadan, 2004).

3.4.3.5 At the Meso-to-Macro Level: From the Prefectural/City Government to the Central /Provincial Government

Guanxi Builder and Maintainer

Despite the record of increasing tourist arrivals in the last four years, according to official reports, the majority of visits are sponsored by public funds. In other words, it is the government that spends tax payer's money on subsidizing schools, government departments, and state-owned companies to encourage participation in red tourism. Some local governors admitted they are tired of hosting tours where they must accompany superordinate politicians on visits to communist heritage sites numerous times per year. Although the economic viability and sustainability of junket tourism is questionable, its rationality and necessity are justified by local governors through guanxi. First, junket tourism can stimulate personal tours in the future. More importantly, it constructs a basis of familiarity through interacting with upper-level officials. During this process, instrumental guanxi can be cultivated and maintained for local officials' own career promotion, as well as the potential funding opportunities in that "leaders have the tendency to allocate funds to the places where they have visited because of the sense of familiarity and personal emotion" (Shi & Chen, interview, October 2012). In this case, the grant applicant and provider may recall and discover common events and acquaintances from previous junket tourism, tap emotional bonding, and envision future joint goals and collaborations (Chen & Chen, 2004).

Although guanxi bases may not guarantee guanxi practices, they enable individuals to claim guanxi with each other or to relevant third parties in the future. This process is reflected by the second stage of Chen and Chen's (2004) guanxi development model, where guanxi quality and the associated levels of trust, affection, and obligations are greatly improved. This finding is supported by Wang's (2013) point of view that at a grassroots level, collective movement replies on more guanxi networks than the function of rationality in China. For instance, guanxi is said to be the decisive factor in recruiting for permanent tourism jobs (Li et al., 2007), and business performance (Guthrie, 1998; Yang & Wang, 2011). In addition, it also determines public funds and preferential policies. As well, rather than being purely social or business, both expressive (e.g. social-oriented activities) and instrumental (e.g. pragmatic transactions and exchanges related to work or business) interactions are intertwined to build affection and affective trust, as well as obligation and cognitive trust among guanxi partners (Hwang, 1987).

In brief, different types of guanxi are distinct from each other in terms of nature, purpose, function, and influence, yet they are in common with respect to reciprocal exchange of materials, favors, or feelings (Yang, 2001). The above discussions provide insights into how preordained and voluntary guanxi (which needs to be activated and constructed voluntarily by individuals) are initiated, built, or utilized by different levels of government in addition to their hierarchical power relations in red tourism development.

3.5 Conclusion and Implications

The tourism planning process is essentially about value selection and thus political in nature. From this viewpoint, tourism politics is key in understanding the dynamics of tourism development. Traditionally, however, the political analysis of tourism is considered a by-product of social or economic research (Smith, 1989; Hall, 1994). Although there is an expanding body of research on the political dimensions of tourism, it is mostly about what should be done rather than what is done and how it is arrived at (Hall, 1994). This paper argues that tourism studies should not be conservative, non-critical, and value-free, since tourism is not the result of a rational decision-making process. Rather, it is the product of complex and interrelated political, economic, and social factors (Peck & Lepie, 1989).

This study explores political dimensions of tourism by identifying the major roles that governments play in red tourism development in China. As the core of politics, power determines the participatory characteristics of stakeholders and thus the very nature of government involvement. Apart from the visible and documented power demonstrated up the political hierarchy, guanxi, as an invisible dimension and micro-technique of power, and a social trade model in China (Wang, 2013), can also have fundamental impacts on government involvement in red tourism. Therefore, this exploratory study adopted these two constructs, *power* and *guanxi*, to provide insight into the nature and workings of government with respect to red tourism at the meso and micro levels.

Because of the fragmented nature of tourism, and more importantly the political sensitivity of red tourism, local government in fact lacks real power to consolidate and impose regulations and initiate new tourism products. Such powerlessness at the local level of governance can be ascribed not only to its lower position in the political hierarchy, but the excessive attention from higher authorities who draw from former President Hu's visit in 2010. Certainly, this "celebrity" endorsement offers an opportunity for building a sound public image, receiving preferential policies and funding, as well as realizing politicians' personal career advancement. Conversely, it also became a significant barrier for local development because it largely deprived local government of its administrative autonomy.

From the top down, meso-level government dons the role of tourism planner and designer. It organizes and provides necessary resources and controls the progress of local development. It also maintains the official state ideological narrative by supervising onsite displays, interpretation, and market entry. The practices of marketing, branding, and commercialization are employed to design and package tourism and its products. Meanwhile, educational and human resources are provided to improve leadership, entrepreneurship, prospective strategic vision, and service quality.

The results suggest that micro-level governments are, overall, excluded from the strategic decision-making circle and serve as state stooges and coordinators primarily responsible for land expropriation, maintaining social stability, mobilizing local residents to support red tourism development, and hosting visitors from higher government offices.

A democratic trend is emerging during the process of land expropriation as massive negotiations are usually carried out before forced eviction, although this consultative process may be tokenistic.

From the bottom up, the effect of lobbying is notable as red tourism development is supported by local residents, especially the ones in the core villages whose advanced status is enhanced by celebrity endorsements and political attention. The secondary villages, on the other hand, attract much less attention from the government and thus receive fewer funds and preferential policies. As a result, a win-win model is hoped for less-developed communities to build a cooperative guanxi network with the township government. During the establishment of guanxi, village headmen usually take the lead in negotiating and bargaining with township leaders, on the basis of strong patrilineal kinships. The distinct differences in participatory village development show that whether a top-down or bottom-up approach, it is not at local communities' own will, but dramatically decided by higher political authorities.

When confronting the meso-level government, micro-level governments act as executors of local interests and request resources for local development. However, they are also required to implement top-down policies and programs that may not be consistent with local needs and desires. In fact, micro-level governments struggle to find a balance between their roles in grassroots governance and their roles as dictated by the superordinates, with findings similar to that of Dredge (2001). To survive in a fissure created by both forces, accordingly, the micro-level government has to adapt to the rules

of the game, shift its job focus, and take a conservative and docile approach in addressing many of its roles and responsibilities, even if some local governors remain skeptical about development plans that are deficient in long-term vision and concerns about sustainability. Local government's capacity and responsiveness are largely influenced by power, ideas, values, and perceptions encoded in legislation and other non-statutory mechanisms (Alford & Friedland, 1985; Dredge, 2001; Hall, 1994).

Despite the aggressive achievements and goals mentioned in the planning documents in terms of tourist arrivals and tourism receipts, such statistics are not reliable, as many visits are junkets by politicians who have been criticized for wasting taxpayers' money. From the networking perspective, however, junket tourism serves as a medium through which guanxi is cultivated and maintained at the meso-to-macro level. One use of guanxi is facilitating funding applications since upper-level leaders are more likely to allocate funds to the applicants with whom they have developed guanxi. Here the individual guanxi developed during junket tours is convertible to institutional connections, a prominent phenomenon observed in the business environment in China (Yang & Wang, 2011). It appears that guanxi in the political network is an institutional-defined system as well as cultural fact.

In brief, in strategic decision-making, government gets involved in red tourism in a more top-down manner, although bottom-up forms do exist at a grassroots level in other respects, such as business operation; or in the secondary villages which draw less political attention. Contrary to a community approach, what the tourism development plans of

Gutian emphasize is not the development *in* the community, but the development *of* the community (Hall, 1991). While a certain degree of public input and democratic participation has been observed, such involvement is still tokenistic, passive, and partial.

The interactions among different-level governments and local communities from both top-down and bottom-up directions embody and reflect the power structure embedded in red tourism development. The rules of the tourism game are obviously set by those situated in the higher levels of the political hierarchy (power agents), whose original intention was to direct tourism towards positive political, economic, social, and environmental outcomes. Yet due to the considerable degrees of centralization of power, it may lead to unexpected and unwanted results. In fact, even if complete decentralization, privatization, and deregulation were to occur, a dispersal of power to quasi-government organizations, communities, or business interests may still be unsustainable (Blowers, 1997; Hall, 1999), as seen in the grand migration proposed by Rongwu villagers. This study does not pretend to suggest how to solve these critical problems. Yet steps need to be gradually carried out to empower and engage local communities and grassroots administrative units. Otherwise even the best-planned and well-meaning programs will be altered by those very people (Long, 1993; Timothy, 1999). Instead of dispersing power suddenly, long-term orientation and education are required to help grassroots forces gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to use power in an appropriate, rather than radical, manner. In this way, effective partnerships and collaboration can be established in both top-down and bottom-up directions.

This study contributes to current research by integrating the constructs of power and guanxi in a red tourism empirical setting—government involvement in communist heritage tourism at the meso and micro levels. It also provides insight into how the lofty goals established by the central government are implemented down the political hierarchy. Future studies should consider the complexity of power at different levels, such as Lukes' (1974) three faces of power (decision-making, none decision-making, and ideological power). Otherwise an inaccurate, perhaps rosy, picture of the contribution of red tourism presented in Chinese mass media may cause higher authorities to continue overlooking developmental issues embedded in the political system, thus leading to unsustainable growth and injustice, and further exacerbating existing conflicts.

Chapter 4

DO THEY TELL THE STORY IN A RED WAY? COMPARING TOUR GUIDES AND SITE INTERPRETERS

This chapter focuses on the story-telling, the second stage of the circuit of red heritage and tourism model, where intermediaries reinforce and transform ideological discourses assigned by Chinese government through their interpretations. Comparisons are carried out to examine the possible disparities between the official and intermediary's personal versions of interpretation, and potential variations between two major types of intermediaries, *tour guide* and *site interpreter*. This study is expected to contribute to existing knowledge about tour guiding by anchoring interpretation and guiding practices in a broader political, social, and economic context, and systematically investigating the dynamics of tour guiding and onsite interpretation.

4.1 Introduction

Tour guiding ranks among the world's oldest professions and has been known by a variety of names throughout history, including pathfinder, bear leader, and cicerone (Pond, 1993). Early guides were primarily responsible for offering geographic directions to humans traveling for survival. Gradually, enterprising men started to travel for the purpose of trading goods, and guides were hired as safety escorts. With the popularity of pilgrimages since the Middle Ages and the Grand Tour in the mid-1600s, guides started to serve as mentors who facilitated travelers towards insight, enlightenment, or any other exalted spiritual state (Pond, 1993). Modern tour guides combine and expand elements of

these antecedents, especially at the spheres of leadership and mediation, as indicated by Cohen's (1985) classical framework of the roles of tour guides.

Although a guide can be a person, a printed brochure, or digital material (Hu, 2007), this study applies this term strictly to a person who "guides visitors in the language of their choice and interprets the cultural and natural heritage of an area…(the) person normally possesses an area-specific qualification usually issued and/or recognized by the appropriate authority" (World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations, WFTGA, 2003, p.1). Within this category, there are multifarious types of tour guides, including tour leader, step-on guide, driver guide, tour manager, and docent (Pond, 1993), who may play various roles (e.g. pathfinder, leader, information giver, interpreter/educator, cultural broker, motivator, public relation representative, and facilitator), and career orientation and motives for internal and external reasons. Accordingly, their interpretative content, ways of tour guiding, and personal or perceived roles may vary dramatically.

Despite such diversity within the tour guiding sector, its significance is widely recognized. In China, it is customary for both domestic and outbound Chinese tourists to engage the services of a guide on a package tour for convenience, economy, safety, and companionship (Huang & Weiler, 2010). Meanwhile, the original aura of objects and sites can be reinforced and/or reconstructed through tour guides' reinterpretation and explanation. The popularity of tour guides is also evident by the statistics that there were over 711,883 registered tour guides in China by the end of 2012 (Chinese National Tourism Administration, 2013).

As key front-line players, tour guides maintain the pivotal position of bridging the visitor and the visited by applying knowledge, communication and service skills, and thus contributing to transforming touristic visits from tours to experiences (Ap & Wong, 2001). Notwithstanding that tour guides are among the most visible players in the tourism system, relevant research is still lacking in both depth and breadth. Existing scholarly work on tour guides focuses primarily on the aspects of place construction (Bowman & Harrison,1992; Dahles, 2002; Fine & Speer, 1985; Gelbman & Maoz, 2012; Salazar, 2007), the roles of tour guides (Cohen, 1985; Holloway, 1981; Pond, 1993; Poudel, Nyaupane, & Timothy, 2013; Weiler & Davis, 1993), effectiveness of interpretation (Davidson & Black, 2007; Hu, 2007; Ryan & Dewar, 1995; Leclerc & Martin, 2004; Tubb, 2003), tourist-tour guide interactions (Beeftink, 2011; Pearce, 1984), service quality and training (Ap & Wong, 2001; Black & Weiler, 2005; Black & Ham, 2005; Christie & Mason, 2003; Huang, 2010; Huang & Weiler, 2010; Jacobson & Robels, 1992), the contribution of interpretation to certain forms of tourism (Hu, 2007; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006; Tubb, 2003), or the conceptual development of guiding framework (Cohen, 1985 ; Cohen, Ifergan, & Cohen, 2002; Holloway, 1981; Pearce, 1984). These studies seem to approach this subject from the angle of various masters' (e.g. employers and/or state authorities) expectations of tour guides. For example, state authorities utilize tour guiding strategically to address issues of national significance, such as national unity and multiculturalism (Dahles, 2002). Tour operators expect guides to provide high-quality service to maximize not only visitor satisfaction but also the company's profit margins (Weiler & Ham, 2002). Local residents regard guides as ambassadors of their

communities who can encapsulate and present the essence of place to audiences (Hu, 2007; Pond, 1993). Among all these masters, the majority of research is skewed towards the tourists, reflected by a multitude of studies that discuss the criteria, principles, and approaches of successful guiding and interpretation, and the roles of tour guides that are oriented towards the needs of the tourist, as indicated by Cohen's (1985) model.

As an important link in the entire tourism system, there is no doubt that tour guides have many masters to whom they are accountable. Current research, however, tends to ignore guides' self-expectation and assumes that tour guides are altruistic mediators. In fact, just as any other profession, tour guides also desire to derive the greatest benefits from their work (Bras, 2000; Stam, Steege, & Bras, 1999). From a commercial perspective, they are sales people who not only sell things (e.g. knowledge, images, souvenirs, authenticity, and ideology), but also know how to turn their social capital and narratives into a profitable enterprise. Rather than merely obeying guidelines and to-do-lists, or blindly submitting to government rules and regulations (Bras, 2000), this dissertation agrees with Reisinger & Steiner's (2006) argument that tour guides are rational individuals who develop their own agendas according to the interplays of the political, economic, social and cultural context of their employment situation.

Apart from the consideration of personal interests, another critical factor that can affect guiding and interpreting practices is power, revealed at least in the following two ways. First, government (power agent) controls interpretative narratives to project a political philosophy through a variety of means, including imposing authorized heritage

discourses, standardizing well-rehearsed commentaries, and reinforcing a consensus approach to deal with historical and social differences and conflicts. Second, while guides exert power over tourists by constructing and mediating experiences, organizing and limiting the tourist gaze, and controlling movement spatially and temporarily, tourists can also be conversely in charge of tour guides since they pay for the service and therefore obtain a sense of entitlement (Prosser, 1994). Therefore, power flows in multiple directions between tourism actors/brokers who can be power agent and target simultaneously. Although Holloway (1981) has pointed out that the future direction of research on tour guides should include the balance or disparity of power between host and guest, a notable research gap still exists after more than three decades. Even though there are a few studies, such as Dahles' (2002) research on how the Indonesian government directly controls licensing, certification, training, pay, remuneration, the content of tour guides' narratives, and the tour itineraries, most of them are descriptive in nature and lack theoretical underpinnings.

Given that tour guiding is a diverse profession, ranging from highly trained and qualified guides to untrained and unqualified guides, further field-based research within the tour guiding sector is required (Black & Weiler, 2005). Studies have compared different types of guides in terms of their structures, origins, and roles (Cohen, 1985; Pond, 1993; Holloway, 1981; Poudel et al., 2013). Yet scant attention has been given to how and why they interpret the same story differently. A few exceptions include Bowman and Harrison's (1992) work, which analyzed how political, religious, and cultural conflicts can shape Israeli and Palestinian guides' contrasting interpretations of

the Holy Land. In this case, Israeli and Palestinian guides have distinct and mostly opposite viewpoints, thus divergent discourses are reasonable and expected. For other types of tour guides, such sharp contrasts are not as common. This does not mean that deviances within their interpretations are not worthy of analysis. In actuality, for most intermediaries in China, such acute conflict is uncommon. However, given their various personal backgrounds, tour guides cannot be entirely value free, apolitical, unbiased, and a-cultural. In other words, external forces from various masters and environmental settings may affect guides' attitudes towards their job, mastery of interpretative skills, and perception of self-roles, and then subsequently influence their way of interpretation, representing a wide range of deviations, from nuanced to acute.

The Chinese government has invested enormously in red tourism to achieve a political end. In reality, however, there are always gaps between official narratives and actual interpretation. To lessen such deviation, efforts are needed to understand the dynamics of interpretation. This chapter explores this research goal by comparing two major types of intermediaries in Gutian, *tour guides* and *site interpreters*, who work under completely different staffing systems, but nevertheless both tell the official storyline. Tour guides are required by law to sign an employment contract with a travel agent in order to apply for a work license. Yet the latter usually does not pay a basic salary or wage. Thus tour guides must earn their income by collecting shopping commissions and other kick-backs. Under this business-to-business transaction system, tour guides are featured as freelancers who gain meager wages, fewer job benefits, and fewer opportunities for steady employment or career advancement (Pond, 1993). Site

interpreters, on the other hand, are the employees of Gutian Conference Memorial Museum, which is a public service unit at the prefectural level. Significantly different from other ordinary public service organizations, this museum is managed according to the regulations of the civil service system, which possesses enormous prestige in Chinese society (Wang, 2006). A position in the civil service system is often described as the *iron rice bowl* attracting millions of college graduates who flock into the government sector for its strong job security and non-pecuniary benefits (Brodsgaard & Gang, 2009). A detailed introduction of different staffing systems in the Chinese administrative apparatus will be provided in the literature review section. Here, an assumption is proposed that the distinct institutional arrangements in the background along with other factors in the foreground (e.g. onsite interaction with tourists) provide an interesting context to study the dynamics of the story-telling process of red tourism.

4.2 Literature Review

4.2.1 The Roles and Qualifications of Tour Guides

The term "tour guide" has been widely used for many years, yet over time its use may have become imprecise because the general public may view guides as an undifferentiated job, while there are actually various types of guides, such as tour manager, museum docent, step-on guides, and interpreters (Pond, 1993). In public, these intermediaries may label themselves as guides, while within the professional sphere they may distinguish themselves from one another, supporting the notion that some possess considerable professional pride. Albeit Ap and Wong (2001) noted the paucity of studies

on tour guides, an interest in the topic has developed gradually only recently. The following section briefly reviews some relevant topics covered in research on guides and guiding.

The roles of guides have been comprehensively analyzed from the perspectives of either the types of guides or the stakeholders/masters to whom they are responsible. Pond (1993) summarized some of the most common types of guides and their functions. For example, *government guides* are public-sector employees who show visitors important historic, cultural, political, and scenic facilities. A *tour manager* is responsible for the administrative and logistical aspects of a tour to make the trip run smoothly. They usually provide light commentary on the way to the destination until step-on guides join the group at a destination or site. More often they function as both tour manager and guide (Pond, 1993). *Interpreters* "employ a mission-based communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the meaning inherent in the resources" (Brochu & Merriman, 2002, p.16). *Docent* is a type of interpreter at museums, visitor centers, historic houses, and other commonly visited sites. Although many of them are volunteers, sites are highly selective and offer training and educational programs throughout the year (Pond, 1993).

Hu (2007) classified the roles of guides into three categories: *experience management*, *resource management*, and *local economic promotion*, based on their responsibilities. In the sphere of *experience management*, guides are primarily responsible for tourists and don the roles of pathfinder, leader, information giver,

interpreter/educator, cultural broker/mediator, animator/entertainer, and tour manager (Ap & Wong, 2001; Black & Weiler, 2005; Cohen, 1985; Dahles, 2002; Salazar, 2007). Among these roles, cultural broker and mediator are crucial to enhance visitors' in-depth understanding and awareness of local culture and environment, and optimize their experience at the destination. They need to select, gloss, and interpret sights, translate culture, and immerse tourists into the local environment through sensitive guiding (Smith, 2001). Thus an intimate knowledge of local culture and environment, and a high level of professional skills, are required (Dahles, 2002). In red tourism, tour guides are expected to be brokers of communist heritage and ambassadors of the state who not only provide facts and figures, but also influence visitors' attitudes and perceptions by distilling, translating, and conveying the significance and values of red heritage.

In the sphere of *resource management*, the destination place is the focus for which guides serve as interpreters with three major roles: educator, motivator, and gatekeeper (Beeftink, 2011; Gelbman & Maoz, 2012; Huang & Weiler, 2010). More specifically, they need to encapsulate the essence of the destination and foster visitors' mindfulness of destination resources and long-term responsible behaviors.

The third sphere is *local economic promotion*, which focuses on the wellbeing of local communities. Guides are expected to serve as facilitators who can stimulate consumption of local goods and services, and thus promote local economic development. Meanwhile, they function as public representative who can mediate between tourists and the local community (McDonnell, 2001; Weiler & Davis, 1993).

Guides usually assume multiple interwoven and interactional roles. What roles are predominant and to what extent depends on the nature of the group, the surroundings of the visited site, and the expectations of the guides' employers. Guiding is a practice of art, not only because of the multiple roles that guides play simultaneously, but also because of the diverse audiences with distinctive social, cultural, and political backgrounds, as well as socio-demographic characteristics.

Owning to the complex nature of guiding, a few key qualifications and traits are required for successful guiding and interpretation. Guides must be knowledgeable, inspiring, enthusiastic, empathetic, flexible, and organized. A few approaches to effective communication have been suggested in previous research. For instance, Ham (1992), Moscardo (1996), and Weiler and Ham (2001) discussed several rules for presenting effective interpretation, including creating a positive learning environment through a sense of humor and stimulating visitors to think through integrating beliefs, concerns, worries; customizing interpretation and touching audiences by making content relevant to audiences' personal experiences; having a "factual but also compelling" theme about a place or an object rather than just a topic that is merely the subject matter of a presentation; challenging tourists with powerful and differing values and assumptions that can promote critical self-reflection on audiences' pre-assumptions and stereotypes. All these approaches reflect that at the heart of interpretation is not instruction or indoctrination, but, at least ideally, provocation (Tilden, 1967). Provocation can lead to a positive change in attitudes and values among tourists and foster more responsible behaviors.

Despite previous research on how to conduct successful interpretation through the approaches and tips summarized above, it is important to note that proposing guidelines is one thing, and applying them to tour guides is another. Guides are rational individuals who may have their own agendas and attempt to maximize their own benefits. To probe their primary concerns, it is necessary to understand their working circumstance, namely the tour guiding system in China. A brief review of the history, development, industrial regulation, and human resource management in the guiding sector can provide a better understanding of how the relevant external factors working backstage can shape tour guides' career orientation, and further develop their attitudes towards their jobs and their method of interpretation.

4.2.2 Tour Guiding in China

4.2.2.1 History

In the early 1900s, the first Chinese travel agent was established in Shanghai. Yet due to subsequent political and social turbulence and revolution, tourism did not germinate as expected (Hu, 2007). Even after the establishment of PR China, leisure travel, regarded as a component of bourgeois lifestyle and opposing communist ethics, was not encouraged for the first 30 years (Sofield & Li, 1998). The importance of tourism as an economic mechanism was not recognized until the economic reform of the late 1970s. At that time, the tour guiding profession began to emerge and was recognized in China.

Initially, tour guides were college graduates who majored in foreign languages or tourism (Hu, 2007; Sofield & Li, 1998). The year 1989 was a turning point for the tour guiding profession, as it became a career option for any citizen who possessed a high school or secondary school education, in a good physical condition and possessing certain communication skills, as long as they could pass the official certification examination (Hu, 2007). This new policy lowered the entry requirement and expanded the pool of candidates, thereby meeting the rapidly-increasing demand for tour guides.

To guarantee guiding quality, a set of management mechanisms have since been developed to guide, regulate, monitor, and even control tour guides and their guiding performance. A few of the most common means, as Black and Weiler (2005) summarize, involve codes of conduct, professional associations, awards of excellence, professional certification, and licensing. The following section reviews *certification* and *training*, two forms of quality assurance that are related to guides' job skills and qualifications in China.

4.2.2.2 Certification and Training

Whether certification is a voluntary process largely rests in the nature of the profession, legal requirements, and level of responsibility, with great variation existing across the world. In some countries, there is a tendency towards increased formalization and professionalization of tour guiding, expressed in establishing training centers or schools and regulating entry into the profession through a licensing and qualification process. For instance, tour guides in the UK usually are more strictly trained and are required to obtain the highly regarded "blue badge" to work legally. On the contrary,

interpretation education in the U.S. is broad in scope and lacks educational standards for guides. Guiding requires little training and few qualifications and thus leads to wide variations in quality and accuracy.

In China, tour guiding quality is one of the main issues on China's National Tourism Administration's (CNTA) policy agenda. Both CNTA and local tourism authorities have been making continuous efforts to regulate tour guiding practices and maintain service quality. A few key regulations include the provincial measures on tour guide administration issued in 1987, the national tour guide qualification exam, and the licensing and registration system launched in 1999, and the implementation of a score card monitoring system in 2001 (Huang & Weiler, 2010). Only after passing qualification exams and registering with tourism authorities are guides permitted to work. The credibility and validity of the mechanism for quality assurance, however, has been questioned. To begin with, the selection of subjects is significantly determined by CNTA policy-makers' views of tour guides' roles, which may place an emphasis on political ideology (Huang & Weiler, 2010). Accordingly, political viewpoint and knowledge of the country's national policies and regulations are the main content points being tested. In addition, there is an over-emphasis on basic procedural information rather than the practical skills needed to engage tourists. Hence, it is common (yet ironic) that graduates fresh out of college who lack experiences in leading a group can easily pass the exam, whereas skilled guides may fail (Yang, 1999).

Multiple training conduits are available in the tour guiding sector. At the national level, CNTA has a division of education and training, which organizes training sessions for guide trainers or examination officers to become familiar with new policies, regulations, and rules, but the division rarely provides direct training to tour guides (Huang & Weiler, 2010). At the provincial and city levels, most tourism administrations have affiliated training centers that hold sessions for tour guides to prepare for qualification examinations and annual auditing (Huang & Weiler, 2010). Universities, colleges, and some private training schools also receive contracted tour guide training. Meanwhile, at the company level, on-the-job training and low-season training for tour guides are also common tools for ongoing training and education.

One difficulty of tour guide training lies in balancing the accuracy of guides' narratives and the boredom of memorized rhetoric. One solution to this dilemma recognized by the tourism authority is giving tour guides autonomy to research and develop their own narratives, using the organization's resources and the experience of other guides. As a result, guides can gain a sense of independence and flexibility, feel in charge of tour materials, and avoid getting bored or disenchanted with their roles (Pearce, 1984).

4.2.2.3 Industrial Issues

As mentioned previously, tour guides are required by law to register with a tour-guiding service company or sign an employment contract after receiving their qualification certificates (Hu, 2010). In most cases, tour guides cannot earn a basic salary

or wage from a travel agency, and tipping system is uncommon in China. Inevitably, guides need to make a living based on shopping commissions and vendor kick-backs. This is why tour guides have the notorious reputation of enticing or beguiling tourists into shopping. China is not alone; in fact it is a ubiquitous phenomenon globally that the title "tour guide" has a sort of pejorative, static, and vapid connotation (Hobson & Christensen, 2001; Timothy, 2005). Owing to this negative connotation, in New York City, guides sometimes avoid using the title "tour guide" (Pond, 1993). Instead, some of them adopt the term "city historian". The inferior social status of tour guides may weaken their position as educators, and thus put them in an awkward place with conflicting roles. This may have an impact on their attitudes towards guiding and their perception of self-roles, and thus has a significant bearing on their means of interpretation.

4.2.3 Museum Docents/Site Interpreters in China

The organizational structure of museums in China has been diversified to meet emerging needs since the late 1980s (Lu, 2013). There are three major types of museum staffing systems, including employment in public service units/organizations, contracted employment, and labor dispatching. Museum docents are usually part of the first and second staffing systems. The contracted position, however, appears not to be as stable as the public service position, which usually entails lifelong tenure. In addition, job performance usually has a much more significant impact on career and contract extension of contracted employees than public service employees. In recent years, labor dispatching has become an emerging form of recruitment whereby employment and use of the labor

force are exclusive. In other words, employees are dispatched by an intermediate agency that takes responsibility for establishing the labor relationship, creating the contract with the dispatched employees, paying out the salary, and handling labor disputes between employers and dispatched employees (Ou, 2013).

At the Gutian Conference site, most interpreters are employees of the Gutian Conference Memorial Museum, which is a public service unit (*shiye danwei*) under the jurisdiction of the Longyan Prefectural People's Government. However, it is different from the ordinary public service unit in that it has been converted from non-civil servant status to the one that is "managed according to the civil servant system (*canzhao gongwuyuan guanli*)" (Lo & Tang, 2013). To have a better understanding of civil and public service units, there is a need to have a closer look at the unique employment system in the Chinese administrative apparatus, which includes *government administrative organs* (*jiguan*), the *public service unit* (*shiye danwei*), and the *state-owned enterprise* (*guoyou qiye*) (Brodsgaard, 2002). Such an administrative staffing system is called *bianzhi* in Chinese, referring to the numerous established posts in the state administrative apparatus (Brodsgaard, 2002). Different from the *nomenklatura* system of the Soviet Union, China's bianzhi system not only includes cadres, but also millions of state-salaried employees (Brodsgaard, 2002; Burns, 2007). Attention will be paid particularly to the first two types in the following section, since they are closely related to the bianzhi status of the site interpreters in Gutian.

The employees belonging to the first bianzhi system are usually called civil servants, who are frequently described as the ones that eat "imperial grain" (Brodsgaard, 2002). This group usually includes administrators, managers, and professionals working in government organs at all levels, yet excludes the blue-collar manual workers employed by the government (Wang, 2006). Positions in the civil service sector carry considerable prestige and are one of the most highly sought after jobs in China (Burns, 2007). Wages and welfare are borne by state finance, and civil servants perform public duties and execute state functions according to law. Public service units (*shiye danwei*), on the other hand, are the organizations providing operational functions in all public service fields, including health, education, research, social welfare, sports, arts and culture (Simon, 2005). Significantly different from the civil service system, public service does not possess administrative power over other organizations.

Quotas on the civil-service bianzhi are strictly set by the central government. Meanwhile, in reality some public service units need to possess administrative power in order to perform relevant functions. As a result, *the Civil Service Law* launched in 2006 proposes a new hybrid category of quasi-civil service status, referring to positions whose bianzhi belongs to the public service system yet whose management is conducted according to the regulations of the civil service system. In other words, under this type of staffing system, recruitment, career promotion, training, position transfer, authority and obligation, salary and welfare benefits, retirement, and so forth are set according to the civil service scales, yet they do not have full civil servant status (Lo & Tang, 2013).

The Gutian Conference Memorial Museum is the only museum in Fujian province to have been converted from non-civil service status into the aforementioned hybrid status. There are a series of regulations to standardize the manner, behaviors, dress code, and performance of interpreters. As mentioned previously, after being recruited, employees are required to attend training sessions taught by academic staff of the museum and researchers specializing in Chinese revolutionary history. They must memorize the interpretations and descriptions of the museum and its exhibition(s) written by curator(s) in charge of training. Moreover, the museum sometimes organizes docents to participate in interpretation competitions at city, provincial, and national levels. Senior and experienced interpreters are normally promoted to managerial or administrative posts within the museum or other equivalent organizations at the same administrative level in Longyan Prefectural City.

4.2.4 Dynamics of Tourist-Intermediary Interaction

During the communication process of interpretation, there is always a tendency to emphasize telling the significance of a place or an object to the audiences so they can "enjoy it more, understand heritage and environment better, and then develop a positive attitude towards the site and destination" (Moscardo, 1999, p.8). This tendency assumes that people need to know the officially "correct" significance first in order to start enjoying or understanding their experience. Yet Reisinger and Steiner (2006) argue that it is absolutely possible for visitors to enjoy the experience without knowing the significance or by just superficially understanding it, especially when their attention is

not heavily placed on heritage itself, but the surrounding natural environment. Although the government is eager to influence tourists' attitudes via short onsite interpretation, the outcome largely depends on the interactions between tourists and intermediaries. The following section reviews several theoretical frameworks that have been applied to understand tourist-intermediary interactions, and it summarizes the influencing factors found in some of the most representative studies.

4.2.4.1 Theoretical Frameworks

Social situation analysis. Social psychology focuses on the quality of social interaction and the meanings people attribute to their behavior and experience: what people do with one another, and how people think, feel, interpret, and cope during social episodes (Gardner, Innes, Forgas, O'Driscoll, Pearce, & Newton, 1981). From this angle, tourist-intermediary interactions can fall under the category of social psychological inquiry and thus can be investigated by applying social psychological theories. One application is the framework of social situation analysis, proposed by Argle, Furnham, and Graham in 1981. Based on hundreds of studies of social situations, they listed a series of principal components or elements of social situations, including *goal*, *sequences*, *rules*, *roles*, *language*, *concepts and cognitive structures*, and *environmental settings*.

This framework can help concentrate on the aspects of social situations of interest, avoid eclecticism by seeing the forests as well as the trees, and evade overgeneralizing findings without considering particular contexts (Pearce, 1984). Although it has been criticized as being static and ignoring the subjective understanding of actors in social

settings, it offers an introduction and framework rather than a full-bodied analysis of specific tourist-guide encounters, and thus can remedy the fragmentation of previous research (Pearce, 1984). Pearce (1984) applied this scheme to analyze tourist-guide interactions and suggested that future researchers need to consider detailed and contingent contextual information. Because of its capability of depicting the principal structural properties of social situations, Chapter 5 also applies it to deconstruct the social situation of onsite red tours and offers insight into tourists' perception towards the dynamics of their red experience.

Contact hypothesis. Contact hypothesis was first proposed by Allport (1979) to examine the influencing factors of interactions between ethnically and culturally different individuals and groups. A few key factors were found, involving type of contact, relative status between individuals, social sanctions, and common goals. According to Allport (1979), superficial contact may limit communication between two groups or individuals and exacerbate pre-existing stereotypes. On the other hand, in-depth interaction can exchange knowledge and form acquaintances between people and thus reduce stereotypes and prejudices. In the Chinese context, however, keeping a certain distance from strangers might be normal and appropriate and, therefore, in-depth tourist-guide interaction may be considered "unnecessary", reflected by a few personal interviews, "[there is] very little communication...mostly we were listening... there is nothing to ask" (Li, Zhang, & Zhao, interview, October, 2012).

Additionally, unequal status between individuals is an active factor in creating and maintaining prejudice (Allport, 1979; Amir, 1998). In China, tour guides usually have an inferior social status and tourists feel a sense of entitlement because they pay for guide services. Such unequal status seems to be offensive to site interpreters when clients call them "tour guides" and treat them as such. Third, social sanction may be influenced by the social context, which includes laws, customs, and the general atmosphere or level of acceptance. Beeftink (2011) pointed out that in the tourism context, this may be mediated through tourist codes of conduct, stereotypes towards tour guides, and group dynamics. Lastly, common goals during people's encounters are the primary force forming positive inter-group dynamics (Allport, 1979).

Contact hypothesis has been applied to understand tourist-guide or tourist-host (resident) interactions. For instance, Pizam, Uriely, and Reichel (2000) identified how the levels of contact between tourists and hosts can affect tourists' motivation and satisfaction. Tourists who experience a higher intensity of social contact with hosts were found to have more positive feelings and positive changes. Maoz (2010) utilized this to examine the interactions between Israeli tourists and Egyptian hosts, and the associated effects on reducing prejudice and negative stereotypes. Beeftink (2011) incorporated the elements of contact hypothesis along with additional components from the work of Cohen (1985), Weiler and Davis (1993), and Howard, Thwaites, and Smith (2001) to encompass the complexities of social and cultural impacts of interactions on both tour guides and tourists. This chapter also uses some elements of the contact hypothesis to explore the dynamics of onsite tourist-guide interactions.

Educational process and models. To understand how tourist-guide interactions can achieve educational goals, a series of education frameworks have been applied to understand the learning process during onsite encounters. For example, Forestell and Kaufman (1990) reviewed cognitive psychological theories and developed their own effective interpretation model that contains three stages of learning: creating a need for information, providing the needed information in an informed and interesting manner, and facilitating participation in follow-up activities.

Based on Forestell and Kaufman's (1990) model, Orams (1997) depicted five major steps of the interpretative process by integrating the theory of cognitive dissonance and the affective domain. This model emphasizes the importance of creating cognitive dissonance and a few approaches include providing interesting questions to stimulate participants' curiosity in the first stage, and offering feedback and assessment for the design of program changes in the last stage. In this way, long-term educational effects can be achieved. Luck (2003) employed these education frameworks as a theoretical foundation to explore tourists' perceptions about interpretation and, more specifically, whether tourists are willing to be educated on marine mammal tours. Some of the techniques mentioned by these frameworks will also be applied to analyze the story-telling process on red tours.

4.2.4.2 Influencing factors

Both facilitators and barriers/challenges of tourist-guide interactions have been explored at length. For instance, Beeftink (2011) examined the major factors of the

interactions between indigenous tour guides and foreign tourists in small-scale ecotourism programs. The factors were divided into three dimensions: tour characteristics, tourist/guide characteristics, and supportive environment. In this section, this three-dimensional framework is employed to review the factors discussed in previous research.

a. Tour Characteristics

Small scale. Previous research indicates that small-scale tours can facilitate positive interactions and cross-cultural understanding among participants and provide more opportunities for tourists to be involved alongside guides (Cohen, 1972; Smith, 2002). This study argues that the mediatory effect of small group size can also be counteracted by onsite crowdedness and carrying capacity since physical limitations and discomfort may lower the possibility of deeper interaction.

Tour length. Although tourist-guide interactions are limited in both depth and time, multi-day tours may enable intimate contact (Tucker, 2001). Holloway (1981) contended that a single-day trip may not be long enough to establish close relationships, but it can still help both tourists and guides go beyond fleeting relations. For Gutian, however, tour length may not serve as a predominant mediator between tourists and site interpreters, as usually the onsite interpretation lasts less than 40 minutes.

Tour activity. Tour activity is a way for tourists and guides to experience things and spend time with each other, and thus serves as a facilitator for their interactions, particularly when the activity is adventurous and cooperative in nature, such as

whitewater rafting (Beeftink, 2004). Yet this relationship is largely unexplored in the tourism literature.

All three factors discussed above can create opportunities for interactions between tourists and guides, and thus may help them increase mutual understandings, reduce stereotypes, and develop positive attitudes and trust towards each other (Alreshoud & Koeske, 1997; Amir, 1998; Pearce, 1982, 1994). Yet without considering the quality and nature of contact, the explanatory power may be limited. The following section discusses the subjective characteristics of both tourists and guides that may stimulate or impede their willingness to interact with each other, and shape the content, patterns, and dynamics of onsite communication.

b. Tourist/Guide Characteristics

A few characteristics of tourists and guides need to be considered when assessing interaction between visitors and the visited. Allport (1979) and Amir (1998) held that certain personalities may resist the influences of contact. Beeftink (2011) found that the similarity or disparity of age and personal stage in life may influence tourists' feelings of connection with a guide. Among a number of characteristics, goals/motivation is probably one of the most commonly discussed determinants. Previous research has revealed that common goals/motivation and interests can contribute to positive interactions where people may work together by pooling their efforts and resources (Allport, 1979; Amir, 1998; Pearce, 1982, 1984). For example, Cohen, Ifergan, & Cohen's (2002) work suggested that Jewish tourists' need for Madrich guides is a

reflection of their motivation to explore their identity and understand their heritage. Correspondingly, Israeli tour guides endeavor to meet Jewish tourists' goal of seeking authenticity by offering less definitive interpretations but more mind-opening insights and questions that encourage them to find their own significance and relevance in what they experience.

In this arena, both tourists and guides share common goals and are highly committed to positive interactions, and the former's attention is inwardly driven towards the latter. Even when both guides and tourists may seek to maximize their personal benefits, their goals can still be overlapped to a certain extent if both of their focuses are relevant to the visited objects. Yet when tourists' target is something entirely different (e.g. to get immersed in photo-taking activities to achieve their social visibility), then their attention may shift away from the interaction with guides. By the same token, tour guides may also try to reduce their burdensome guiding tasks by segregating themselves from the group whenever possible, which thus makes them less likely to engage tourists in a two-way interaction/exchange.

As the nature of an occupation and work environment can affect an employee's service attitudes and performance, it is necessary to investigate intermediaries' attitudes towards their guiding and interpreting job. Based on the interviews of tour guides in China, Hu (2007) found that the primary motives for tour guides choosing their career include flexible working time, chances of increasing social ability, and chances of making friends, while their complaints are primarily about heavy workloads, pressure,

and lack of protection of personal benefits. Some of these advantages and disadvantages might be applicable to tour guides in Gutian, yet it might not be the case for interpreters who are quasi civic employees. This study will compare the attitudes towards jobs between these two types of intermediaries, and how their likes and dislikes towards their existing work conditions can influence their guiding conduct.

c. Setting and Environment

The setting is the situation where actors encounter one another and participate in a form of collective rituals with commonly understood or taken-for-granted aims (Holloway, 1981). In the context of tourism, guiding conduct occurs in various settings, such as motor coaches, tourist attractions, shops, restaurants, and hotels. In these settings, a supportive environment promotes cooperation and positive interaction among participants. Schmidt (1979) contended that guides were more functional in the environmental setting with good internal structure (e.g. a factory or theme park). While agreeing with Schmidt's (1979) statement to a certain extent, Pearce (1984) also pointed out that sometimes in a cross-cultural settings with low levels of internal structure (e.g. a market or bazaar), there was still high demand for guides; otherwise, tourists may frequently break social and cultural rules and violate local behavioral codes (Ritter, 1975). Participants interact with each other in a setting through various media, such as language, cooperative activities, and dramaturgical performances. How these media can influence tourist-guide interactions was analyzed inconsistently across several studies. While some scholars found that language barriers may contribute to a harmonious relationship

between hosts and guests (Cohen, 1983), other scholars found the opposite to be true (Beeftink, 2011; Tucker, 2001).

Driven by the constructivist research paradigm, this study uses several factors reviewed above and conducts an inductive inquiry to understand the active factors that can influence the content and ways of interpreting by onsite intermediaries. Comparisons are administered to figure out what shapes the differences between tour guides and interpreters internally and externally.

4.3 Research Methods

4.3.1 Data Collection

There were multiple sources of qualitative data for this research. The primary data consist of onsite observations, personal interviews, and focus groups with tour guides and site interpreters. Secondary data include training materials and other official documents. Given that inductive research itself is a continuing process in which any activity undertaken may benefit data assembling, except the formal process of data collection, the author also paid attention to every causal chat with guides, listening to their word, and sensing their attitudes (Huff, 2008).

After arriving at Gutian in September 2012, the author took two package tours and followed a couple of guided tours onsite to become familiar with the research site. A number of informal interactions and conversations with several guides facilitated the author's gaining contextual information as quickly as possible. Meanwhile, the author

adopted the roles of non-participant observer and observer-as-participant, to explore the onsite interpretation (e.g. selection of objects of interests, choice of words, expression, speech rhetoric, etc.), the dynamics of tourist-intermediary interactions, and the surroundings/environmental settings. Extensive notes were taken during observations, providing a detailed impression of how the guided tour was carried out.

The author was then introduced by a local official and held one focus group with six interpreters in their office near the conference site. As the author spent nearly two and half months in Gutian, a closer relationship was gradually established between the researcher and the site interpreters who later provided their interpretative textbooks, training materials, and internal documents as sources of secondary data. They were also asked to help the author contact other interpreters who were not there for the first focus group and eventually two more personal interviews were conducted.

With regard to tour guides, several tour guides were asked on the spot whether they would agree to participate in an interview after they finished guiding. Most of them refused and complained that their guiding job had already tired them out. A handful of guides agreed, and the interviews turned out to be short, limited by the guides' time and schedules. Follow-up contact was made through emails or QQ (a Chinese instant messaging software), yet the response rate was unfortunately low. Thus it was decided that offsite interviews might be an alternative approach to interviewing tour guides. Through her personal network, the author was introduced to two major travel agents in Longyan Prefectural City, which has jurisdiction over Gutian Town. Two focus groups

with 13 tour guides and one personal interview were conducted. In total, 8 site interpreters and 14 tour guides participated in either focus group discussions or personal interviews, lasting from 55 minutes to 84 minutes with an average length of 65 minutes. All of the tour guides were female, new college/vocational school graduates or college interns majoring in tourism and hospitality management, dominating the tour guiding sector in Longyan. For the site interpreters, except for one woman who had worked in Gutian for 7 years, the rest were young females in their early or middle 20s, who had recently graduated from college and had been working as interpreters for 1-3 years.

Although a list of prefigured questions was presented to participants, all respondents were encouraged to talk about whatever they wanted to talk about, and emergent questions were generated during the data-collection process. Interview questions consisted of four categories. The first category included several opening questions related to the subjects' personal careers and the primary types of visitors they have encountered. For instance,

"How long have you been working as a tour guide/interpreter?"

"What types of visitors you have served?"

The second group of questions was about their interpretation and training. For example,

"How do you interpret red heritage to tourists?"

"Do you tailor your interpretations based on different types of visitors?"

"What are other factors/under what situation you will adjust your way of interpretation?"

"During your interactions with tourists, have you experienced some conflicts or difficulties? What are they and how did you handle it?"

"Have you taken any training session/class, if yes, what kind of training methods they have used?"

The third group of questions concentrates on their perceptions, involving:

"What are your roles during the interpreting/guiding process?"

"What do you think of your job?"

"Do you think your guiding/interpreting job can influence you? If yes, in what ways?"

Secondary data obtained from tour guides and interpreters include their training manuals and personal notes as mentioned earlier. In addition, job advertisements were analyzed to learn about the nature of the job (e.g. qualifications, requirements, selection process, staffing system, etc.).

4.3.2 Data Analysis

Two cycles of coding processes were performed sequentially. In the first cycle, transcripts were broken down into discrete parts, and examined and compared closely. This initial coding process allowed the researcher to remain open to all possible emerging theoretical directions and thus provide an opportunity to reflect deeply on the contents and nuances of the data (Charmaz, 2006; Saldana, 2012). A personal analytic memo was written beside the codes to reflect the process thus far. After the initial coding, coded data were recognized and reconfigured to develop a sense of categorical, thematic, conceptual,

and/or theoretical organization (Saldana, 2012). While some codes were merged together, other codes were dropped due to their infrequency, irrelevance, and redundancy (Lewins & Silver, 2007). After the second cycle coding process, a hierarchical/axial structure including themes (categories) and codes (subcategories) was developed. In this way, codes were not only labeled, but also linked organically to capture the big picture of guiding.

To increase the validity, a journal with observation notes documenting the process of data collection and coding was written to mark potential biases or unclear answers. While writing up the dissertation, the author referred back to the journal and materials to aid in interpretation and to reflect the perceptions of the interviewees more precisely. Given the huge number of transcripts, only part of the data was reviewed and recoded by two research assistants who speak both Chinese and English. Only a few minor differences, such as wording and categorizing, were found between the original codes and the reanalyzed codes.

4.4 Result and Discussion

4.4.1 Interpretation

After content analyzing the interpretative textbook, training materials, and notes from onsite observation, comparisons of interpretation between tour guides and site interpreters are summarized in the aspects of *content* and *approach*, discussed as follows.

4.4.1.1 Content

Both similarities and dissimilarities of interpretative content were found between tour guides and site interpreters, as listed in Table 4.1. To make it clearer, a diagram is provided to depict the sequences and spatial structure of the tourist attraction (Figure 4.1). To begin, both intermediaries emphasize the significance of the Gutian Conference by quoting some key national leaders' words, such as former President Jiang Zemin's epigraph at the entrance of the tourist attraction: "the Gutian Conference is the historic milestone of building our party and army." A few major conference decisions and resolutions that have far-reaching effects on China's revolutionary history are used to reinforce this significance, including *the correction of the mistaken views in the army since the Nanchang Uprising*, *the confirmation of Mao's leadership*, and *the reinforcement of Marxism-Leninism as guiding principles.* Lastly, ideological meanings were embedded to interpret scenic views outside the building and the decoration in the front meeting hall. For instance, the conference building used to be Hesheng Primary School, yet its name was changed to Dawn Primary School as the revolutionary dawn was coming, reflecting its associated political connotations (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1 Comparison of Interpretive Content between Site Interpreters and Tour guides

Sequences	**Tour Guides**	**Site Interpreters**
Opening	●Introduction of Gutian's geopolitical position ●Brief introduction of the content and political significance of the Gutian Conference: it is the historic milestone of	●Introduction of President Jiang's epigraph on the front side of the stone monument at the entrance from the aspects of *design* (structure, material, and style) and *content* ("the Gutian Conference is the historic

	establishing our party and army.	milestone of building our party and army"). ●Crystallization of the core content of the Gutian Conference: establishing our party and army under the guidelines of proletariat thoughts. ●Emphasis on the political significance of the Gutian Conference by quoting top national leaders' comments. For instance, "Comrade Mao Zedong develops and expands Lenin's thoughts of how to establish a party to the utmost level. You can learn about it from the decisions and resolutions of the Gutian Conference" commented by Deng Xiaoping. ●Introduction of Mao's epigraph on the back side of the stone monument, "a little spark can start a prairie fire," which is quoted from his letter to Linbiao. ●Summary of this letter, which was considered the embryo of Chinese revolutionary theory, including "*encircling the cities from the rural area*" and "*seizing the power by armed forces.*"
The scenic view outside of the conference building	● Introduction of the lawn near the conference site -The then ceremonial parade was reviewed by General Zhude here.	●Introduction of the lawn near the conference site: -This is where the then ceremonial parade was reviewed

	● A well and lotus pond near the conference building - This was where Mao took rest, walked a little, and considered the issue of establishing the party and country	by General Zhude. -This is where the CCTV "heart-to-heart" art troupe performed. ●A well and lotus pond near the conference building - This is where Chairman Mao took rest, walked a little, and considered the issue of establishing the party and country.
The front door of the conference building	●Introduction of the conference building with regards to: - *History*. It was originally the ancestral hall of the Liao's family in Qing Dynasty, and later became a local primary school - *Political connotation of changing school names*. Hesheng Primary School was changed into Dawn Primary School as the political dawn was coming. ● Introduction of the meaning of the couplets -The Liao's family learns advanced Western knowledge yet does not abandon Chinese traditions.	● History of the building: -It used to be the ancestral hall of Liao's family in Qing Dynasty -Introduction of the meaning of the couplets a. All the happiness are from the grace of our ancestors b. The Liao's family learns advanced Western knowledge yet does not abandon Chinese traditions ●Political connotation of changing school names: Dawn Primary School typifies that the revolutionary dawn is coming.
The courtyard	● The architectural structure of the front courtyard, front hall, the left- and right-wing rooms	●The structure of the building ●Decoration of the courtyard with a traditional style
The meeting hall	● Decoration of the front hall: political slogans (*against pure militarism*, *against opportunism*, and *against adventurism*), tables, chairs, teapot, blackboard, and a conference banner of "*the 9th*	● Decoration of the front hall: tables, chairs, teapot, blackboard, a conference banner of "*the 9th Meeting of The Forth Army of The Chinese Communist Party*", Party flag, the pictures

	Meeting of The Forth Army of The Chinese Communist Party," Party flag, the pictures of Marx and Engels, and an European style mural clock. ● Story of the black residue on the floor: it was left by the fire over which soldiers warmed themselves up, reflecting the living harsh conditions for the conference attendants. ● Introduction of the Gutian Conference in terms of when, where, who, and what. Attention was particularly paid to the conference content, including the correction of mistaken ideas within the army, the summary of the lessons of failures in army establishment since the Nanchang Uprising, and the conference committee election.	of Marx and Engels, an European style mural clock, political slogans (e.g. *against pure militarism*, *against opportunism*, and *against adventurism*). ● Story of the black residue on the floor: it was left by the fire over which soldiers warmed themselves up, reflecting the harsh living conditions for the conference attendants. ● Introduction of the Gutian Conference in the following aspects: - Scale (e.g. the number of delegates) - Content (e.g. the correction of mistaken views in the army since the Nanchang Uprising, the confirmation of Mao's leadership, the reinforcement of Marxism-Leninism as the guiding principles) - The election of the conference committee - The political significance of the Gutian Conference
The left-wing room	●Very simplistic and short introduction: "Only one table and two chairs. And this is where Mao reviewed documents and met delegates".	●Brief introduction of the previous eight and the 9th conferences: -1st: when, where, who, and what are the election results -2nd: the election and military force restructuring

		-3rd: the election and mistaken military decision -4th: the election -5th: the military restructuring and lessons from Xiangnan Failure -6th: the election and political restructuring -7th: the issues within the army, correction of mistaken views, and election -8th: the army establishment, lessons of failure, the promotion of army morale, and strengthening disciplines ●Introduction to the offices of Mao Zedong and Chen Yi, whose room it was and what were their political positions.
The right-wing room	None	● Introduction of the General Front Committee with regards to: *election* criteria (e.g. correct political views, hardworking, having the experience of battle), *name*, *hometown*, *political position*, and *main achievement/story*.
The CCTV "heart-to-heart" art troupe in 1999	●Introduction of the auspicious/superstitious saying of the mysterious weather: when the heart-to-heart artistic troupe came to Gutian, the rain came down in torrents. Yet when Guyue, an actor, portrayed Mao [and] came out, the rain stopped immediately. It seems like he has some supernatural power to stop	● Briefly mentioned in the beginning while introducing the lawn near the conference building (this is where the CCTV "heart-to-heart" art troupe was held) ●They are forbidden to talk about auspicious legends

	the rain. ● Introduction of some folk legends about the conference site and Mao Zedong. Local people consider the places where Mao has visited to be lucky and auspicious places.	

Sources: Sorted by the author based on interpretative textbook, training materials, intermediaries' personal notes, and the researcher's field notes.

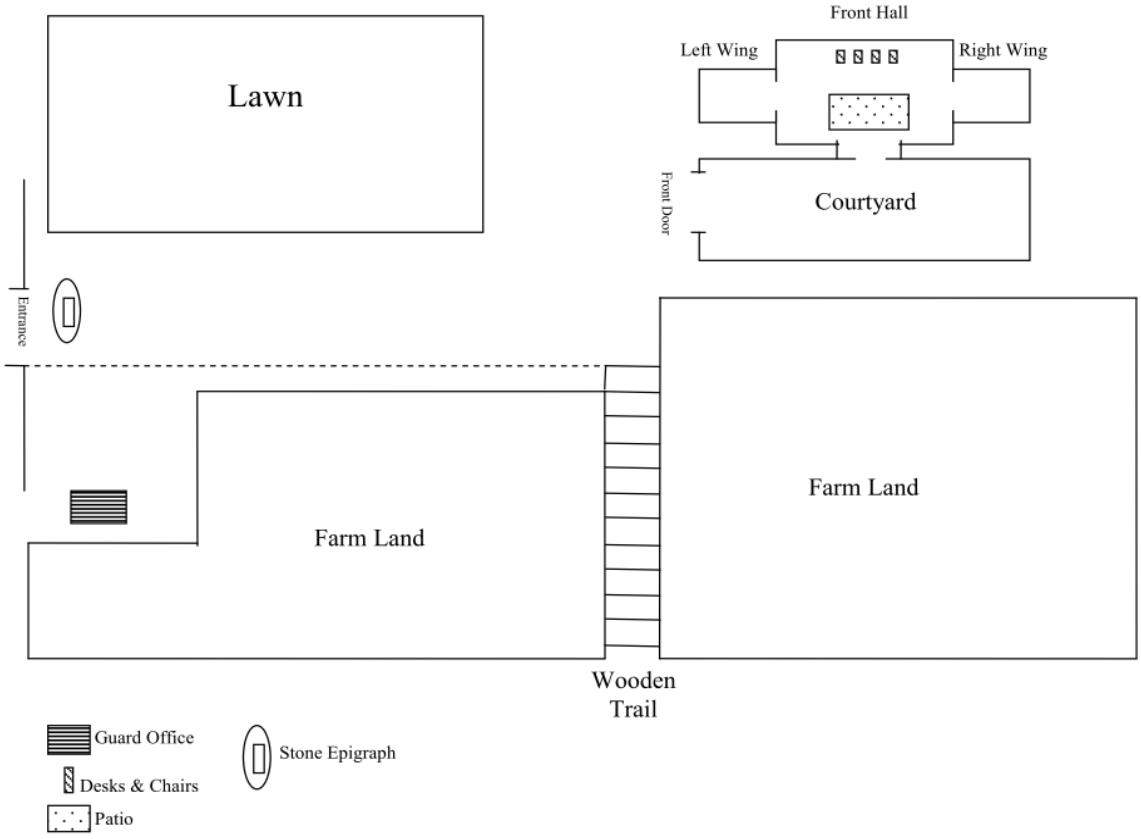


Figure 4.1 Diagram of the Gutian Conference Site

There were significant disparities between these two types of intermediaries as well. While site interpreters provide detailed introductions of major conference delegates in the left-wing room and previous eight conferences of the CCP in the right-wing room,

tour guides only give a very rough overview and then ask tourists to visit these rooms and read the introductory panels by themselves (Table 4.1). This is probably because there is no relevant information in the tour guides' training manuals.

Moreover, a good portion of tour guides' interpretation is about the auspicious/ superstitious phenomenon of Gutian, including at least some of the following legends: 1) *Defoliation*. Defoliation never falls down on the roof of the conference building even though there is a forest right behind it; 2) *Spider web*. There are no spider webs in the conference building; 3) *Banyan tree*. The big banyan tree in front of the conference building died when Mao passed away in 1976; 4) *Snake*. A snake, signifying the dragon (the symbol of king) in Chinese culture, slithered in front of President Hu when he visited the conference site in 1999 and he became the national president four years later; 4) *Mysterious weather*. When the heart-to-heart artistic troupe came to Gutian in 1999, the rain came down in torrents. Yet when Guyue, an actor that portrayed Mao, came out, the rain stopped immediately, suggesting that he has some supernatural power to stop the rain.

Despite the attractiveness of these mysterious legends, tour guides also admit that they need to observe tourists' responses and interpret them carefully. As suggested by some of the tour guides, they usually add "this is just some local saying… please just listen to it and do not take it seriously" at the end of the interpretation (Chen, Hua, & Jiang, October 2012). It is an effective way to avoid some tourists' questioning towards controversial content. Site interpreters, in contrast, do not buy into these legends, and one interpreter remarked, "People just mystified it. Isn't it common to see snakes in rural

area?" In actuality, they are not allowed to talk about superstitious legends as well as unofficial/unauthorized narratives, given the political attributes of red heritage.

There are three types of interpretative information: *directional*, *behavioral*, and *educational* (Hu, 2007; Kou, 2002). *Directional guiding* refers to giving basic information about the tour and destination (e.g. direction, distance, and approximate time); *behavioral information* is often represented as socio-cultural and environmental guidelines with the goal of modifying visitors' onsite behavior; and *educational information* aims to help visitors gain an in-depth understanding of destinations. The results of content analysis reveal that the interpretations provided by both site interpreters and tour guides are primarily about directional information, focusing on "when, where, and what" of the Gutian Conference or factual things about distinct topics. Educational information was sporadically offered in the form of more or less clumsy references to ideology. For example, an account of the political structure is provided throughout the process of interpretation. Very little effort, however, is made to provide connections for visitors, promote the audience's participation, or encourage visitors' mindfulness. Participatory interaction and the pieces of information with big ideas or relevant ones to audiences themselves are in fact more likely to be remembered and internalized by tourists than isolated facts (Weiler & Ham, 2002). A few potential underlying factors may include the ulterior motive of sustaining commercial viability, limited personal knowledge, career orientation, and interpreters' personal opinions of the communist past.

4.4.1.2 Approach

In spite of being potentially informative and contextualized, both tour guides and site interpreters appear to pin interpretation down to prescription by giving a memorized, well-rehearsed and scripted speech. A number of approaches to building interpretative content suggested in previous studies, such as humor, analogy, metaphor, and opportunities to ask questions, were rarely applied by intermediaries. One exception is the commentary on the black residue left on the floor, making the interpretation more visual and vivid.

Giving a clear and simple explanation can help to reduce the gap between the information and visitors' current knowledge; it alone cannot, however, give a transformative experience that can lead to a positive change in attitudes and values among participants (Christie & Mason, 2003). In reality, tour guides admit that their own interpretation cannot even transform themselves, not to mention the audiences.

> *"I do not have many feelings... I just make myself know a little bit more stuff...maybe a little bit, but just temporary, [it] just lasted for a while. Yet I forgot when I left the building" (Chen, Li, & Liao, interview, November 2012).*

Sometimes even if they have feelings, such feelings can be diluted by the interpreting experience.

> *"At first I felt these revolutionary pioneers were great as they loved and sacrificed for our country. I felt enthusiastic when I was talking about their stories... yet the more you talk, the less feeling you have. Sometimes you only feel that your lips are moving...not much feeling" (Liao, interview, November 2012).*

Nonetheless, the working environment has tremendous impacts on intermediaries with regards to their values and behaviors. The opportunity to meet with all walks of life makes them learn how to manage personal emotions and communicate with different types of clients. Correspondingly, their sense of responsibility and achievement has been significantly improved.

Distinctive characteristics were also found between tour guides and site interpreters. Interpreters wear the uniform of the liberation army soldier to create staged authenticity, and they tend to provide detailed, uniform, politically, and ideologically "correct" commentaries in a more formal and professional way. On the other hand, tour guides usually dress casually, and their interpretation is inclined to be colloquial and less structured. In some cases, they even use rumors and anecdotes about national leaders (e.g. Mao's illegitimate children in western Fujian Province) to attract the audience's attention, break the ice, and establish relationships with them.

4.4.2 Tourist-Intermediary Interaction

Both observation and personal or group interviews suggest that onsite interpretation is more likely to be given in a mundane lecturing manner in which visitors mostly listen and unmotivated to interact with interpreters. During a handful of infrequent encounters, visitors interact with intermediaries by asking questions, giving suggestions, and correcting guides' inappropriate commentaries.

In the interpreter-tourist interaction, more often than not, the interaction appears to be interruptive, permeated by the issue of power. Visitors have a sense of entitlement as they pay for interpretation service, reflected by interpreters' complaints about visitors' disrespectful and disdainful attitudes and words, such as, "I wanna BUY one interpreter" and "Who is gonna to SERVE us." "We are not misses (prostitute) who serve customers" one senior interpreter reacted angrily. What is more, due to the power structure shaped by the business philosophy of "customer is king", the visitors who think they buy interpreters' time take their own superior status for granted. As a result, it is not uncommon to see that they make interpreters follow them wherever they want to go and serve them in whatever act they are engaged in (e.g. photographing, shopping), revealing the absence of a shared behavioral protocol between guides and tourists.

Slightly different from this type of interaction, power is somewhat diluted in the tourist-tour guide interaction. Some possible explanations might be that the money paid by tourists is not exclusively for interpretation service but the whole journey, or the large number of guided group members may decrease an individual's sense of entitlement. As soon as they arrive at the destination, the tourists are informed about the schedule, such as when and where to assemble, and then the tourists are free to choose to follow or not to follow their guide and listen to the interpretation. In this case, the ones who follow tour guides generally are more or less interested in red heritage and pay a certain degree of attention to the interpretation, and thus the interactions are more harmonious. Yet this does not necessarily mean that the experience is complaint-free. One frequently emerging

theme is that tourist's expectations are too high regarding tour guides, as though they are supposed to be walking encyclopedia.

> *"Sometimes they ask irrelevant questions, such as where does [the] rapeseed plant grow... Why and how should I know? But he criticized me… [and said] that I am not knowledgeable enough." (Liao, interview, November 2012).*

This reflects that, while intermediaries share their expertise with their clients through information dissemination, they sometimes feel helpless and fear being showed up by a particularly knowledgeable tourist or trouble maker.

Intermediaries' responses to tough tourists vary. A few common reactions include appreciating the experience as a great learning opportunity, ignoring criticisms, smiling and humbly admitting their shortage of relevant knowledge and promising to study harder, lowering tourists' expectation by warning them of the poor food quality in rural areas in advance, and smiling in front of visitors but complaining to their colleagues afterwards.

> *"Some tourists are really uncivil and underbred ... sometimes it is really like casting pearls before swine. What we expect is mutual respect during the interaction where they ask normal questions without interrupting our interpretation" (Chen, Liao, Zhang, & Xie, Interview, November 2012).*

Intermediaries can also exert power over tourists reversely. They can control tourists' movement spatially and temporarily, and tell them the dos and don'ts. Unlike Madrich guides in Israel whose power originates in the notion of role model and prototype for imitation and emulation (Cohen et al., 2002), intermediaries' power in Gutian stems from their professionalization and knowledge, and even superstitions. For instance, tourists are asked not to step on the highest level of the stairs near the

conference building where many photos are taken as "you may fail in your life and career after reaching the peak." Therefore, according to tour guides, only the greatest figures, like Chairman Mao, deserve to stand on such high apexes. Surprisingly, these very tour guides who warned of the "taboo" commented on visitors' obedience to their words as "ridiculous", saying "they are so docile and dare not to step on it" (Ye, interview, November 2012). In spite of the jurisdiction that intermediaries have over their clients for the length of the tour, it is temporary and unclearly defined. Therefore, conflicts between guides and clients may become personal power struggles, with no clear guidelines for resolution (Cohen, 1985).

Given the similarities and dissimilarities between authorized narratives and actual interpretation, as well as tour guides and site interpreters in terms of interpretation and interactive dynamics, this study probes into how both the backstage and front-stage settings help shape the dynamics of the story-telling process, which may help the Chinese government understand the barriers and/or facilitators to maintain the uniformity of story-telling throughout the meaning-making process, and thus achieve the goal of ideological (re)construction.

4.4.3 Influencing Factors of Interpretation and Interaction

4.4.3.1 Institutional Arrangement

Staffing System and Career Orientation. As mentioned in the literature review, site interpreters are employees of the Gutian Conference Memorial Museum, which is a

prefectural-level public service unit under the jurisdiction of Longyan City. According to the Chinese bianzhi system, they are quasi-civil servants who belong to the public service system yet are managed according to the civil service scales. Although its administrative status is not as prestigious as the civil service system, entry into such a system is desirable and increasingly competitive. The qualification criteria and hiring process for site interpreters are equivalent to that of civil servants, which is regarded as strict and competitive. The recruitment process consists of a *written exam*, which is an annual nationwide *Civil Service Entrance Examination* designed to test candidates' administrative career aptitude, and a *personal interview*, comprising a three-part *trial lecture/interpretation* (40%), *professional defense* (30%), and *personal "talent show"* (30%) (Job Advertisement of Site Interpreters at the Gutian Memorial Museum, 2009). Accordingly, candidates who successfully pass all these selection rounds may possess considerable professional pride and draw a clear demarcation line with tour guides. Fieldwork reveals that their career focus is centered on hosting higher official dignitaries who visit Gutian. Consequently, no matter whether it is high or low season for tourism, they always have a heavy workload in receiving and hosting officials. Because they are political reception-oriented rather than market-oriented, interpreters sometimes refuse to offer interpretation services to ordinary tourists when they are overloaded. Many of them regard the interpreting job as the start of their career from the bottom for further promotion or position transfer to other departments. This orientation may assist in explaining their lacking of effort to establish interactive and close relationships with tourists.

On the other hand, they have a different career path and salary system, tour guides are much more customer-oriented. Their main goal during guiding is to maintain a good relationship with tourists in a variety of ways, such as chitchatting with visitors about various topics (e.g. red heritage, Hakka culture, local economy, news and even gossip).

> *"We have to establish and maintain a good and close relationship with tourists... otherwise even if you are good at interpretation, it does not work" (focus group I with tour guides, October 2012).*

Despite starting their careers fairly recently, most admit that tour guiding is merely a temporary job option and they would like to change their career in the near future. Their current position is regarded as a conduit to establish their social networks and better their social skills for the purpose of developing their own business or finding other promising careers in the future. Lacking a well-defined career path and stable source of income can account for their attitudes towards guiding jobs.

> *"We tried our best to make tourists happy... make them satisfied...and buy stuff... but what we have given is way more than what we have received" (focus group I with tour guides, October 2012).*

Quality Control and Monitoring. Distinct strategies might be adopted to professionalize and control intermediaries who are under different institutional arrangements. Training and qualification examinations (e.g. certification, licensing) are some of the most commonly used measures of controlling and monitoring intermediaries' performance.

As aforementioned, tour guide quality is controlled and monitored by national, provincial, and local tourism authorities through qualification exams, licensing, and other

measures. Yet such quality management is more likely to be feedforward control instead of concurrent and feedback control. In other words, tour guides need to make considerable efforts to pass the qualification exam by memorizing scripted commentaries of major tourist attractions in Fujian province. Typically, the oral exam does not exceed eight minutes, which may help explain why tour guides' interpretation tends to be shallow and short. Except for the interpretative materials offered by travel agents, little training is provided after tour guides obtain legal permission to work. In most cases, tour guides are asked to read training materials, search information online, and develop their personal narratives for interpretation. Consequently, tour guides may tailor their commentaries based on their personal knowledge, and they may attempt to reduce their workloads (rather than being based on tourists' preferences and taste). A tour guide admitted that the reason for her not to introduce "*the letters from the central committee in September and February*" is that she does not know much about such elusive revolutionary theories.

> *"We were not born in that age... it is easy for us to forget it as we just learn by memorizing" (Ye, interview, November 2012).*

Aside from the official narratives, some other unofficial content, such as rumors and anecdotes about politicians, is inherited from senior tour guides and added into the interpretation repertoire. Previous studies suggested that to avoid planned, rehearsed, and well-researched lecture, tour guides should be encouraged to use the organization's resources to develop their own personal commentaries. In such a way, guides' own efforts and motivation can be elicited to make them feel in control of the tour materials,

not get bored of their interpreting exercises, which might increase satisfaction with their jobs (Pearce, 1984).

In the case of Gutian, such autonomy does help tour guides personalize their interpretation texts and develop their personal styles by emphasizing different topics, such as background stories of the red army and several "firsts" (e.g. the first time the red army got its military uniform; the first time the army had its own hospital). However, the root cause of giving such seemingly decentralized interpretation is saving training costs and maximizing marginal profits for travel agents. In fact, tour guides favor such flexibility, which enables them to escape from the painstaking process of memorizing interpretative content. Onsite observations revealed that sometimes tour guides even try to transfer their interpretative duty to site interpreters by asking tourists to follow the interpreters. In summary, quality assurance practices do contribute to enhancing tour guiding quality and maintaining high standards of guiding practice to a certain extent, yet they lack feedback control, as well as the focus on harnessing it as an instrument for ideological indoctrination. Accordingly, it is not surprising that there are significant dissonance between actual interpretation and the political goal that the government aims to achieve.

For site interpreters, there is a relatively strict system of performance management, comprising official training, exam evaluation, and onsite peer evaluations. The trainers are always experts in revolutionary history, such as the curator, the head of Party History Research Office of Longyan Prefectural City, and academic researchers at universities.

After the training session, both written and oral exams are carried out to assess interpreters' knowledge and skills. Onsite peer evaluation is also performed at times where interpreters point out the disadvantages of each other that need to be improved. When in the office, interpreters are not allowed to use the internet; rather, they are required to study books, journals, and any other relevant documents and materials about the Gutian Conference and revolutionary history. Through such continuous study, they are expected to achieve a solid understanding of relevant background information.

4.4.3.2 Environmental Settings

Settings can dramatically influence how people perceive goals, rules, potential roles, and expectations for social interactions under certain circumstances. For example, Holloway (1981) analyzed tourist-guide interactions in a motor coach setting which separates tourists from the outside environment and limits their contact with indigenous populations. Under this environmental setting, tourists' attention seems more inwardly directed towards the guide, and the locals become objects to be gazed upon.

The conference building covers an area of 826 square meters (8891 square feet), a relatively small structure when considering the upsurge in tourist arrivals in the past five years. During the peak season, such as the "golden week" in October, this traditional wooden structured is crowed with a perpetual stream of visitors all day. Crowdedness and carrying capacity play a dramatic role in visitors' physical comfort, their access to the guides, and hence the dynamics of tourist-intermediary interactions. To achieve the best effect of interpretation and interaction, each room (the left and right-wing rooms and the

front hall) should only accommodate one guide at a time. Yet during the peak season, voices of several guides and tourists are chaotically interwoven and thus significantly weaken the effect of interpretation.

For tour guides, deleting or adding interpretation content largely depends on available time and specific itinerary. Usually the guided group spends 30 to 40 minutes on the conference site, including 10 to 15-minutes of interpretation and 15 to 20-minutes of free time for tourists' personal activities. Yet when the group is in a hurry to get to the next spot, less or no interpretation is offered. If the itinerary also contains other red sites in the Longyan Prefectural Area, then less background information is provided by tour guides. On the other hand, the environmental setting does not seem to have as much impact on site interpreters as it does on tour guides, since the former's interpretation is highly standardized. Yet because of carrying capacity and crowdedness, sometimes the museum office refuses to dispatch interpreters even if there is tourists demand.

4.4.3.3 Characteristics of Tourists

Based on onsite observation and interviews with intermediaries, most visitors seem to be interested in photography, superstitious legends, wandering around, and enjoying the natural landscape. Many genuine red tourists have a tendency to stay longer, listen to the interpretation carefully, ask questions, and even research information prior to their arrival. Intermediaries attempt to fit their communication to the audiences' interests. Among tour guides, if tourists lack interest in red heritage, they may try to shift topics. Guides usually plough around tourists' interests en route. After receiving some positive

responses or opposing voices they continue or discontinue the topic, such as superstitious legends.

> *"At first you really need to learn about what they are interested in, whether it is revolutionary history, Hakka culture, local tradition and customs, and even news, Weibo (Chinese Twitter), mysterious phenomenon, and rumors of great leaders" (Ye, interview, November 2012).*

Yet interpreters' way of accommodating primarily remains at the quantitative level, namely, shortening or elaborating on red content. Depending on tourists' attitudes and responses, site interpreters may provide information about local culture, geography, economy, and the incident of President Hu's visit at most, yet unofficial history and superstitious legends are considered forbidden topics. Therefore, tourists' interests have salient repercussion for tourist-intermediary interactions.

Tourists' interest can also be influenced by their socio-demographic characteristics (Chang, 2006; Kim & Chalip, 2004; Oh, Cheng, Lehto, & O'Leary, 2004). Take political status as an example. Government visitors are usually more familiar with revolutionary history, have higher political awareness, and show a stronger interest in red heritage, as reflected by their onsite behavior, such as reading interpretative panels carefully, visiting every room and lingering much longer. Accordingly, tour guides may elaborate on revolutionary history by providing more detailed contextual information, and they may avoid talking about unofficial elements of history and superstitious legends.

> *"We cannot tell everyone that there is no defoliation on the roof…but you may talk about how the visit to Gutian can help them to achieve their personal career promotion. In fact, many officials like this topic" (focus group I with tour guides, October 2012).*

For young people and/or school students, some wording may need to be adjusted according to their level of understanding. For instance, the phrase "the Party commands the gun but the gun must never be allowed to command the Party," a more informal and lucid expression, is adopted to illustrate the abstract idea of the primacy of the CCP as decision-makers in Marxist-Leninist and Maoist theories of democratic centralism. Yet site interpreters also admitted that it is hard to narrate the history in a vivid and entertaining way. After all, "history is history and we need to abide by and respect it" (Li, Chen, & Ye, interview, November 2012). This suggests that intermediaries tend to equate the authenticity of history to tedious education and mundane interpretation.

4.4.3.4 Self-Perceived Roles

Hu (2007) probed the roles of tour guides from their own perspectives and identified both macro-level roles (e.g. civil ambassador) and micro-level roles (e.g. babysitter). While a widespread agreement on the items of civil ambassador, interpreter, sales representative, and pathfinder were found across interviewees, the roles of baby-sitters and friends were only sporadically mentioned by the participants (Hu, 2007). To investigate whether and how the perspectives of employer and the policy authority can influence tour guides' attitudes towards their responsibilities and conduct in guiding practices, Hu (2007) then elicited travel agents and governments' views on the roles of tour guides respectively. A comparison among these three entities' views suggests that tour guides' descriptions of their own roles are most comprehensive, including not only government and travel agents' expectations of their political and business functions, but

also tourists' reliance on them as interpreter, pathfinder, friend, and even babysitter. Therefore, it can be concluded that tour guides have a good understanding of the expectations of the key stakeholders they are accountable for (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Roles of Tour Guides from Stakeholder Perspectives

Tour guide	**Travel agent**	**Government**
Civil ambassador	Service provider	Service provider
Interpreter	Representatives	Propagandists
Sales representative		Civil ambassadors
Pathfinder		
Friend		
Babysitter		

Sorted by the Author based on Hu's (2007) Work

Table 4.3 Self-Perceived Roles of Tour Guide and Site Interpreter in Gutian

Stakeholder	**Site Interpreter**	**Tour Guide**
For tourists	Teacher	Babysitter
	Story Teller/Information Disseminator	Actor/Clown
		Relationship Maintainer
For employers and/or work partners	Errand Runner	Bridge/Representative
		Coordinator

Significantly different from Hu's (2007) findings, neither tour guides nor site interpreters consider their political and social roles at the macro-level as the government expects. Instead, the aspects of operating practices and business partnership were highlighted in the data (Table 4.3). Deviating from site interpreters who emphasize the interpretative function, tour guides place considerable weight on logistic and relational

aspects of guiding practices, such as taking care of tourists' needs, coordinating transportation, accommodation, tourist attractions, and other business partners. This might be explained by tour guides' client-driven career orientation. Onsite observations also discovered that tour guides forced themselves to energize and behave enthusiastically while guiding, yet they appeared to be exhausted and withered immediately after tourists went off to walk by themselves. Site interpreters considered themselves teachers who get a sense of achievement if audiences' facial expressions indicate that "they really get what you mean" (Zhang, interview, November 2012). Yet the role of being a guide-teacher is still different from being a school teacher, in that guides teach independently of academic curriculum in short periods of time and thus may have less responsibility for, and impacts on, visitors (Pond, 1993). Moreover, to carry out effective interpretation, interpreters are required to move quickly to study audiences, including their socio-demographic background, interests, and motivation. In conclusion, the aforementioned influencing factors, including staffing system, career orientation, and characteristics of clients, can exert substantial influences on the ways intermediaries perceive their roles during tourist-intermediary interaction, and affect their method of, and emphasis on, interpretation, as depicted in Figure 4.2.

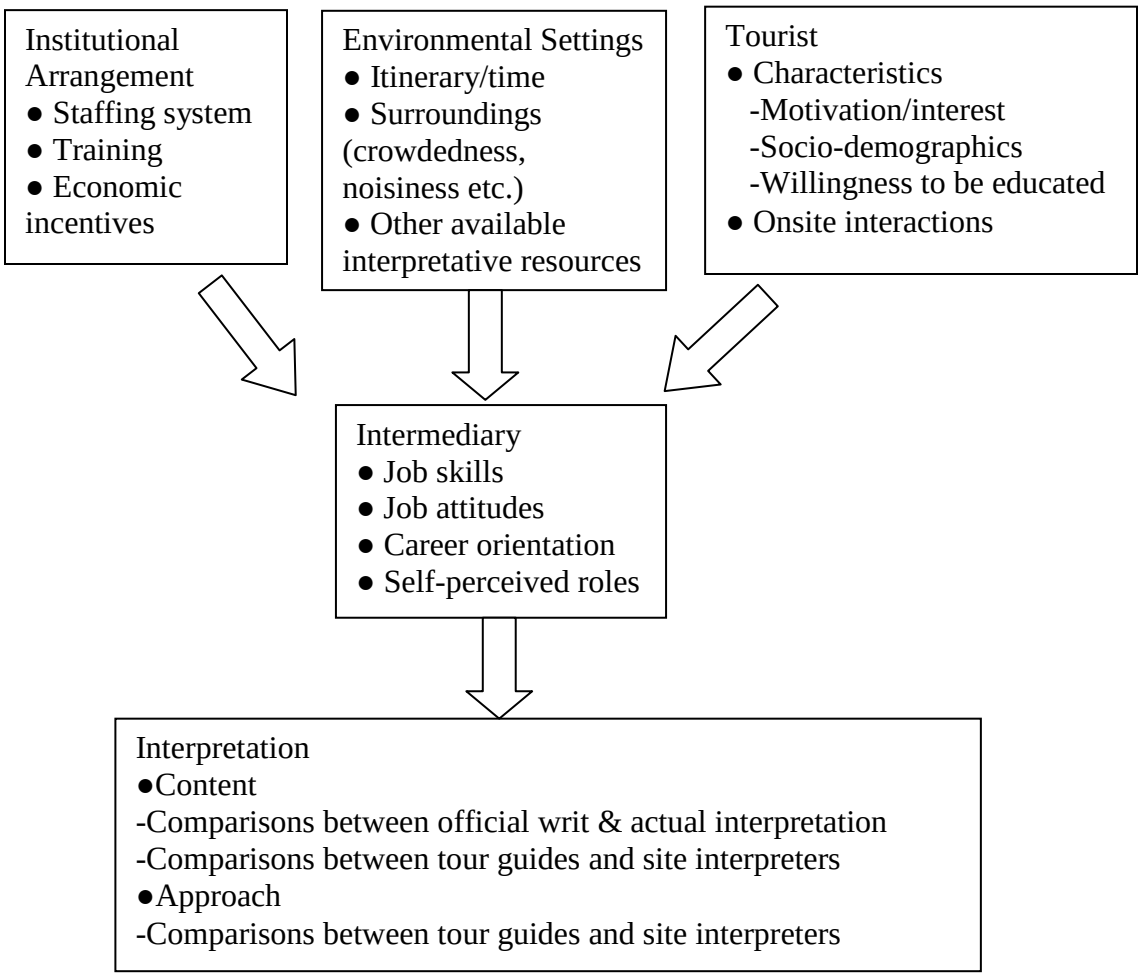


Figure 4.2 A Systematic View of the Dynamics of Interpretation

4.5 Conclusion

Tourism is an arena for discourse construction and manipulation, and the interpretation of toured objects can be used as a political instrument for forming and transforming national identities and justifying political power (Norton, 1996; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006). The political meaning-making process is permeated by power, reflected by the issue of who defines and controls content and the form of interpretative practices

(Dahles, 2002; Salazar, 2007). Yet such power may not guarantee whether the information can be absorbed by audiences. Tourists, as story consumers, also possess the power to select, filter, accept, and even reinterpret the messages disseminated by the representatives of authority. Serving as a bridge between authority and audience, intermediaries play a pivotal role in the meaning-making process of communist heritage, in that tourists view and interpret red stories through the words of tour guides to a large extent. From this angle, intermediaries are (re)producers of heritage narratives and entrusted with the role of public relations representatives who are expected to encapsulate the glory and essence of former revolutionary sites.

Although official narratives might be highly codified and authorized, the commentaries provided by intermediaries may still be different from what the government requires to be disseminated and local residents would provide. This can be attributed to what Stam, Steege, and Bras (1999) suggested as the role of intermediaries, who have multiple masters and are not altruistic mediators, as they attempt to derive the greatest number of benefits from their work. This can also help explain that, while some guides may focus on and gain a sense of achievement from representing local heritage and culture, others are prone to be more business-oriented and interested in selling tourism products.

There is an emerging concern about noncumulative studies in the social sciences. A number of studies are conducted as separate and unrelated pieces of work, which may defy the systematic nature of tourism (Pearce, 1984). Viewing intermediaries as rational

people as in any other profession, this study situates tour guiding and interpreting practices in a larger context by integrating political, social, and economic forces, as well as onsite contingent factors to explore how intermediaries' methods of interpretation can be influenced by these external and internal factors. Comparisons between tour guides and site interpreters, two major types of intermediaries in Gutian, who are under different staffing systems, can offer a lens to reveal the underlying factors of the story-telling process.

According to MacCannell (1999), sights are transformed into tourist attractions in five stages. The first stage is *naming*, during which the sights are "made worthy of preservation, including authentication and reports testifying to the object's aesthetic, historical, monetary, recreational, and social values" (MacCannell, 1999, p.44). The second stage, *framing and elevating*, involves the display of an object or opening a sight for visitation, placing an official boundary around the object, which is protected and enhanced (Fine & Speer, 1985; MacCannell, 1999). During the third stage, *enshrinement*, ritual negotiation and performance are adopted to make a tourist attraction within its boundaries even more valuable (Fine & Speer, 1985; MacCannell, 1999). The fourth stage is *mechanical reproduction*, during which prints, photographs, models, or effigies of the object are created (MacCannell, 1999). The last phase is *social reproduction* where groups, cities, and regions begin to name themselves after famous attractions (MacCannell, 1999).

For Gutian, the process of sacralization focuses primarily on the first two phases of *naming* (e.g. providing referential discourses about the history of the conference building; performing in a didactic style), and *framing and elevating* (e.g. redecorating the meeting hall with antique furniture, banners, and slogans to re-enact the scene). Little evidence was found for enshrinement, mechanical reproduction, and social reproduction, except the creation of photos, prints and effigies of the Gutian conference building and Chairman Mao Zedong.

Previous studies have emphasized the dramaturgical skills and performance competence of tour guides, which can catch the audience's attention, stimulate audiences to think as interpretation is interwoven with worries, beliefs, concerns, and a sense of humor (Ham, 1992; Moscardo, 1999; Pond, 1993; Tilden, 1967). Yet little research has been conducted to analyze verbal performance on guided tours (Fine & Speer, 1985). Based on observations of onsite interpretation and content analysis of authorized interpretative texts, this chapter examined the structure and functions of intermediaries' speech content.

The results suggest that intermediaries tell the story they have learned by heart and repeat over and over again. The content is centered on the history and structure of the conference building; political significance, decisions and resolutions of the Gutian Conference; Mao's revolutionary theories; and a brief account of several conference delegates. Yet this reproduction of rehearsed narratives is not devoid of deviation from the official version. While site interpreters are more strictly trained and regulated to

enforce ideological indoctrination, the control system does not necessarily restrain tour guides, as opposed to what Dahles (2002) found in Indonesia. Often, to entertain tourists, the latter share auspicious/superstitious legends which goes against the images and narrative desired by the government.

Tour guides and tourists are engaged in mutual negotiation during their encounter. For example, to lessen their workload, guides suggest that tourists wander around by themselves or follow site interpreters. Even when interpretation is offered, most of it focuses on factual information that may not encourage tourists to step outside of their normal life, knock them off-balance, challenge their attitudes, and modify their behaviors (Christie & Mason, 2003; Orams, 1995; Tucker, 2001). In some cases, tourists challenge intermediaries intentionally by asking tough questions. If intermediaries do not know the answer, tourists will complain or even ridicule them for having insufficient knowledge. The majority of tourists do not pay much attention to interpretation. Even if intermediaries would like to provide an interpretative framework to determine the significance of communist heritage sites and construct officially-desired images of red heritage, the effectiveness can be compromised if tourists are not willing to be educated and lack motivation and common goals with intermediaries.

Institutional arrangements (staffing system, training, and economic incentives), environmental settings (carrying capacity, crowdedness, and itinerary), characteristics of tourists (motivation, interest, and socio-demographics) and tourist-intermediary onsite interactions, can have significant impacts on intermediaries' job skills, career attitudes

and orientation, and self-perceived roles, and further shape their way of interpreting the past. Some of these influencing factors are consistent with previous studies by Cohen (1972), Allport (1979), Holloway (1981), Pearce (1982, 1984), Smith (2002), Hu (2007), and Beeftink (2011). In addition, these external and internal factors are found to affect tour guides and site interpreters in different ways. For instance, crowdedness may make tour guides provide less or even no interpretation, yet site interpreters normally provide highly standardized commentaries no matter how crowded the site is. Both of them would alter their interpretation in accordance with visitors' reactions, yet site interpreters may only adjust it quantitatively by adding or deleting certain pieces of information, while tour guides may change it qualitatively by shifting topics and even talking about officially forbidden content.

This study contributes to existing knowledge about tour guiding by systematically investigating the dynamics of tour guiding and onsite interpretation. From an inductive perspective, both external and internal factors at macro and micro levels have been explored to understand how they contribute to shaping the content and methods of interpretation. A conceptual framework that describes such dynamics was developed inductively, laying the groundwork for future studies of tour guiding and open to adding new components in different research contexts.

The comparisons provide insights for the government, the tourism authority, the Gutian Memorial Museum, and travel agents/tour operators. First, the traditional competency-based training with an emphasis on knowledge transmission and skill

acquisition can facilitate guides in quickly gaining and tracking their qualifications and skills. Yet such feedforward control may discourage tour guides from pursuing better practices and continuous improvements after acquiring relevant certificates and licenses. Hence, effective concurrent and feedback control systems are needed to guarantee the quality of guiding service and interpretation. Second, both tour guides and site interpreters provided mostly scripted interpretation, characterized by replies that recite officially authorized and memorized narratives, merely giving facts and figures, and lacking input from tourists. Thus, employers and/or the tourism authority should integrate theories of relevant subjects (e.g. psychology, education, and communication) into training sessions, and show trainees how to apply these theories in their interpreting and guiding duties. For example, a few applications of Orams' (1997) education model contains creating the need for interpretation by stimulating curiosity; linking the toured objects to audiences' personal life; using analogies, metaphors, and humor; and engaging tourists by asking questions.

Measures of effective interpretation have been suggested in previous research, such as knocking the audiences a little off balance, promoting critical reflection of their own values and assumptions, and offering clients opportunities to see the world differently rather than badgering or indoctrinating them. In spite of these ideal ways of interpreting, such value transformation is rarely seen in Gutian and perhaps many other places in China. One major reason is that the guiding profession is located on the lowest rungs of society and is merely considered a means of making a living for most tour guides. In other words, guides are not situated in a good social position to undertake such

a crucial role of ideological education and transformation. Given the inferior status of tour guides and limited time for onsite interaction, it is hard to achieve the profound effects that the authority expects. After all, tour guides are not preachers or spiritual mentors. In light of this, performance evaluation and incentive measures need to be carried out to modify tour guides' job attitudes and career orientation. Yet travel agents may hesitate to initiate this because of higher overhead costs. It is suggested here that the government should play a leading role by passing legislation and urging the industry to work out a rational remuneration system that provides a reasonable and stable income for tour guides. Efforts need to be made by both the government and the industry to make guiding an appropriately respected profession.

Although site interpreters possess higher social positions as quasi-civil servants in the Chinese administrative system, most tourists do not distinguish them from tour guides and sometimes may not interact with them respectfully. In addition, due to the stable yet relevantly low income level, tedious work, and heavily-loaded political tasks of official reception, site interpreters usually experience low morale, which is a common but critical issue in human resource management in the Chinese administrative system.

The conclusion and framework of this study are drawn based on one case study in a conference-type red destination. Future research in other types of red destinations (e.g. battlefield, former sites of revolutionary organizations, former residence of great leaders, and memorial park/cemetery of revolutionists) and contexts (e.g. economic development, city scale, and geographic location) would be of value for exploring other influential

factors. In addition, aside from horizontal comparisons among intermediaries, longitudinal comparisons between interpretations in the past and at present over a certain period of time should also be conducted to understand the transformative ideologies, which are the products of the interplays between government guidance and market mechanisms.

Chapter 5

HOW DID MY RED TOUR AFFECT ME?

TOURISTS' CONSUMPTION AND PERCEPTION OF RED HERITAGE

Chapter 5 focuses on the third stage of the circuit of red heritage and tourism model, where visitors perceive and experience the content and way that red heritage is selected and interpreted by the suppliers, and reconstruct their own meanings. The framework of social situation analysis is adopted to investigate how tourists consume and perceive the nationalistic discourses presented by the government and intermediaries, using sequential mixed methods. In this way, in-depth insights into the decoding step of the meaning-making process of red heritage and tourism are provided.

5.1 Introduction

Academics have long considered tourists' experiences and perceptions (Cohen, 1972, 1979; Uriely, 2001; Urry, 1990), particularly since Pine and Gilmore's (1998) milestone work on experiential economy, which divides experiences into four types: entertainment, educational, escapist, and esthetic. By definition, experience refers to the "total outcome to the customer from the combination of environment, goods, and services purchased" (Lewis & Chambers, 2000, p. 47). More specifically, it is about what is sensually perceived, how it is processed, and in what ways it can result in and influence the being of the tourist self (Gnoth & Matteucci, 2014). The experience is indicative of the self in its being, change, and growth, which is the quintessential of anthropological practice (Galani-Moutafi, 2000; Gnoth & Matteucci, 2014). Intense attention has been

placed on tourists' behaviors, motivations, benefits, satisfaction (Brown, 2005; Crompton & McKay, 1994; Formica & Uysal, 1998; Petrick, 2004; Ross & Iso-Ahola, 1991; Yoon & Uysal, 2005).

In industry practice, tourism suppliers always project changes and/or transformation of tourists. Promotional media conveys messages that something will happen to the tourists causing them to change dramatically because of the trip. For example, Frost (2010) analyzed twenty-two fictional-feature films set in the Australian Outback, to determine how promotional media describe the profound effect that the trip can have on the tourist. Tourists went from "being bored, alienated, frustrated or stagnant" to "being re-energized, more tolerant, and spiritually uplifted" (Frost, 2010; Willson, McIntosh, & Zahra, 2013). Similarly, Buzinde, Choi, and Wang (2012) analyzed promotional brochures of Chinese *feng shui* tourism to understand the embedded divinatory practice and philosophy of *feng shui*. They found that the tourism brochures assert that Western tourists will have a lifetime-remembering experience and return home refreshed and renewed. Although the previous research has revealed that promotional materials have the inclination to project a "different person" who is "changed completely and forever" after the journey, Bruner (1991) argues that such marketing information assumes the native residents as frozen in time, immobile, and incapable of learning and changing. In actuality, researchers have found the opposite to be true in that changes for tourists were minimal, whereas the consequences for locals were profound. This is due to the limited contact or immersion tourists have with local culture (Bruner, 1991). Locals may be largely exposed to the outside world and have gained a deeper retrospective

understanding of the inadequacy of their condition. It thus may even raise questions about their current status (Bruner, 1991).

Opposite to the trend in industrial practice, there is ample scholarship about tourism impacts on the native self and local residents' attitudes towards tourism (Andereck & Vogt, 2000; Ap & Crompton, 1993; Gursoy, Chi, & Dyer, 2010; Jurowski & Gursoy, 2004). One notable research gap, however, still exists on the impact of tourism for the visitor (Hampton, 2007). Since suppliers frequently deliver such transformative information, it is time to examine its effectiveness from the perspective of their target audiences, *the tourists*.

Suppliers, in this case government and intermediaries, are story makers and tellers, providing a provocative background by presenting compelling stories, situations, and characters (Frost, 2010). Yet tourists do not mindlessly consume the information disseminated to them. For example, study abroad programs or international tourism promises the experience of a lifetime and the world, promotes cross-cultural understanding, increases tolerance and acceptance of new practices and values, and thus has potential to reduce world conflict (Ap & Var, 1990; D'Amore, 1988; Wilkinson, 1998). Previous research, however, has found that travelers do not necessarily experience such radical attitudinal and cognitive changes (Anastasopoulous, 1992; Nyaupane, Paris & Teye,, 2011; Pizam, Jafari, & Milman, 1991; Poudel & Nyaupane, 2013). For example, a few pieces of scholarly work, including Pizam, Jafari, and Milman's (1991) research about American students who visited USSR, and Anastasopoulous' (1992) study of

Greek tourists to Turkey, have revealed that direct encounters between the host and guests who have traditional hostilities do not necessarily reduce their negative inter-ethnic attitudes. On the contrary, it might even reinforce their ethnic stereotypes in certain contexts. Additionally, attitudinal changes may vary across different host populations. For instance, Nyaupane et al. (2008) discovered that American study-abroad students had various post-trip attitudes in multiple destinations. While positive attitudes were developed towards Europeans, negative and mixed perspectives were shown towards Australians and Fijians, respectively. Therefore, tourism alone does not guarantee a certain type of attitudinal change. In fact, preconception is not simply discarded or strengthened and cognitive effect is not just a choice between a positive or negative. Instead, the process of cognitive (re)construction in tourism is riddled with contradictions, equal status, personal preferences, values, length of stay, intimacy of encounter, and many other factors (Dolby, 2004). In addition, even if it does lead to the assumed changes, it does not necessarily have to be radical, long-term, or applicable to all participants. Studying Western backpackers in India and Sri Lanka, Hottola (1999) found that only a small number of respondents developed high levels of either adaptation or opposition. Based on Brown's (2009) research on the international student sojourn, the transformative potential of improving cross-cultural communication skills, discovering and (re)constructing their self-identity has been discovered, yet the durability of such change is questioned (Brown, 2009). It might be less likely for mass tourists to mobilize narratives of self-transformation on the road, if they have any, after returning back home.

Likewise, while the Chinese government expects Chinese tourists to develop more supportive attitudes towards the party and the government by visiting communist heritage sites, reviewing the glorious achievements of the CCP, and honoring the tremendous sacrifice, bravery, and courage of revolutionary pioneers (Li, Hu, & Zhang, 2010; Rioux, 2008), this dissertation argues that audiences do not passively absorb top-down hegemonic discourses. The assumption that heritage sites can format and maintain a national identity may appear to be arbitrary and not based upon empirical research.

Studies delving into tourists' transformation and change have been conducted to fill this gap in recent years. Most of them attempt to look at how tourism becomes a catalyst for changes in the tourists' outlook and their behavior. Existing research primarily focuses on the populations of international tourists/study-abroad students (Anastasopoulos, 1992; Brown, 2009; Desforges, 2000; Dolby, 2004; Griffths & Sharpley, 2012; Lozanski, 2013; Pizam, Jafari, & Milman, 1991; Nyaupane et al., 2008), volunteer tourists (Sin, 2009; Zahra & McIntosh, 2007), backpackers (Cohen, 2011; Maoz, 2007; Noy, 2004), natural tourists/eco-tourists (Beaumont, 2001; Kim, Airey, & Szivas, 2011; Orams, 1997; Poudel & Nyauapane, 2013), and wellness/spiritual tourists (Voigt, Brown, & Howat, 2011; Wilson, McIntosh, & Zahra, 2013). One common characteristic across all these groups is that tourists usually stay in the destination for a comparatively longer period of time and may have more clear travel goals during their journey. Yet for more general sightseeing or short-stay educational tours, there seems to be a lack of empirical research to explore whether or not tourists' perceptions can be changed through tourism. Thus, the present study aims to investigate empirically Chinese

who visit red destinations and how the visit can have impacts on their perceptions of red heritage. Such a study of tourists "in the flesh" is timely and valuable.

5.2 Literature Review

5.2.1 Tourism Impacts on Tourists

Tourism provides a new environment that blends sensory images with known and unknown objects. Thus it can give tourists an opportunity to remove themselves from familiar surroundings, adjust to a new climate, and discover a state of real living (Hottola, 2004). Previous studies have discussed various changes and transformations among tourists in different contexts, which can be roughly classified into two categories: *being* and *becoming*. These two types of changes are not mutually exclusive or dichotomous. They are actually closely related in the way that being is not static and finite, rather, it is permeable and always becoming different to various extent (Deleuze, 1968). From this perspective, tourism experience can be considered a continual process which has potential longer-term impacts on travelers (Zahra & McIntosh, 2007).

5.2.1.1 Being

Being refers to the formation of the self. Links between sense of selfhood and representation of history have been revealed in previous research (Goulding & Domic, 2009). Manipulating the past can reinforce a sense of continuity and security, strengthen social bonds between groups, and reduce the significance and/or contribution of others.

One way to realize this purpose is to reify the intangible past with concrete heritage sites and museums.

At the national level, history and heritage have the similar function as the dominant political system in the sense of creating a greater sense of nationalism and social bonding (Goulding & Domic, 2009). At the individual level, tourists have the chance to gain a novel or reflective view of their own society, consolidate their socially conceived being, and experience an existentially authentic perceived mind (Gnoth & Matteucci, 2014). Owning to the significant relationships between subjective perceptions and lived experiences, tourist attractions become a means through which tourists realize their own purposes. Hence, heritage sites and museums are not considered just leisure or aesthetic experiences, or the carrier of ideology, but a sign systems that permeates the very essence of selfhood (Goulding & Domic, 2009).

5.2.2.2 Becoming

A journey can be a turning point in one's life path, leading to a disruption or deflection in personal trajectory. A few studies have described such pivotal moments in which the tourists' life story changes. Previous research suggests that young Israeli backpackers usually seek independence and self-efficacy by backpacking, following compulsory military service. This provides an opportunity to exit normal life and enter an unfamiliar and liminal situation abroad (Maoz, 2007; Noy, 2004). Such experience is considered a rite-of-passage, which is a critical transition in their life. Studies on intercultural adaptation reflect that tourists may experience difficulty and stressful

moments upon their initial arrival. However, they can learn fast to enable a smooth and rewarding adaptation process (Hottola, 2004).

Both positive and negative changes in tourists have been discovered. Some studies reflect that tourists become more self-critical, confident, inspired, uplifted, energized, and culturally competitive and tolerant (Frost, 2010; Willson, McIntosh, & Zahra, 2013). Accordingly, tourists may return home in a more advantageous position compared to their mental state prior to trip (Noy, 2004). Also, the cross-culture perspective can equip them in an increasingly globalized environment and thus enhance their employability. As well, travel experience can introduce different perspectives on life, reorder an individual's priorities, and redefine the foundations of their selfhood.

In spite of these positive consequences, negative impacts have also been reported. For example, although tourists typically return back with feelings of relief and euphoria, many of them, especially those who seek life-changing experiences, may struggle with re-orientating themselves in the moment of homecoming (Desforges, 2000). When their new experience cannot be assimilated into their host environment, they may feel they no longer fit in at home. In some extreme cases, people even refuse to go back as it is "constraining, regressive, boring, and routinized" (Cohen, 2011, p.1545). Desforges (2000) reported that some backpackers may have a hard time dealing with interpersonal relationships at home, as some friends consider them having become hyperactive and aggressive. Backpacking experiences may also lower competitive ability in the job

market in that their travel identity may be considered incompatible with work commitments for potential future employers.

Likewise, both positive and negative tourism impacts on tourist's nationalistic understandings have been found. While it is widely assumed that tourism can play a significant role in stimulating national homogeneity and alleviating enmity between hostile states (Kim, Timothy, & Lee, 2006; Litvin, 1998), opposite results were found as well. For example, Gelbman's (2012) research has indicated that cross-border tourism may in fact widen the fissures between adversaries in his study on the Island of Peace between Israel and Jordan, the destination is actually interpreted as the Island of War to highlight a past of tensions and conflict. As well, Anastasopoulos (1992) evaluated attitudinal changes of Greek tourists towards Turkish hosts and found that travelling to Turkey had a negative impact on their perceptions of the host population.

Not all tourists, however, are mindful enough to focus on self-reflection and thus experience considerable cognitive or behavioral transformation. Many of them are inclined to regard their trips as a break or time bubble within their otherwise routine life-path (Cohen, 2010). It is not uncommon for tourists to change some of their opinions and even experience existential authenticity during the journey, yet they may still remain very egocentric and primarily concerned with their own enjoyment and fun. In reality, Chinese mass tourists are always portrayed in mass media as *mindless tourists* who keep mostly to themselves and photograph profusely.

5.2.2.3 Theories and Methods

Multiple theories have been adopted to demystify tourists' changes and transformations. For instance, the culture shock U-curve model proposed by Oberg (1960) has been widely used to investigate intercultural interaction in the context of international or ethnic tourism. This model describes a process of human intercultural adaptation, including five stages of euphoria, disillusionment, hostility, adaptation, and assimilation. It has been critiqued, however, that the U-curve might just be one of the event courses and not fully supported by empirical studies. In Hottola's (2004) opinions, tourists generally do not experience shock or depression, although they may get stressed and confused while learning new things or facing unexpected difficulties. As a result, the term "culture confusion" might appear to be more precise than "culture shock". Meanwhile, most mass tourists may not have enough time or motivation to learn and thus gradual adaptation and integration is not guaranteed.

Another frequently used theory is contact hypothesis. This is constructive in understanding the role of tourism as an agent of intercultural encounters and exchanges between the hosts and the guests (Carlson & Widaman, 1988; Pearce, 1982; Smith, 1957; Weiler, 1989; Welds & Dukes, 1985). There is widespread agreement that while intergroup contact has the potential to reduce mutual prejudice, conflict, and tension, other factors, such as common goals and equal status, should also be integrated (Nyaupane, Teye, & Paris, 2008; Pizam, Jafari, & Milman, 1991; Pizam, Uriely, & Reichel, 2000).

Gidden's (1991) analysis of contemporary self-identity has been applied to depict travel biographies. According to Gidden, identity is not a distinctive trait and the self is reflexively understood by people in terms of their biography. The method of self-narratives and/or story-telling is given prominence as it implies reflexivity or the ability to produce an understanding of events that have happened in the past (Desforges, 2000).

Social distance theory is also instrumental in analyzing host-guest encounters. Although it predominantly refers to a function of a state of mind, people still maintain social distance by spatial segregation. Particularly, the construct of nationality is often adopted to understand how national and cultural characteristics can shape tourist behavior, motivation, and interaction with the host population (Maoz, 2007; Pizam & Sussmann, 1995). For instance, according to Nyaupane et al.'s (2008) research on American-based study-abroad students who went to the South Pacific and Europe, nationality plays an important role in pre-trip attitude formation, yet its role in attitudinal change was shown very weak.

5.2.2.4 Research Gap

Despite insightful studies that have explored the association between tourism and nationalistic perception, most research is performed from an etic perspective or in the context of international tourism. Little attention has been directed to the ways in which individuals experience national identity by visiting sites of national significance (e.g. landscape, artifacts, buildings, and monuments) in the domestic context. A few exceptions include Hu's (2010) work on red tourism which analyzes the tourists'

experience in the Ge Le Shan Revolutionary Memorial in China. He provided critical insights into how Chinese domestic tourists perceived the authenticity of communist heritage and experienced emotional and ideological reflection during their red trip. Mixed methods were applied to develop the survey questions based on focus groups with local college students, interviews with tour guides, and onsite observations. This dissertation argues, however, that the representativeness of the survey questions might be lowered without approaching to multiple types of tourists. In addition, most relevant research, including Hu's (2010) work, only focuses on a small number of constructs, such as motivation and satisfaction, without considering rich contextual information. This research, contends that an in-depth understanding of the tourist *being* and *becoming* cannot be gained without considering the prevailing economic, political and social conditions, given that the subject is embedded in a complex, ever-changing, and mutually intertwined world. This study integrates the dynamics of red tours and explores the contextual situation by using Argle et al.'s (1981) framework of social situation analysis, which can further facilitate designing the subsequent quantitative research.

5.2.2 Nation and Nationalism

Originating from the industrial revolution in Europe, the concept of *nation* has been defined from different angles. While some consider it a political unit represented by a legislative assembly, some regard it as a socio-anthropological concept which includes a homogeneous population, either ethnically, culturally, or linguistically (Anderson, 1991; White, 2012). Anderson's (1991) classic study defines nation as an imagined community

based on horizontal comradeship where inhabitants of a nation do not know, meet, or hear most of their fellow members (Gellner, 2006). It encompasses many intangible political, social, cultural, linguistic, and religious factors, rather than only the tangible borders of a particular territory.

Likewise, the term of *nationalism* has been approached from various points of views, such as doctrine, a state of mind, an anthropological phenomenon, a soul and spiritual principle, or a modern construction (Kedourie, 1971; Kohn, 1961; Palmer, 1998). Drawing on pride, sentiment, and national character, nationalism endows citizens with a national identity, frees nations from alien rule, and contributes to the process of modernization (Goulding & Domic, 2009; Palmer, 1999). On the other hand, it may also lead to aggressive behavior and even fuel interstate warfare in extreme cases (Zhao, 2000).

The Western concept of modern nationalism rarely existed in imperial China where traditional culturalism permeated Chinese thoughts. It was not until the Opium Wars of the 1840s when Chinese elites started to abandon old culturalism and borrow the European idea of nationalism, turning China from a cultural entity to a political entity (Yuan, 2008; Zhao, 2000). Yet the Chinese view of nationalism might be somewhat different from the American meaning. While the American concept may emphasize a manifest destiny centered around: *the founding moment*, *political culture*, *diversity*, and *spectacle* (Spillman, 1997), Chinese nationhood draws on shared ethnic and linguistic identity and nationalistic political movement (Yuan, 2008). National humility and pride

are the core of Chinese nationalistic discourses, expressed fully by "the dream of a stronger China" proposed in the early 1900s, which aims to restore and revive China (Zhao, 2000).

The underlying philosophies of nation-building vary across countries, as well as over time. For the past century, three different nationalistic perspectives have developed in China: nativism, anti-traditionalism, and pragmatism (Zhao, 2000). The essential difference between these lies in the aspect of how to assess sources of national weakness and adopt the best approach to revitalize China. The first philosophy, nativism, views the impact of imperialism on China as the root of its weakness and advocates isolating the country from the outside world (Barme, 1995). In stark contrast, anti-traditionalism thinks its very tradition should account for China's weaknesses. Consequently, Chinese tradition is denounced as a feudal legacy and should be eradicated from society (Yeh, 2001). Both the nativist anti-Western xenophobia and anti-traditionalist movement are strongly expressed in the Chinese 10-year Cultural Revolution (Zhao, 2000). Currently, Chinese nationalism is featured pragmatically. This attributes the fragility of China to a lack of modernization, which made China fall victim to imperialism (Zhao, 2005; Downs & Saunders, 1998). As a result, self-strengthening measures are advocated, such as gaining foreign technical skills and modern scientific knowledge.

Nationalism has been used by the communist state to shore up its waning legitimacy and turn past humiliation and current weaknesses into a motivation for modernization (Callahan, 2006). Yet surprisingly, very little empirical work has

discussed the social process of forming national identity at the individual level. Using red tourism as an example, this study attempts to fill this gap by analyzing how communist discourses embedded in tourist objects can facilitate building and improving tourists' national identity and sentiment. It is hoped that this study will contribute, if in small part, to clarifying the ways in which individuals' national identity can be communicated and maintained through domestic tourism.

5.3 Qualitative Design

This study adopts sequential mixed methods to collect data regarding tourists' consumption and perceptions of red discourses in an iterative process. In other words, the data collected in the first phase of this qualitative design contribute to the development of survey questions in the subsequent quantitative part.

5.3.1 Qualitative Methods

Given the exploratory nature of this study, qualitative methods are considered the most suitable approach to investigate and evaluate the potential influence of the components of social situations on tourists' perceptions. Initially, both onsite participant and non-participant observations were conducted to obtain first-hand knowledge about the travel experience in Gutian Town. This information is used to supplement further the following interviews and focus groups.

According to grounded theory, being immersed in the data can enable the researcher to dig out the embedded meanings and relationships of the ostensible

phenomenon being studied (Patton, 2002). Therefore, in September 2012, the author attended two 2-hour group tours departing from the visitor information center in Gutian. Several open, informal, and spontaneous conversations with group members were carried out. The conversations were not directed by particular interview questions. Rather, some general questions, such as "Where are you from?" and "Why did you come to Gutian this time?" were asked, allowing the author to become familiar with the visited and the visitor in terms of the attractions, the itinerary, onsite interactions, tourists' reactions to interpretation, and sense of involvement. In these circumstances, it is hard to pinpoint the beginning and the end of these discussions. The researcher's identity was not revealed during participant observation to avoid interrupting tourists' natural behavior during their tours. In addition, the author spent one week in different spots of the conference site, including the entrance, lawn, courtyard, front hall, left-wing room, and right-wing room, to gain more insights into the nature of touristic practices in Gutian. While being a powerful technique in understanding phenomena in the natural setting, observation alone may provide less objective information as to the actual meaning of experiences; thus, further research steps, such as individual and focus group interviews, were performed.

To understand tourists' roles in decoding and (re)constructing nationalistic discourses better, there is a need to examine the dynamics of the social situations where they read these communist discourses. This study adopted Argle et al.'s (1981) framework of social situation analysis to deconstruct the onsite situation in red tourist attractions into several components and explore tourists' perceptions of each of them. A detailed introduction and review of this framework was conducted in Chapter 4 and thus

is not reviewed again here. Based on each element, interview questions regarding tourists' experiences and perceptions of red tourism are developed. The results are utilized to provide contextual information, as well as to develop questionnaires since there is little relevant empirical research. The interview questions were as follows:

> *1. Goal. Why did you come to Gutian? What activities have you participated and/or are you going to participate?*
>
> *2. Sequences. What is the itinerary of your red trip? Where do you plan to visit this time?*
>
> *3. Rule. What kind of behaviors are appropriate and/or inappropriate while visiting the conference site?*
>
> *4. Role. Who do you think you are during your trip in Gutian?*
>
> *5. Language. Did you hear or use any red language/terminology? If yes, does it influence your feelings?*
>
> *6. Concepts and cognitive structures. What did you learn from your trip? How do you feel? Is there any change in your perceptions (e.g. attitudes towards the CCP)? What can you remember of your stay in Gutian?*
>
> *7. Environmental settings. How would you describe the environment/atmosphere of the conference site? How does it influence your feelings?*
>
> Interviews were performed from late September to mid-October, 2012.

Considerable effort was made to avoid approaching strangers abruptly and occasionally through initial casual chitchatting. Once a certain degree of trust and rapport between the interviewees and the interviewer were established, the author revealed her research identity and invited visitors to participate. While a great number of respondents agreed to take part in the interviews and were open enough to answer all the questions, some

tourists, especially older individuals, were highly wary and reluctant to state things that might be deemed incriminating. For example, one military official in his 50s stated:

> *"It is necessary to restore the truth of the history of Chinese communist party…currently it is centered on Mao Zedong's thoughts…it is manipulated to a large extent… I CANNOT tell you more" (Chen, interview, September 2012).*

In two extreme cases, the visitors reacted quite negatively which led to the author withdrawing from the encounter. For example, a taxi driver said:

> *"I am telling you, DO NOT ASK ME! Go ask the officials, go ask those tour guides. What can I know? I am just an ordinary person… Are you a journalist? … I am running away right now!" (Unknown Name, interview, September 2012).*

These respondents might have a certain degree of fear of expressing their thoughts. Thus the interviews were cut short and did not address all the prepared interview questions. Also, the number of those respondents is relevantly small and may not represent the opinions of the majority. Yet because these views are critical and insightful, offering different voices, the author decided to keep them in the pool for further coding. In some cases, interviews were forced to terminate depending on travelers' interest in the questions and time constraints as some were in a hurry to get to their next destination(s), especially for group tourists. After thoroughly considering the quality and completeness of the data, the author eventually decided to focus on individual tourists who appeared to slow down on the spot. Interviews were conducted when tourists were sitting and relaxing near the conference site.

The bulk of the fieldwork for this research was originally designed to be individual interviews. Yet due to the nature of the predominant travel patterns wherein most people travel with friends, families, and colleagues, several individual interviews spontaneously turned into focus groups. Thirteen interviews and fourteen focus groups were performed, involving fifty participants in total. Slightly more males (58.9%) than females (41.1%) participated, ranging in age from 18 to 62. The majority were in their 30s and 40s. The length of interviews or focus groups ranged from 3 minutes to 98 minutes, with an average length of 22 minutes.

All interviews were recorded on tape with consent from the respondents and were transcribed verbatim. During the interview process the participants were free to switch off the recorder if they felt upset. Memos taken during and after the interviews served as a reference to refresh the researcher's mind while transcribing and analyzing. This can facilitate capturing and reflecting verbal and nonverbal aspects of the interviews and observations (Altinay & Bowen, 2006).

The coding process is similar as the one described in detail in Chapter 4. In brief, the author read the transcripts and notes several times, and broke them down into several manageable blocks. Under each grouping, key themes and implicit meanings embedded in the texts were further identified and searched. Another Chinese and English-speaking research assistant offered his expertise during the analysis phase to ensure the validity of the coding process.

5.3.2 Qualitative Results

5.3.2.1 Goal

Various motives were generated across respondents. Many informants had clear motives, either related to the *pull* factors, which refer to external forces of the destination attributes (e.g. the reputation of Gutian, political pilgrimage, and revolutionary atmosphere), or *push* factors, which pertain to intrinsic needs of tourists (e.g. spend time with family and friends, take a walk around and be physically active, and relax and release pressure). Meanwhile, some tourists conveyed vague purposes, such as

> *"I do not have any purpose, just wandering around" (Chen, interview, October 2012),*
>
> *"I just stop-by as I have business trips nearby" (Lin, interview, October 2012).*

Quite a few tourists did not mention their engagement in learning revolutionary history, indicating that the purpose of their trips may not be political-oriented but "hanging out with family and friends". This echoes the findings of Zahra and McIntosh's (2007) study on volunteer tourists, who were found to be cost-saving focused rather than being motivated solely by altruistic volunteering.

One interesting emerging code was *feng shui*, a Chinese term referring to the existence of a constant energetic flow between humans and their environment that is responsible for an individual's psycho-physical wellness (Bonaiuto, Bilotta, & Stolfa, 2010). Gutian has been described by study participants as "very pure and holy", "sitting

on the dragon pulse with very good *feng shui*", and thus attracts the respondents to visit to get "a little bit [of] good luck, a little bit [of] dragon energy". Although *feng shui*, as a superstition was ignored during Sun Yatsen's regime and banned during Mao's regime, some visits to Gutian resembled secular or quasi-spiritual pilgrimage to a certain extent.

Nostalgia is another term frequently mentioned by the middle and above-middle age participants. Seeking nostalgia, however, is not indicative of missing the past or being willing to return back to the old days. Instead, it is just an emotional complex that can remind tourists of their earlier years, reflecting a nostalgic longing for a romanticized or idealized past. One tourist in his 60s used red songs as an example to illustrate the red complex:

> *"I like singing red songs… it does not mean that I am worshiping Chairman Mao or being left-wing. Yet it is part of my past…" (Liu, interview, October 2012).*

Respondents were also asked to describe their travel activities in Gutian, since the relationship between motivation and participation has been tested in previous studies (Lang & O'Leary, 1997; Mehmetoglu, 2007). The activities reported include political-related activities centering around revolutionary predecessors and the Gutian Conference, such as "commemorating the contribution, revolutionary spirit, and talent of revolutionary pioneers", "learn about the content and meanings of the Gutian Conference"; and nature, culture, or pleasure-related activities, such as "appreciating natural scenery", "participating in rural tourism (e.g. picking fruit, staying in farmhouse inns)", and "buying souvenirs and local products."

The results so far indicate that visitors were motivated by both push and pull factors and participated in various political, natural, cultural, and pleasure-related activities, reflecting the concept of "big red tourism" development proposed by the Prefectural government as discussed in Chapter 3.

5.3.2.2 Sequence

Four major itineraries were found, including "only Gutian", "other red attractions nearby, e.g. Linjiang Tower, Wenchang Tower, and Chairman Mao's Cave", "other more distant red attractions, e.g. Ruijin and Changting", and "other natural and cultural tourism destinations in Longyan District, e.g. Mountain Guanzhai and Yongding earth buildings." The inclusion of the tourist attractions listed above heavily depended on the place of origin of the tourists. While the one who only visits Gutian or the nearby tourist attractions are primarily from Longyan District, those who involve more distant red or other tourist attractions in their itineraries are usually from other regions in Fujian province or further afield. This reflects the relationship between travel constraints (e.g. temporal and spatial limitations) and travel choice components (e.g. destination choices) as discussed in previous studies (Dellaert, Ettema, & Lindh, 1998).

5.3.2.3 Role

Tourists' self-perceived roles were found to be largely determined by travel motives and travel party. While most perceived themselves as tourists, a few visitors identified themselves as a company or amateur interpreter who takes guests to visit

Gutian although they have been there "millions of times." Parents travelling with their children usually extend their familial role as an educator, providing political education to their children. Only two out of fifty respondents identified themselves as admirers and political pilgrims who worshipped Chairman Mao and other revolutionary pioneers. One respondent in his early 60s had experienced the cultural revolution as a student representative. Another, in his 40s from a remote village in Sichuan Province, possessed a strong feeling of respect and admiration for Chairman Mao, calling him "Grandpa Mao."

5.3.2.4 Rule

Rules are the shared beliefs that regulate behavior. In the context of red tourism, there is widespread agreement on "cherish a deep reverence, keep solemn and quite, visit the conference site in good order, and do not make fun of revolutionary pioneers or national leaders during the visit." Split opinions were found on the item of "do not talk about the *feng shui* of Gutian, as it is inconsistent with its image of a red revolutionary base." Some held the opinion that *feng shui* was incompatible with the destination image of Gutian, whereas others contended that pure communist history was tedious and unattractive. Participants who were motived by cultural and natural factors regarded communist heritage as "icing on the cake", which was not the leading factor but an indispensable factor for driving their decision to visit (Zhao, interview, September 2012).

A considerable number of comments were drawn on the commercialization of communist heritage. It was unanimously agreed that a "certain degree of commercialization is acceptable and understandable in current Chinese society",

consistent with the mainstream trend which considers heritage a product that is exploited and developed within a market orientation (Ashworth, 1994). Both tourists' perceptions towards the commercialization of communist heritage and the government's "red-plus-green" development plan mentioned in Chapter 3 reflect that China has been moving away from strict adherence to ideological communism to a secularized movement that incorporates ideological control and practice of commercialization and modernization, with some concerns, such as whether modern landscapes may vulgarize red themes remaining.

5.3.3.5 Concept and Cognitive Structure

The qualitative data indicate that there is no universally understood or accepted definition of nationalism among the participants. The majority of informants agree with the concept of triune nationalism, which equals loving the country to loving the government and the party. This is reflected by some comments such as:

> *"If there is no the CCP, there would be no PR China… We absolutely should love and devote our loyalty to our nation, our party, and our government" (focus group II with tourists, October 2012).*

On the contrary, some respondents distinguished the concept of homeland and nation, where the former is established on the foundation of ethnic and blood ties and the latter is a political concept. As mentioned earlier, the Chinese nation is a modern concept which was developed after the Opium Wars and associated with nationalistic writing against the trend that China might be annexed by foreign aggressors (Whitney, 1969). A

significant number of informants expressed their confusion of the terms nation and nationalism, such as:

> *"Nation is a vague and intangible concept… I do not know how to show my nationalism and patriotism" (Huang, interview, October 2012).*

Such diverse opinions may result from the Chinese nationalistic movement, which has been evolving over decades as mentioned above. Being state-centric, Chinese nationalism is always used by the communist state to strengthen its legitimacy, create a sense of nationhood among its citizens, bring disparate groups together, and mobilize public support (Zhao, 2000). Despite such considerable efforts, some dissenting voices were also raised. For instance, some tourists unknowingly elements of applied social exchange theory to explain their rational nationalism:

> *"The government deserves being loved by us only if the government makes people satisfied. If not, issues like corruptions are really annoying" (focus group III with tourists, October 2012).*

Divergent opinions were found on the effectiveness of red tourism as an approach to nationalistic education. Some tourists noted that they admired former revolutionaries' spirit of enduring hardship, which facilitated their winning the final revolutionary victory. Accordingly, they tended to cherish what they currently had by comparing a hard past to a happy present. This sheds light on the attempt of the CCP to win more respect for the party by emphasizing what it has done for the people of China to obtain national independence and prosperity, rather than focusing merely on its communist ideals. Others, on the other hand, remarked that it did not have much influence on their nationalism, or only lasted for a short period of time. A fading national identity was discovered across

several respondents who regarded politicians as political hypocrites whose "say one thing and do another", reflected by the following quote:

> *"Despite the saying that the people is the owner of the nation…it is not like that… you do not have the power…you will become more and more indifferent as you have lots of thoughts, yet none of them is going to come true" (Zhao, interview, September 2012).*

5.3.3.6 Language

Tourists evaluated onsite interpretation as "formal, boring, dry, and mechanical" and preferred a more casual and interactive style of interpretation that can evoke deep feelings and emotions. Yet they also recognized that the interpretation of communist heritage must follow textbook/training materials strictly, using a consistent and uniform language. A small number of tourists, typically males in their 50s or 60s, realized that the interpretation might be manipulated to serve political ends through selectively remembering or partially forgetting the historical and political legacy. Thus, the authenticity of interpretative content was emphasized that history should be judged objectively and comprehensively rather than being either black or white (Liu & Zhao, interview, September 2012).

5.3.3.7 Environmental Settings

Environment is a symbolic text that can influence how one reads the goals and rules, and gains the experience (Pearce, 1984). As discussed in Chapter 4, factors such as group size, crowdedness, and carrying capacity, can influence tourist-intermediary interaction and thus how tourists consume and perceive heritage. The major comments on

the environmental settings include less interaction, pale, boring, and uncomfortable, and thus some visual and audial techniques are needed to (re)construct and simulate the historic scene to bring visitors to the past.

The research goal of this chapter is to find out how tourists consume and perceive red heritage. More specifically, attention is placed on tourism's impacts on red tourists. While all seven of the above mentioned elements are instrumental in offering contextual information and answering the research question, the subsequent quantitative analysis only selects some of the most relevant constructs, given the exploratory nature of this study and the complexity of exploring the interactions among all these variables. For example, since most of the respondents identified themselves merely as tourists, the construct of *role* may be less conducive in analyzing their conception and thus removed from questionnaire design and development. The variables selected include *goal* (motivation and activity) and *concept and cognitive structure* (memory and perception). The rationale lies in the purpose of exploring the consistency/relationships among what motivates tourists (motivation), what they have done (participation), what they have learned (memory), and how red tourism can have cognitive and perceptive impacts on them (perception). In this way, in-depth insights into how tourists are attracted, consume, perceive, and are influenced by red heritage and stories are provided.

5.4 Quantitative Design

5.4.1 Survey Design

Pilot Study

The survey was first developed in Mandarin. The subsequent pilot study was conducted offsite, recruiting people who have been to Gutian through the author's personal network. In this way, the appropriateness of survey content was pretested from the emic perspective. Thirty-two participants in total, including college students, government officials, bank staff, public institution personnel, engineers, private business owners, and retirees, in both Longyan City and Fuzhou City (the capital city of Fujian Province), were involved. Some wording and survey content were adjusted based on pilot study responses and comments to make the questions more appropriate and condensed. Following the pilot study, the survey was translated into English by the author, and then translated back to Mandarin by another research assistant. After the translation, back-translation procedure, it was then sent to two bilingual tourism scholars for further scrutiny. In this way, the face validity of the translated version was strengthened (Bergstrom, Jensen, Bodin, Linton, Nygren, & Carlsson, 1998).

The questionnaire is comprised of two parts. Section I first included two warm-up questions regarding their pre-visits to, and pre-knowledge of, Gutian. It then asked respondents about their travel motivation, trip activities, memories, perceptions, and travel patterns (e.g. length of stay, expenses, and travel party). Travel motivation was

measured by rating the importance of each reason for travelling to Gutian (1=*not important* to 5=*extremely important*). A total of sixteen motives regarding nature, culture, politics, relaxation, socialization, enjoyment, and official/business, were included.

Trip activities were also included in the survey for the purpose of group clustering and exploring any consistencies between motivation and activity. In total, twelve activities regarding political, pleasure, leisure, nature, and culture-related aspects emerged from the qualitative study. Two constructs were used to examine how red tourism can impact visitors. First, memories describe what the audiences can remember from their visits to Gutian. This was tested using thirteen items in relation to tangible (e.g. visual displays, local culture, and natural landscape) and intangible political items (e.g. the content and significance of the Gutian Conference). Second, visitors' perceptions were measured by quantifying how the visit to Gutian influenced their sense of nationalism, attitudes towards and support for the CCP and/or government, and understanding of the approaches to nationalistic education.

Part II included questions about socio-demographics. Since previous research has shown that political orientation can have repercussions for visitors' choice of destination (Legg, Tang, & Slevitch, 2012), respondents' political orientation/ideology was also included as one of the socio-demographic characteristics. This portion of the study attempts to examine the potential relationship between visitors' political orientation and their perceptions of red tourism and communist heritage.

Furthermore, given the fact that every country takes a different approach to defining a generation, this study adopted a different classification of age groups which is unique to Chinese society. It is widely recognized in China that "ten years is a generation", which not only describe the generations quantitatively, but also qualitatively. Generally speaking, generations in China are labeled as the post-50s, the post-60s, the post-70s, the post-80s, the post-90s and so on, based on one's year of birth. This classification can depict the influential events or critical changes in the Chinese population's mindset and behavior. Srinivasan (2012) summarized the characteristics of each generation in the recent decades after PR China was established. The post-50s generation was born 1950-1960 and experienced economic and political turmoil in the first developmental phase of PR China (Srinivasan, 2012). The post-60s grew up in an environment of the Cultural Revolution (Sabet, 2011; Srinivasan, 2012). The era when the post-70s grew up, had economic reform and market liberalization. This generation tends to be traditional, conservative and steady when compared to the post-80s who are the first to be born into China's new era of opening up and the one-child policy (Bergstrom, 2012; Sabet, 2011). The post-80s are termed as *Me* generation and motivated by high family expectations. The post-90s are the generation that were first to be born into an already open and more developed society. This group of people is always described as unconventional, carefree, and rebellious (Bergstrom, 2012). Given the unique characteristics of each generation, the construct of age for the present study was divided into five groups of 18-22, 23-32, 33-42, 43-52, and above 53 years old. The

association between perceptions of communist heritage and red tourism was explored by using chi-square analysis.

5.4.2 Data Collection and Analysis

Quantitative data were collected from Friday to Sunday during the four weeks from Mid-November to Mid-December 2012. Four research assistants, who were tourism students at a local college, were trained by the investigator prior to completing the fieldwork. Most surveys were conducted at the exit of the conference site and the sitting area nearby. The researchers attempted to collect between thirty to forty completed surveys daily. A total of 421 surveys were collected during the four weekends, and invalid questionnaires, such as those with too many missing values, were excluded from the analysis. In total, 240 valid surveys were used for further analysis.

The quantitative analysis option of this study was comprised of four major steps: factor analysis, cluster analysis, discriminant analysis, and comparative analysis. A series of principal component factor analyses were first used to classify the underlying dimensions of motivation, participation, memory, and perception.

Tourism typologies are one of the most commonly used methods in market segmentation. Hvenegaard (2002) divided the typological approach into four empirical categories of researcher-based, respondent-based, motivation-based, and activity-based. He also argued that the existing typologies are featured as being static in that they tend to assume the tourist does not change en route. Therefore, there is a call for more empirical

work, particularly with respect to activity-based approaches (Hvenegaard, 2002). Accordingly, this paper adopts trip activity as the criterion to determine clusters by using a *K*-mean cluster analysis. In this way, relatively homogenous groups based on their participation can be identified. It is admitted that no individual can represent an entire population of red tourists, yet ethnographers argue that similar settings may produce similar data, thus theory-based generalization can be achieved (Daymon & Holloway, 2010). Therefore, clustering tourists into several types based on a certain characteristic, in this case, *trip activity*, can still largely reflect the make-up and/or characteristics of the tourist population.

Next, a discriminant analysis was undertaken to assess the accuracy of the cluster groupings. This is a useful technique to determine whether a set of variables is effective in predicting group membership by building a predictive model based on observed characteristics of each individual case (Green & Salkind, 2011).

Finally, comparative analysis utilized one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with post-hoc Bonferroni tests and Chi-Square analyses to see whether these clusters can differ in terms of motivation, memories, perception, and socio-demographic and trip characteristics. MANOVA tests were adopted to test differences between groups rather than ANOVA to reduce the risk of Type I error (Green, Salkind, & Akey, 2000; Spicer, 2005).

5.4.3 Findings and Discussion

5.4.3.1 Factor Analysis

A principal component factor analysis was first used to classify the underlying dimensions of motivation. The calculation of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistics was .773, suggesting the data were suitable for factor analysis. Sixteen items loaded saliently on five factors, which explained 57.73% of the total variance. The five domains were: 1) *location, socialization, and superstition,* containing four items related to Gutian's location, *feng shui*, and social needs and family gatherings; 2) *official/business*, comprising three motives in relation to visitors' official/business purposes to visit Gutian; 3) *novelty and relaxation,* including three items of relaxing and relieving stress, seeking excitement and novelty, and being physically active; 4) *political/historical learning and nostalgia*, comprising four items about political education and recalling and/or experiencing the past; and 5) *nature and culture*, involving two items related to natural environment and folk culture (Table 5.1).

Reliability tests were performed to test the internal consistency and validity of each scale. Chronbach's alpha with a value of 0.7 or larger indicates good internal consistency (Nunnally, 1975). Except for the factor of "political/historical learning and nostalgia", all Chronbach's alpha coefficients were larger than 0.7. Yu (2001) argued that while 0.7 and above was considered a high internal consistency, scales with a lower value should not automatically be regarded as unreliable. It is contended that a value of 0.6 can still be considered acceptable (Arrindell & ven der Ende, 1985). Therefore, with a value

of .66, the dimension of "political/historical learning and nostalgia" still demonstrates acceptable internal consistency among the measurements.

Table 5.1 Factor Analysis of Motivation

Domains	Factor Loadings	Eigen-value	Variance Explained (%)
Factor 1: Location, Socialization, & Superstition		5.339	24.542
I visited Gutian without clear purpose, just because it is near	.746		
There is little choice in tourist attractions nearby	.647		
Get some dragon energy and improve personal luck	.565		
Spend time with family and friends	.540		
α=.726			
Factor 2: Official/Business			
Official training and conferences	.913		
Government's investigation group visit	.875		
Official reception/guest hosting	.748		
α=.859		2.440	11.090
Factor 3: Novelty & Relaxation			
Seek for excitement and novelty	.765		
Relax and release pressure	.660		
Take a walk around and be physically active	.652		
α=.726		2.006	9.118
Factor 4: Political/Historical Learning and Nostalgia			
Take political pilgrimage, receive ideological education, and experience revolutionary atmosphere	.748		
Learn about historical and political knowledge	.667		
Gutian is very famous and I would like to visit the place where national presidents have stayed	.642		
Recall and feel nostalgic about the past life	.632		
α=.660		1.654	7.519
Factor 5: Nature and Culture			
Enjoy beautiful natural environment	.832		
Experience Hakka folk culture and rural tourism	.790		
α=.714		1.201	5.458

1= not important at all, 5= very important. KMO=.773. Barlett's test of sphericity $p<.000$

Visitors were asked to rate the extent to which a series of activity items described their activities in Gutian. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistic was .824, suggesting the data was good for factor analysis. Three factors emerged: *political-oriented activity*, *pleasure activity*, and *nature and culture*, explaining 33.27%, 20%, and 8.7% of the total variance, respectively. Chronbach's alpha coefficients of these three factors were .79, .79, and .89, indicating good reliability (Table 5.2). Two items, *pay attention to interpretation and displays* and *consider/discuss economic and social impacts of red tourism in Gutian*, were not loaded well on any of those three dimensions and thus were excluded from further analysis.

Table 5.2 Factor Analysis of Trip Activities

Domains	Factor Loadings	Eigen-value	Variance Explained (%)
Factor 1: Political-oriented activity		4.658	33.271
Consider/discuss the contribution, revolutionary spirit, and talent of revolutionary predecessors	.807		
Consider/discuss the content and significance of the Gutian conference	.776		
Compare former revolutionary predecessors and current leaders	.766		
Consider/discuss personal anecdotes of revolutionary predecessors	.761		
α=.792			
Factor 2: Pleasure activity		2.800	20.003
Buy souvenir and local products	.789		
Taste local food	.736		
Participate in rural tourism (e.g. picking fruits)	.673		
Take photos	.606		

Stroll around	.559		
α=.786			
Factor 3: Nature and culture		1.218	8.701
Appreciate natural scenery	.870		
Experience local culture and customs	.825		
Consider/discuss some folk mysterious legends and fengshui	.738		
α=.877			

1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree. KMO=.824. Barlett's test of sphericity $p<.000$

Tourists were asked how well they remember their trips to Gutian. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistic was .88. Therefore, further factor analysis can be proceeded, resulting in two factors with eigen-values exceeding 1. Reliability analysis indicated that both Chronbach's alpha coefficients were sufficiently high (α_1=.898, α_2=.795). Two dimensions to emerge were *visual observation*, including both tangible (e.g. buildings, natural landscapes, and displays etc.) and intangible (e.g. Hakka culture and customs, auspicious legends and *feng shui* stories etc.) aspects of Gutian, and *political significance/content* (e.g. the content, spirit, and significance of Gutian etc.), as indicated in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Factor Analysis of Memories

Domains	Factor Loadings	Eigen-value	Variance Explained (%)
Factor 1: Visual Observation (Culture, Nature, Building, Impacts of Tourism on Local Community)		5.509	42.380
Local food	.885		
Local Hakka culture and customs	.842		
Tourism souvenirs and local products	.815		
Rural view, farm tools and agronomic activities	.813		
Natural environment	.798		

Displays and buildings	.729		
Negative impacts of tourism on local community (e.g. inflation, environmental pollution)	.655		
Positive impacts of tourism on local community (e.g. improvement of road and housing conditions)	.649		
Auspicious legends and *feng shui* stories	.531		
α=.898			
Factor 2: Political Significance		2.371	18.240
The content and spirit of the Gutian Conference and its significant meanings in the history of army and party building	.858		
Introduction of nine conferences and eleven committee members	.819		
Poor facilities, hard conditions, and predecessors' spirit of enduring hardship	.774		
Significant meanings of Gutian to the current leader group	.717		
α=.795			

1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree. KMO=.875. Barlett's test of sphericity $p<.000$

The factor analysis of tourists' perceptions generated three dimensions of: 1) *positive impacts*, encompassing nine items related to people's nationalism, positive attitudes towards and support for the CCP/the government, and appreciation of the sacrifice of former revolutionary pioneers; 2) *unnecessary, indifference, and temporariness*, including four items about people's attitudes towards the necessity of comparing the past and the present, indifference towards communist heritage, and their short-lived nationalistic feelings; and 3) *effectiveness*, which is about visitors' comments on the effectiveness of Gutian's communist heritage in nationalistic education (Table 5.4).

Table 5.4 Factor Analysis of Perceptions

Domains	Factor Loadings	Eigen-value	Variance Explained (%)
Factor 1: Positive (Nationalism, Support for the CCP/the Government, Appreciation)		5.954	39.691
I feel more positive towards the future development of our nation	.864		
My nationalism is enhanced	.844		
I feel more proud of being a Chinese	.841		
It encourages me to work harder for our nation and people	.825		
My advocacy of the CCP is firmer	.819		
I believe more in the achievements of our party in the past decades	.770		
I admire and appreciate these revolutionary martyrs more	.731		
Comparing with the past hard conditions, I appreciate more of our current hard-won happy life	.729		
Red tourism can improve my personal morals and values	.722		
α=. 923			
Factor 2: Unnecessary, Indifference,& Temporariness		2.789	18.591
As the time is different, I think it is unnecessary to compare the past and current ways of leadership	.902		
As the time is different, I think it is unnecessary to compare the past and current living conditions	.866		
Since I have visited Gutian for several times and there are lots of red resources nearby, I got used to it and do not have much feelings	.769		
The feelings of martyrs' stories only exist at that moment and I will forget about it soon after I return back to the reality	.754		
α=.843			
Factor 3: Effectiveness		1.365	9.103
Comparing to red tourist attractions, controversies in China's international affairs (e.g. Senkaku islands incident) can better enhance my nationalism	.858		

Comparing to conference site and revolution bases (e.g. Gutian conference site, Jinggangshan revolutionary base), the places of grand massacres (e.g. Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall) can better enhance my nationalism	.821
α=.580	

1= strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree. KMO=.863. Barlett's test of sphericity $p<.000$

5.4.3.2 Cluster Analysis

A cluster analysis was performed to determine the activity-based segments, using a *K*-mean cluster analysis procedure. A four-cluster solution emerged from the analysis, which satisfied both value judgment and statistical criteria (Table 5.5).

Table 5.5 Mean comparisons of trip activity factors by clusters

Trip activity factors	Clusters				F-ratio	Sig.
	Pleasure and Nature/Culture Oriented (n=73, 35.8%)	Political-Oriented (n=22, 10.8%)	Red and Nature/Culture Oriented (n=35, 17.2%)	Red Generalist (n=74, 36.3%)		
Political-oriented activity	3.053	3.864	4.221	4.345	62.677	.000
Pleasure activity	3.499	2.245	2.731	3.892	95.414	.000
Nature and culture	3.685	1.985	4.038	4.234	147.763	.000

Note: Discriminant analysis shows 91.2% of all cases were correctly classified (hit-ratio)

The results indicated that the three activity dimensions were significantly different in all four clusters. The first cluster, *pleasure and nature/culture-oriented*, represented 35.8% (n=73) of the respondents. They had high scores of "pleasure activity" and

"natural-cultural activity." Second, *political-oriented*, was made up of 10.8% (n=22) of the respondents, had high scores of "political-oriented activity" and low scores on the other two items. Third, *red and nature/culture-oriented*, included 17.2% (n=35) of participants. They scored high on items relating to "political-oriented activity" and "nature and culture." The final cluster, *red generalist*, encompassed 36.3% (n=74) of the total number of participants. They scored high on all those three activity items. A multiple discriminant analysis (MDA) was performed to determine the accuracy of the classified group membership (Fraley & Raftery, 1998). The overall hit-ratio indicated that 91.2% of the cluster cases were correctly classified, representing a high accuracy rate.

5.4.3.3 Do activity-clusters differ in terms of motivation?

The overall MANOVA tests (Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, Hotelling's Trace, and Roy's Largest Root) were all significant at the .0001 level, indicating that the three-activity-based clusters differed in terms of travel motivation (Table 5.6). Post-hoc Bonferroni analysis was examined to find out which trip motivation items differentiated between the activity-based segments. Significant differences were found (p<0.05) on four out of five motivation items: "local, socialization, & superstition", "novelty and relaxation", "political/historical learning and nostalgia", and "nature and culture." The item of "official and business" received a relevantly low rating and was not significantly different across all four clusters, suggesting it was not a dominant motive for all tourists. The "pleasure and nature/culture-oriented" cluster was driven by the "nature and culture" factor more than the "political-oriented" cluster yet less than the "red and nature/culture-

oriented" and "red-generalist" segments (M_1=3.71, M_2=3.19, M_3=4.04, M_4=4.15, F=10.061). It was also influenced by the factors of "political/historical learning and nostalgia" (M=3.42) and "novelty and relaxation" (M=3.23) moderately. This result suggested a high degree of consistency between travel activity and motivation for Cluster 1 members.

Second, although the political-oriented cluster was primarily driven by the "political/historical learning and nostalgia" purpose, no significant differences were found between it and the "pleasure, and nature/culture-oriented" cluster on this item. In fact, this cluster was driven by the political purpose significantly less than cluster 3 and cluster 4 who had multiple trip motives (M_2=3.61, M_3=4.04, M_4=4.15, F=13.945). The chi-square analysis in the following part indicated that many of this group members travelled with their colleagues and friends. Thus, it is possible that the members of this cluster took group tours organized by their institutions over the weekends, where they may have lacked travel autonomy and did not demonstrate a strong political purpose in visiting Gutian.

Also, the "red and nature/culture-oriented" cluster was heavily motivated by the factors of "political/historical learning and nostalgia" and "nature and culture", indicating a high degree of congruence between travel activity and motivation. Yet it was driven significantly less than the "pleasure and nature/culture-oriented" and "red generalist" segments on the factor of "location, socialization, and superstition" (M_1=2.98, M_3=2.62, M_4=3.34, F=7.537), suggesting that it was less pleasure-oriented.

In addition, the "red-generalist" segment was heavily driven by all the motives except the "official and business" purpose. As aforementioned, this motive gained relatively low ratings across all four clusters. One possible explanation for this low loading is that the quantitative data were primarily collected from Friday to Sunday when the four research assistants were available. Thus, the number of the tourists who stopped by and visited Gutian while taking a business trip nearby might be somewhat smaller.

Table 5.6 MANOVA results for the relationship between activity-based clusters and motivation

Dependent variables	Means				*F*	Sig.
	Cluster 1: Pleasure and Nature/ Culture Oriented	Cluster 2: Political-Oriented	Cluster 3: Red and Nature/Culture Oriented	Cluster 4: Red Generalist		
Location, socialization, and superstition[a]	2.98[a]	2.61[ab]	2.62[b]	3.34[c]	7.537	.000
Official and business[b]	2.36	2.44	2.63	2.86	1.953	.124
Novelty and relaxation[c]	3.23[ac]	2.30[b]	3.05[c]	3.38[c]	8.576	.000
Political/historical learning and nostalgia[d]	3.42[a]	3.61[a]	3.95[b]	4.04[b]	13.945	.000
Nature and culture[e]	3.71[ac]	3.19[b]	4.04[cd]	4.15[d]	10.061	.000
	Value	df	F-value	Sig.		
Wilk's Lambda	.986	5	1973.311	.000		
Pillai's Trace	.014	5	1973.311	.000		
Hottelling-Lawley Trace	68.045	5	1973.311	.000		

Note: Means with the same superscript are not significantly different at the .05 level

[a]R^2=.13.
[b]R^2=.04.
[c]R^2=.15.
[d]R^2=.22.
[e]R^2=.17.

5.4.3.4 Do activity-clusters differ in terms of memories?

The Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, Hotelling's Trace, and Roy's Largest Root were statistically significant at the .0001 level, indicating that trip activity had a significant effect on people's memories of Gutian (Table 5.7). People who participated in multiple activities in Gutian tended to have a favorable impression of the tangible visual displays and objects, as well as intangible political significance of the Gutian Conference. The tourists who primarily took part in pleasure and nature/culture-oriented activities had moderate levels of impression of both visual observation (*M*=3.50) and political significance (*M*=3.73), which were significantly less than that of red generalists. Political activity-participants were very impressed by the political significance of Gutian (*M*=4.13), yet they did not necessarily paid a good deal of attention to the tangible aspects of the destination (*M*=2.35).

Table 5.7 MANOVA results for the relationship between activity-based clusters and memories

Dependent variables	Means				*F*	Sig.
	Cluster 1: Pleasure and Nature/Culture Oriented	Cluster 2: Political-Oriented	Cluster 3: Red and Nature/ Culture Oriented	Cluster 4: Red Generalist		

Visual observation (culture, nature, buildings, displays, & tourism impacts)	3.50[a]	2.35[b]	3.64[ac]	4.00[d]	51.444	.000
Political significance	3.73[a]	4.13[b]	4.31[b]	4.35[b]	16.009	.000
	Value	df	F-value	Sig.		
Wilk's Lambda	.034	2	2712.903	.000		
Pillai's Trace	.966	2	2712.903	.000		
Hottelling-Lawley Trace	28.113	2	2712.903	.000		

Note: Means with the same superscript are not significantly different at the .05 level

[a]R^2=.47.

[b]R^2=.22.

Visitors' memories may also be influenced by their pre-knowledge of and pre-visit to Gutian in that the more familiar with Gutian the tourists are, the more memories they would have. Thus, MANOVA was carried out to test the potential effects of these two variables (Table 5.8 and Table 5.9).

Interestingly, no significant difference was found between those who were unfamiliar and familiar with Gutian on the item of visual observation. This suggested that all the people with varying degrees of familiarity of Gutian paid considerable attention to the physical surroundings, such as buildings, and natural and cultural landscapes. On the other hand, regardless of peoples' pre-knowledge and pre-visits, all respondents had a relevantly high impressive memory of the political significance of Gutian since all groups scored above 4.00 on this item, indicating that red tourism is effective with regard to indoctrinating political information to its audiences to a certain extent.

Table 5.8 MANOVA results for the relationship between pre-knowledge and impression

Dependent variables	Means					*F*	Sig.
	Not familiar at all	Not familiar	Average	Familiar	Very familiar		
Visual observation (culture, nature, building, tourism impacts)	4.28	3.51	3.65	3.49	3.32	1.872	.117
Political significance	4.25	4.00	4.02	4.25	4.25	1.793	.132
	Value	df	F-value	Sig.			
Wilk's Lambda	.052	2	1690.586	.000			
Pillai's Trace	.948	2	1690.586	.000			
Hottelling-Lawley Trace	18.081	2	1690.586	.000			

Note: Means with the same superscript are not significantly different at the 0.5 level

[a]R^2=.04.

[b]R^2=.04.

Table 5.9 MANOVA results for the relationship between pre-visit and impression

Dependent variables	Means					*F*	Sig.
	1st time	2nd time	3rd time	4th time	5th and above		
Visual observation (culture, nature, building, tourism impacts)	3.52	3.58	3.61	3.69	3.69	.457	.767
Political significance	4.17	4.09	4.16	4.13	4.01	.546	.701
	Value	df	F-value	Sig.			
Wilk's Lambda	0.034	2	2712.9	.000			
Pillai's Trace	0.966	2	2712.9	.000			
Hottelling-Lawley Trace	28.113	2	2712.9	.000			

Note: Means with the same superscript are not significantly different at the 0.5 level

[a]R^2=.01.

[b]R^2=.01.

5.4.3.5 Do activity-clusters differ in terms of perceptions?

The Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, Hotelling's Trace, and Roy's Largest Root were statistically significant at the .0001 level, showing a significant main effect of tourist activities on their perceptions (Table 5.10). All four clusters had relatively high scores on the item of "positive impacts (nationalism, support for the CCP, appreciation)", revealing that red tourism can significantly enhance visitors' sense of nationalism, and positive attitudes towards, and support for, the CCP and/or the government. The impacts were much larger on the "red and nature/culture-oriented" cluster and the "red-generalist" cluster than the first two clusters (M_1=3.77, M_2=3.94, M_3=4.28, M_4=4.33, F=13.430). This suggests that the combination of political-oriented activities and other none-political activities might be a more effective way to result in positive cognitive impacts than pure leisure or political-oriented activities.

The red generalist tourists were more likely to agree on the items of "unnecessary, indifference, & temporariness" (M_4=3.18) than those who were pure political participants and mixed participants of both red and nature/culture activities (M_2=2.55, M_3=2.77). In other words, in the opinions of the second and third segments, it was still necessary to compare the past and the present in terms of leadership and living conditions even though the times were different. Meanwhile, they tended to disagree that the impacts of red tourism on their perceptions were temporary.

Among all respondents, there was widespread agreement, particularly for the pure political-activity and red generalist participants, that China's international affairs and national humiliation can more effectively enhance respondents' nationalism than red heritage in Gutian, which is a conference-site type of attraction (M_1=3.63, M_2=4.16, M_3=3.94, M_4=4.14, F=3.06). The first cluster achieved significantly lower scores on this item than the other three segments, possibly owing to the fact that they were more leisure-driven and less concerned about the nationalistic impacts of red tourism.

Table 5.10 MANOVA results for the relationship between activity-based clusters and perception

Dependent variables	Means				*F*	Sig.
	Cluster 1: Pleasure and Nature/Culture Oriented	Cluster 2: Political-Oriented	Cluster 3: Red and Nature/Culture Oriented	Cluster 4: Red Generalist		
Positive Impacts (Nationalism, Support for the CCP, Appreciation)	3.77[a]	3.94[a]	4.28[b]	4.33[b]	13.430	.000
Unnecessary, Indifference, & Temporariness	2.97[ac]	2.55[a]	2.77[ab]	3.18[c]	3.063	.030
Effectiveness	3.63[a]	4.16[b]	3.94[b]	4.14[b]	6.905	.000
	Value	df	F-value	Sig.		
Wilk's Lambda	0.014	3	4134.332	.000		
Pillai's Trace	0.986	3	4134.332	.000		
Hottelling-Lawley Trace	70.874	3	4134.332	.000		

Note: Means with the same superscript are not significantly different at the .05 level
[a]R^2=.19.

[b] R^2=.05.
[c] R^2=.10.

5.4.3.6 Do activity-clusters differ in terms of socio-demographics and travel patterns?

To profile the four activity-clusters, a series of chi-square tests were run to discover whether the four clusters could be distinguished using a number of socio-demographic and trip features (Table 5.11). Significant differences were found among these segments only in terms of age that the majority of the "pleasure and nature/culture-oriented" and "red generalist" clusters were young and middle-aged groups (≤22 and 23-32) while the "political-oriented" cluster were significantly older than the other three groups (33-42 and ≥53) (χ^2=31.900, Sig.=.000).

Regarding gender, males were usually more numerous than females except in the "red-generalist" cluster. Noticeably, there were three times more male visitors more than female visitors under the "political-oriented" category, suggesting that males might be more interested in pure political-oriented aspects, such as the content and significance of the Gutian Conference, and the contribution, revolutionary spirit and talent of revolutionary predecessors.

For all clusters, more than 60% of visitors had "one-three years of college" (n_1=16, n_2=7, n_3=7, n_4=25) and/or a "bachelors' degree" (n_1=42, n_2=7, n_3=24, n_4=35), suggesting that the majority of the survey respondents were highly educated. Interestingly, however, almost 30% of the "political-oriented" group possessed only junior high or senior high degrees. One possible reason could be that this group was made up of relatively older

visitors (particularly for those above 53 years old), who may have had less access to educational resources back in their youth during the 10-year Cultural Revolution when many high schools and colleges closed their doors (Zhou, Moen, & Tuma, 1998).

With regard to income, the first, third, and fourth clusters had lower income levels than the political-oriented group, whose members were older and more willing to spend. As with the political-oriented cluster, around 50% (n=56) of the red generalist spent more than 500 RMB (81.2 USD), which was much more than the first and third clusters. This is in part because red generalists participated in multiple activities and tended to stay longer than the first and the third clusters that 24.3% (n=17) of them stayed overnight and/or more than two days.

No significant differences were found among these four clusters in terms of political status. It has been reported that the prestige of party membership has been declining since the reform and open-door policies of the post-Mao era due to the diminishing material benefits of joining the party (Dickson & Rublee, 2000). Due to the trend of secularizing communism, political ideology may have less influence on people's decisions and behavior, in this case, tourists' consideration of visiting red destinations.

The majority of visitors travelled with their family, colleagues and/or friends, and stayed less than six hours. As already mentioned, the *red generalists* appeared to stay longer than the rest of the clusters. The visitors who participated in fewer activities, such as the pure political-oriented cluster, tended to spend less time that 81% (n=17) stayed in Gutian for less than 6 hours.

Table 5.11 Activity-based clusters' differences based on socio-demographic and travel patterns

	Cluster 1: Pleasure and Nature/Culture Oriented	Cluster 2: Political-Oriented	Cluster 3: Red and Nature/Culture Oriented	Cluster 4: Red Generalist	Sig.
Gender					
Male	41 (56.9%)	15 (75%)	22 (62.9%)	31 (49.2%)	χ^2=4.695
Female	31 (43.1%)	5 (25%)	13 (37.1%)	32 (50.8%)	Sig.=.196
Age					
≤22	27 (37.5%)	1 (4.5%)	11 (32.4%)	19 (25.7%)	χ^2=31.900
23-32	19 (26.4%)	4 (18.2%)	13 (38.2%)	21 (28.4%)	Sig.=.000
33-42	19 (26.4%)	6 (27.3%)	1 (2.9%)	20 (27%)	
43-52	4 (5.3%)	4 (18.2%)	5 (14.7%)	6 (8.1%)	
≥53	3 (4.2%)	7 (31.8%)	4 (11.8%)	8 (10.8%）	
Education					
Below elementary school	2 (2.8%)	1 (4.5%)	0 (0%)	2 (2.7%)	χ^2=23.567
Junior high	4 (5.6%)	4 (18.2%)	2 (5.7%)	1 (1.4%)	Sig.=.073
Senior high	6 (8.5%)	2 (9.1%)	2 (5.7%)	11 (14.9%)	
One-three years of college	16 (22.5%)	7 (31.8%)	7 (20.0%)	25 (33.8%)	
Bachelor's degree	42 (59.2%)	7 (31.8%)	24 (68.6%)	35 (47.3%)	
Graduate degree	1 (1.4%)	1 94.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	
Income					
No income	8 (11.9%)	0 (0%)	4 (12.1%)	11 (15.5%)	χ^2=19.686
≤ 2000	22 (32.8%)	4 (18.2%)	10 (30.3%)	16 (22.5%)	Sig.=.184
2001-3999	24 (35.8%)	6 (27.3%)	13 (39.4%)	24 (33.8%)	
4000-5999	5 (7.5%)	5 (22.7%)	3 (9.1%)	12 (16.9%)	
6000-7999	3 (4.5%)	3 (13.6%)	3 (9.1%)	4 (5.6%)	
≥8000	5 (7.5%)	4 (18.2)	0 (0%)	4 (5.6%)	
Political status					
Communist Party member	20 (27.8%)	7 (31.8%)	9 (26.5%)	22 (30.1%)	χ^2=14.098
Communist Youth League Member	28 (38.9%)	4 (18.2%)	15 (44.1%)	25 (34.2%)	Sig.=.295
	1 (1.4%)	0 (0%)	2 (5.9%)	6 (8.2%)	

Democratic Party Member or figures without Party affiliation					
Masses	22 (30.6%)	10 (45.5%)	6 (17.6%)	17 (23.3%)	
Other	1 (1.4%）	1 (4.5%)	2 (5.9%)	3 (4.1%)	
Travel party					
Myself	4 (5.6%)	1 (4.5%)	2 (5.9%)	8 (11.3%)	χ^2=15.677
Family	15 (21.1%)	3 (13.6%)	3 (8.8%)	17 (23.9%)	Sig.=.615
Colleagues and/or friends	35 (49.3%)	14 (63.6%)	22 (64.7%)	29 (40.8%)	
Work partner/ guests	8 (11.3%)	4 (18.2%)	3 (8.8%)	7 (9.9%)	
Other	9 (12.7%)	0 (0%)	4 (11.8%)	10 (14.1%)	
Expenses					
≤200RMB	21 (30.9%)	5 (22.7%)	17 (48.6%)	17 (23.3%)	χ^2=22.193
200-500RMB	18 (26.5%)	4 (18.2%)	4 (11.4%)	15 (20.5%)	Sig.=.103
500-1000RMB	11 (16.2%)	5 (22.7%)	5 (14.3%)	16 (21.9%)	
1000-2000RMB	7 (10.3%)	3 (13.6%)	1 (2.9%)	13 (17.8%)	
≥ 2000RMB	3 (4.4%)	3 (13.6%)	2 (5.7%)	9 (12.3%)	
Paid by others	8 (11.8)	2 (9.1%)	6 (17.1%)	3 (4.1%)	
Length of stay					
≤2 hours	15 (20.8%)	5 (23.8%)	3 (9.1%)	10 (14.3%)	χ^2=12.251
2-4 hours	35 (48.6%)	6 (28.6%)	17 (51.5%)	26 (37.1%)	Sig.=.426
4-6 hours	16 (22.2%)	6 (28.6%)	9 (27.3%)	17 (24.3%)	
Stay overnight	4 (5.6%)	3 (14.3%)	3 (9.1%)	11 (15.7%)	
≥2 days	2 (2.8%)	1 (4.8%)	1 (3.0%)	6 (8.6%)	

5.5 Conclusion

To understand how tourists experience destinations and perceive tourism discourses, it is necessary to describe the process by which humans acquire, change, and adapt their knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and behaviors (Gnoth & Matteucci, 2014).

In tourism impact studies, while there is plenty of research focusing on those living and working in the destination, little attention has been placed on tourism impacts on the tourists with regard to, for instance, what travel means to them and how travel changes them in certain ways (Hampton, 2007; May, 1996; Squire, 1994). Research thus appears to be a top-down interpretation from the perspective of suppliers, which might misrepresent many tourists (Desforges, 2000).

An in-depth understanding of how red tourism can influence tourists' attitude and cognition can be obtained by deconstructing the social situations on red trips into the elements of goal, rule, role, sequences, language, cognitive structure, and environmental settings, as depicted in Argle et al.'s (1981) framework of social situation analysis. A qualitative study was conducted to examine how tourists perceived each of these components in the context of red tourism. A few of the most relevant constructs (motivation, activity, memory, and perception) along with social-demographics and travel patterns were selected for subsequent quantitative investigation to explore how tourists consumed and perceived red heritage in certain patterns based on the activities they participated in. By engaging tourists, this chapter analyzed the third stage of the meaning-making process as depicted in the circuit of red heritage and tourism framework, where tourists actively participate in consuming red heritage and reconstructing their own underlying meanings.

The qualitative results revealed that visitors were motivated by a variety of motives and participated in various political, natural, cultural, and pleasure-oriented

activities. Generally speaking, local tourists who were from Longyan District tended to visit only Gutian, while tourists from other regions usually involved more distant red or other types of tourist attractions in their itineraries. While most tourists described themselves as pure tourists, their self-perceived role(s) might also be influenced by travel party and personal social background. People's perceptions of behavioral rules somewhat reflected that China has been shifting from a strict and pure communist ideology towards a more diverse and tolerant form of ideology, incorporating commercialization and modernization. Furthermore, respondents exhibited a mixed response to the concept of nation and nationalism. Some considered the concept of nation from the perspective of blood ties and ethnic bond; some viewed it as a political territory guided under common laws. Informants have split opinions on whether or not red tourism can enhance their sense of nationalism, positive attitudes and support for the party and government. Those who regarded the influence as temporary and weak were more likely to describe red language and onsite environmental settings as outdated, boring, rigid, and pale.

In the quantitative research, tourists were first clustered based on trip activities. Activity-based clustering can reflect a broader scope, including not only the ones who are motivated to travel by political purposes, but also all other types of tourists who are interested in nature, culture, and adventure. Therefore, it can better serve the needs of the suppliers, or the government in this case. The results suggested that visitors were not pure political pilgrims or amateur political scientists who practiced passionate worship or sought a detailed understanding of communist heritage. It also has found that activity-based clusters did differ significantly from each other in five out of six motivation factors,

indicating that motivation can shape certain patterns of people's involvement in trip activities and consumption of heritage (Bruner, 1994). There was some degree of congruence between what they have done and what they have learned. For example, those who primarily participated in political-related activities appeared to have a strong impression of the political significance of Gutian but not visual observation (e.g. buildings, displays, culture, and nature etc.). Those who went primarily for leisure/pleasure may be less likely concerned about nationalistic education, and thus their ratings of tourism impacts on their nationalistic awareness was less than the other three clusters. The majority of respondents agreed that it was still necessary to compare the past and the present and cherish our current life. The roles of demographics and trip characteristics in discriminating between different types of tourists were weak. Only age differentiated the four activity-based clusters from each other. The rest of the variables, especially political membership, did not function as a significant determinant for trip activities, suggesting that political ideology might be more like a nominal title instead of part of the essence of selfhood.

In summary, the party and/or the government always position themselves as representative of the Chinese nation and Chinese economic interests (Zhao, 2004). While they have made tremendous efforts to win more respect for the party and save its waning legitimacy by demonstrating what they have done for the people of China, each individual is free to (re)construct and (re)interpret his or her own meanings of sights. The study results reveal that red tourism can contribute to achieving the political goal to a certain extent since many survey participants stated that they have learned about political

significance and/or content of the Gutian Conference and developed more positive attitudes and support for the CCP and government during/after their visits. However, such effects might be compromised by the effectiveness of interpretation and representation. In addition, different voices have heard that some tourists may be more cynical about the current legitimacy of the leadership of the CCP by comparing those great and altruistic revolutionary pioneers described in communist discourses and current selfish and hypocritical leaders. Therefore, the diversification of tourist experiences and perceptions justify that ideological learning and indoctrination is not just a one-way street. Rather, it is shaped by various psychological, behavioral, and some socio-demographic factors as revealed in this study.

The comparisons can provide some implications for the government to develop red tourism in Gutian better as well as more effectively carry out nationalistic education. First, although the concept of big red tourism (when communist heritage, and natural and cultural resources are combined) has been proposed, communist heritage is still overemphasized in the promotional materials and thus may overshadow other tourism resources. According to the survey, only 11% of tourists were interested in pure political-oriented activities. Therefore, to improve the effectiveness of marketing campaigns, the government needs to conduct a comprehensive market analysis and learn more about visitors' needs, and integrate other tourism resources and products in marketing activities accordingly. Secondly, given the negative comments on the language and environmental settings, efforts must be made to immerse tourists in the environmental settings. A few measures of establishing the experiential atmosphere and reshowing the then scenes may

include applying visual displays, and audio and light effect/technology. In this way, tourists can gain a more profound physical, emotional, and cognitive experience and understanding of red heritage.

It is hoped that this study contributes, even in a small way, to understanding the ways in which individuals decode the symbolic meanings and the impacts that red tours can have on tourists during the new phase where both "top-down" and "bottom-up" official ideology disseminations are emphasized. Due to the complexity of the interactions of all the social situational components and the length limit, this current study only explored the associations among a few variables which are mostly relevant to tourists' perception and consumption of red heritage. Future research may further apply the framework of social situation analysis and examine the interactive effects of other elements on tourists' readings.

Chapter 6

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Research Background

Heritage possesses the potential to disseminate values, beliefs and social norms that are selected and endorsed by different political agents with various interests (Timothy, 2011; Sofield & Li, 2011). Therefore, it has always been utilized as an ideological vehicle to construct identities and enhance national soft power at various levels by (re)interpreting and (re)producing historic narratives, and promoting and consuming heritage (Light, 2001; Young & Kaczmarek, 2008).

Tourism is one of the most direct forms of politicizing heritage. It provides the scene where nationalistic rhetoric, images, signs, and landscapes are weaved together to reveal a past that people can recognize as belonging to them. From this perspective, it plays a formative role in making a nation and establishing a sense of national identity, by conveying meanings and transmitting a very particular message about a nation, for both external and internal audiences. For external audiences, tourism is one way of presenting self to others and enhancing a country's soft power at the international level, giving it a particular brand or destination image (Light, 2001). One example is communist heritage tourism in CEE, which is used to demonstrate a post-socialist identity to the international community and hence seek political and economic integration with Western Europe (Light, 2001; Yong & Kaczmarek, 2008). For internal audiences, tourists are able to make a connection between themselves and the nation by visiting historic and heritage

sites (Anderson, 1991; Timothy, 2007). In this way, social cohesion and collective identities are expected to be further reinforced and consolidated (Palmer, 1999), and thus soft power at the domestic level can be strengthened. During the dynamic and recurrent process, three most fundamental issues have attracted intense scholarly attention: whose heritage should be shown and interpreted; how heritage is valued; and how heritages are imbued with meanings and communicated to consumers (Timothy, 2011; Poria, Butler, & Airey 2004).

One prominent example of politicizing heritage is Chinese red tourism, which is based on revolutionary narratives weaved around memorials and places of history associated with the birth of the Chinese Communist Party, the anti-Japanese war, the Chinese civil war, and the founding of the New China (Gu, Ryan, & Zhang, 2011; Rioux, 2008). It is expected that such a nationwide movement of red tourism is able to generate political, economic, and social benefits, among which political purposes are predominantly emphasized. The authorship of red tourism is dominated by the CCP, who has been making tremendous efforts to record and celebrate its achievement and values, reinforce its legitimate leadership, deal with the serious economic and social problems existing and emerging along with China's rapid economic growth and sociocultural changes, and achieve social harmony and political stability. According to the Chinese media, in spite of merely a short period of development, red tourism has achieved an astonishing level of growth with respect to tourist arrivals and receipts (Xinhua News, 2011). Yet merely using such statistics may draw an inaccurate and rosy picture of the contribution of red tourism. Therefore, there is a need for empirical work on whether or

not the political and social goals set up by the political authority can be achieved. More specifically, there is a need to have a closer look at how red tourism can contribute to this ongoing endeavor to create a new Chinese nationalism.

6.2 Research Gap and Research Questions

Most research about the relationships between heritage tourism and nationalism are production-based, conducted from an etic viewpoint and concentrating on the text and iconography of tourism discourses (McLean, 1998; Palmer, 1999). Going beyond the binary and isolation of production and consumption, this dissertation approaches its research questions from both etic and emic angles by analyzing how tourism meaning-making processes circulate among the processes of production (government), transmission (intermediaries), and consumption (tourist), during which potential mismatches are identified and the possible underlying factors are discussed.

The government's involvement and roles in tourism development have been extensively studied in both developed and developing countries, where the scopes and scales of its involvement might differ (Akama, 2002; Baum & Szivas, 2008). For example, governments in developed countries are prone to take on a policing role and act less as adviser and consultant, whereas governments in developing countries usually don the leading role of entrepreneur or development broker, who takes the initiative of making and implementing tourism plans (Bramwell & Alletorp, 2001; Kunst, 2011). In spite of having received sufficient scholarly attention, a noticeable gap still exists in scale in that most studies are carried out at a macro level. Little attention has been paid to how

the micro-level government, as the go-between of the central government and folk forces, implements the lofty goals set up by the central and provincial governments in practice. One aim of this dissertation is to evaluate the consistency and effectiveness of the governance of red tourism in China by analyzing the roles and goals of government at various levels along the political hierarchy.

It is generally assumed that heritage interpretation and tour guiding can lead to a high level of attitudinal change and cognitive retention, and hence has an important impact on tourist experiences (Ryan & Dewar, 1995). Although intermediaries are one of the most visible players in tourism, they somehow appear invisible to researchers and thus their contribution and impacts appear to be relevantly unclear (Weiler & Ham, 2002).

Current studies on tour guides are centered on their roles and the effectiveness of interpretation. Little research has been directed to anchor interpretation and guiding practices in a broader political, social, and economic context, and explore the underlying factors that can shape those practices. This dissertation attempts to improve the static research by comparing two major types of intermediaries, *site interpreter* and *tour guide*, with regard to the content of, and approach to their interpretation of red heritage. Both external and internal factors that may affect intermediaries' behaviors, such as institutional arrangements, environmental settings, interaction with tourists, self-perceived roles and so on, are examined as well, providing in-depth insight into the dynamics of the transmission process of the circuit of red heritage and tourism framework.

As already noted, the scenery of red tourism forms a provocative stage for the establishment of nationhood. Yet people may not passively absorb the messages presented to them (Ateljevic, 2000; Norton, 1996). As China is stepping into a new stage of nationalistic movements, merely looking at how governments use red heritage as a vehicle for political indoctrination is not enough. In fact, previous research has showed that it is very difficult to change human behavior, and the real purpose of tourists in experiential terms are diverse and can become conflicting challenges to the central government (Gudgion & Thomas, 1991; Orams, 1997). Accordingly, this dissertation argues that efforts are needed to evaluate the effectiveness of the patriotic function of red tourism from the lens of its very audiences, *tourists*, who are the ultimate power in deciding what to experience and what to feel from their stay in red destination.

6.3 Summary of Findings

6.3.1 Government

Without researching government involvement in red tourism, it is hard to analyze past tourism development and forecast future trends (Zhang, Chong, & Ap, 1998). Previous research has revealed that various factors can influence the government's involvement in red tourism, including economic factors, perceived roles, policy formulation, power, political system, and developmental model and stage (Hall, 1994; Javier & Elazigue, 2011; Kunst, 2011; Zhang, Chong, & Ap, 1999). This dissertation focuses on two of the most decisive factors in Chinese society, *power* and *guanxi*, to examine the patterns of government participation in red tourism development at both

meso and micro levels. Specific attention is drawn towards the developmental impetus and progress, and the roles and goals of governments.

The findings suggest that there are efforts to integrate red tourism into a socialist market economy and decentralize the power of policymaking from the central government to local levels. In general, however, only higher-level governments are intensely involved in planning, promoting, investing in, and training for red tourism. The roles and goals of different level government are investigated along the political hierarchy.

From the top-down direction, while the meso-level government assumes the roles of planner, designer, resource organizer and provider, and controller, the micro-level government is largely excluded from strategic decision-making circles and focuses more on implementation and operation. From the bottom-up direction, village and community-level officials bargain and negotiate with the superordinate administrators for financial support and preferential policies. Being a go-between, township governments struggle to find a balance between their goals in grassroots governance and their roles assigned by the superordinate. Accordingly, it is prone to adopt a conservative and docile approach in coping up with many of its roles and responsibilities. When confronting the higher-ups, the meso-level government utilizes junket tourism as a medium to cultivate and maintain guanxi, since strong guanxi may facilitate obtaining funds from upper-level leaders, reflecting a strong overtone of rule of man or ad-hoc management outside the normal legal framework.

6.3.2 Intermediary

Being entrusted with a public relations mission to encapsulate the essence of place, intermediaries direct the tourists' gaze, tell them what to observe and what to ignore, and how to interpret what they see (Gelbman & Maoz, 2012; Pond, 1993). They are not only altruistic mediators who merely sell images, knowledge, and ideologies at the government's will. Instead, they have their own agendas, which are influenced by historical, political, and economic contexts. It is hard for them to make all parties involved satisfied, and keep tourism development in balance. Therefore, it is worthwhile to understand the most dominant internal and external influencing factors that can forge the interpretative content and approaches of their interpretation.

The interpretation of site interpreters is highly codified and authorized. Yet such reproduction of rehearsed narratives is not necessarily 100% in accordance with a government's guidelines, as they are also rational people who attempt to derive the most benefits from their work. For example, site interpreters may reduce interpretative content to lessen their workload since tourist services may not be the first priority for their career path. On the contrary, tour guides are much more customer-oriented and may even function as creative (re)producers of profitable myth-making narratives, which are officially undesirable images.

Intermediaries (re)entextualize or (re)contextualize tourism discourses, reflecting asymmetrical power between the originator and the copier (Salazar, 2007). Locating guiding practices in a broader context, several external and internal influencing factors of

tour guides' interpretation are discussed, including institutional arrangements (staffing system, training, and economic incentives), environmental settings (carrying capacity, crowdedness, and itinerary), tourist characteristics (motivation, interest, and social demographics), and tourist-intermediary onsite interactions. The most significant dilemma the story teller confronts is that intermediaries are always pressed for time and caught between their obligation to please their employers and the tourists, and being subject to government regulations.

6.3.3 The Tourists

Applying the framework of social situation analysis, this dissertation explores how tourists experience and perceive red heritage. Social situations in red tourism are deconstructed into several elements, and tourists' perceptions towards each of them are analyzed. The major findings reveal that tourists were driven by multiple motives and participated in various political and non-political activities. Most of them identified themselves as pure tourists, whereas very few people described themselves as political pilgrims or worshippers. Tourists' attitudes towards behavioral rules, understanding of the concepts of nation and nationalism, and perceptions of the nationalistic impacts of red tourism, suggest an increasingly diverse, tolerant, and multifaceted trend in people's perceptions of the communist ideology.

The subsequent quantitative investigation was designed to understand how tourists consumed and perceived red heritage based on their activities. Four activity-based clusters were found: pleasure and nature/culture oriented, political oriented, red

and nature/culture oriented, and red generalist. A series of comparisons among these four clusters revealed that there is a considerable degree of congruence among tourists' participation, motivation, and memories. For example, the pleasure and nature/culture-oriented cluster had relatively fewer impressions of political significance of Gutian and did not consider red tourism to have significant impacts on enhancing their nationalistic awareness. Socio-demographic characteristics and travel patterns, on the other hand, did not serve as significant determinants of tourists' participation in red tourism, except the age variable, which may significantly determine tourists' personal experience and memory of the communist past.

6.3.4 Synthesis of the Three Processes

As demonstrated in the model of the circuit of red heritage and tourism, the government acts as the story maker by selecting and articulating specific meanings and controlling tour guiding practices and tourism discourses. Within the story-telling process, the position of government at different levels can largely determine the nature of its interactions with other entities, its autonomy and constraints in the political hierarchy, and thus its participation in story-making. The results reveal that macro, meso, and micro-level governments may have different goals and degrees of involvement in red tourism development and meaning-making process. Higher-level governments primarily assume the leading role (planner, designer, resources organizer & provider, controller) in development and focus on political and economic meaning-making practices, whereas lower-level governments are excluded from strategy-making processes, take

responsibilities of implementation and operation, and concentrate much less on political meaning-making. Governors at various levels strive to maximize their own benefits. For example, the primary focus of a lower-level government might not be political or even economic meaning-making, but rather maintaining social stability. Therefore, there are dissonance between higher and lower level governments in terms of their goals and roles in the story-making process.

In the story-telling process, although intermediaries are expected to transmit the ideological discourses to tourists, to a large extent, both site interpreters and tour guides are rational and thus endeavor to augment their own benefits under the current conditions. While site interpreters may provide relatively more officially authorized narratives, their primary focus is hosting higher-ups from the superordinate government. As a result, they may tend to refuse to provide interpretation service to tourists when they are overloaded. On the contrary, tour guides are more customer-oriented, which may lead to some officially undesirable interpretation, such as *feng shui*, to attract tourists' attention. Therefore, ideological narratives might be misrepresented during the process of transmission, depending on various external and internal factors as summarized above.

As story readers and consumers, tourists are driven by multiple motives, have increasingly diverse attitudes and perceptions towards red heritage, and participate in various political and apolitical activities in Gutian. A considerable degree of congruence was found between tourists' motivation, participation, memory, and perception, implying that there are some associations between what motivates them, what they have done,

what they have learned, and how their attitudes and perceptions are influenced. The quantitative data showed that the majority of tourists learn about the political significance and/or content of the Gutian Conference, and developed a somewhat positive attitude and support for the CCP and government.

Interplays among these entities were also found. For example, the demand of audiences can significantly influence the processes of story-making and story-telling. Producers (in this case the government) integrate "experiential paradigms" into redesigning "big red tourism" products and make it more interactive and entertaining than traditional patriotic tourism. A few means include combining red, agricultural, and cultural/heritage resources, commercializing communist heritage, and thematizing tourism products. In addition, the characteristics (e.g. interests, motivation, and political status) of audiences and the nature of tours can influence the interpretative content and method both qualitatively and quantitatively. Moreover, audiences' social baggage can help shape their preferences and heritage values. For instance, older visitors who have had much more experience with China's socialist past (e.g. the cultural revolution) are more likely to participate in purely political activities.

In summary, on one hand, the study reveals a certain degree of effectiveness of red tourism in achieving the political, social, and economic goals established by the central government. On the other hand, it suggests that many conflicts, power issues, dilemmas, and dissonance exist while implementing the lofty goals set up by the central government at the local level along the political hierarchy in the meaning-making process.

The (re)production, interpretation, and consumption of communist heritage via tourism can reflect that China has been gradually shifting from a strict and pure communist ideology towards a more diverse and tolerant form of ideology which incorporates commercialization and modernization.

6.4 Contributions

6.4.1 Systematic and Emic Perspective

Adopting a systematic and holistic reasoning approach, this dissertation provides careful planning and conceptual groundwork by integrating and comparing multiple entities in the meaning-making process of red tourism, reflecting an ongoing dialogue among producer, transmitter, and consumer. Positioning multi-level governance in the political hierarchy, this dissertation discusses how meso and micro-level governments get involved in red tourism from both top-down and bottom-up directions. Such a systematic view of government involvement can provide in-depth insights into how the lofty goals set up by the central government are implemented at various levels along the political hierarchy.

Likewise, this dissertation positions guiding and interpreting practices in a larger social, political, and economic context, to understand how site interpreters and tour guides interpret red heritage, and examines the external and internal factors that help to forge their interpretation. It offers a richer understanding of the story-telling process, the second stage of the circuit of red heritage and tourism model, where intermediaries

reinforce and transform ideological discourses assigned by Chinese government through their interpretation.

As well, the social situations on red tours are considered to achieve a comprehensive and contextual understanding of tourists' patterns of consuming and perceiving red heritage. This study also contributes to analyzing the process of change in tourists, which is a neglected dimension of tourism impact analysis (Brown, 2009).

6.4.2 The Circuit of Red Heritage and Tourism Framework

This dissertation considers consumption the continuous recycling of cultural and symbolic meanings, where production and consumption are regarded as complements. Guided by Johnson's (1986) circuit of culture model, this study develops an adapted model of the circuit of red heritage and tourism, where the meaning-making process is a socially-constructed activity defined and accepted by those who produce, transmit, and consume it. In this model, the meanings of tourist experiences always change at difference levels of representation and in the process of interaction. Consumers can become producers when their subjective understandings enter into the existing reservoir of discourses.

6.4.3 Contextualization

Empirical studies always require a context-laden method, especially when applying Western research to non-Western cultures (Wong & Chan, 1999). Stewart and Bond (2002) pointed out that the results of Western-based studies cannot be directly

generalized to a high context environment, such as China in this case, where the concepts, constructs and scales might be highly variable. For example, the names of the scales can be confusing, and there might be disagreement on the dimensions or typologies divided by different investigators (Stewart & Bond, 2002). This dissertation contextualizes the study in the Chinese scenario in various ways. For example, two of the decisive forces of social practices in Chinese context, *power* and *guanxi,* were adopted to explore the interactions among different levels of government and the local community. What is more, although there are existing measurements of some of the constructs of this study, such as tourists' motivations and perceptions, simply adopting and even adapting existing scales based on the author's speculation may result in questionable validity. Therefore, in this study, measures and dimensions of tourists' experience in a red destination were empirically developed by using mixed methods rather than being presumed theoretically. In this way, this dissertation contributes to the existing body of research by incorporating the context in describing, understanding, and theorizing the phenomena within it.

6.4.4 Grounded Theory

Deriving from its theoretical underpinnings from pragmatism and symbolic interactionism (Corbin & Strauss, 1990), grounded theory is a method of qualitative inquiry where data collection and analysis reciprocally inform each other through an emergent iterative process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). The intent of grounded theory is to generate or discover a theoretical way of describing how people act and react to a certain phenomenon through a successive conceptual analysis of data. Data sources are

interviews, observations, government documents, newspapers, and books and video tapes. The data are then analyzed using multiple coding strategies (e.g. open coding and axial coding), to develop and interrelate categories of information. In the end, generally speaking, theoretical propositions or hypotheses, or a visual representation of the theory, are proposed.

Based on the qualitative data from observations, interviews, and focus groups, this dissertation conceptually labeled codes by comparing the similarities and differences among event/action/interaction. A hierarchy of the categories and subcategories were then mapped out to capture the dynamics of interpretation in Gutian by considering the conditions, contexts, strategies, and consequences of the codes. It is clear that a grounded theory is reproducible in a limited sense (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Yet in fact, probably no social scientific theory that deals with a social phenomenon is consistently reproducible in that the conditions of new situations rarely match those of the original study precisely (Mjoset, 2005). The framework of the dynamics of interpretation is therefore open to emerging components/constructs, and other possible theoretical directions in the future.

6.5 Implications

Despite the dominant top-down developmental model, grassroots administrative entities and local communities should be empowered gradually to establish effective partnerships and collaboration in both top-down and bottom-up directions. During this process, goals and roles should be clearly focused and articulated. Meanwhile, a long-

term vision should be adopted during the process of tourism planning, which not only considers the volume and growth speed of red tourism development, but also the issue of sustainability, such as industry structure and labor force structure.

Intermediaries' capability to contribute to ideological transmission can be affected by the limitations in their own guiding and interpreting competency and impeded by outside constraints that are imposed upon the guide. Therefore, to improve guiding practices, measures are needed to improve their professionalism, such as implementing concurrent and feedback control systems to courage intermediaries to pursue continuous improvement after acquiring relevant certificates and licenses. What is more, collaboration among government, tour operators, and other industrial entities are needed to improve the current inferior social status of tour guides. For example, a rational, steady, and standardized remuneration system and promising career path can be facilitated to foster positive expectations and attitudes towards the guiding occupation. In this way, commission fees or kick-backs will cease to be the primary source of income, reducing guides' financial dependence on tour operators. Furthermore, two-way interactive interpretation equipped with humor, metaphors, analogies, and logically structured information should be adopted, where tourists are encouraged to ask questions and take active roles in the tours. In this way, the links between tourists' everyday experience and the interpretative content can be made (Reisinger & Steiner, 2006).

The dominance of communist heritage in red tourism development may impede the implement of the proposed idea of big red tourism, where communist heritage, natural,

and cultural resources are combined. In actuality, the findings suggest that only a relatively small number of tourists are interested in pure political-oriented activities. Therefore, it can be concluded that there are some dissonance between the officially projected destination image of Gutian and tourists' perceptions and preferences. This dissertation argues that a comprehensive market analysis needs to be carried out to gain a deeper understanding of visitors' needs and incorporate other tourism resources into marketing campaigns. Moreover, it is necessary to hear tourists' voices in terms of how they would like communist heritage to be interpreted. A few recommendations brought up by tourists during the fieldwork include how to create the experiential atmosphere and reshow the historic scene by applying visual and audial techniques. A negotiated version of interpretative content and approach can further be designed based on the official and folk perceptions of red stories, which can make red tours more personal and facilitate audiences in gaining more profound physical, emotional, and cognitive experiences and understandings. In this way, the effectiveness of ideological education of red tourism can be further improved.

6.6 Limitations and Future Research

A perfect research design may not exist for studying human subjects due to various uncontrollable factors, such as research approaches and research environment. For example, fears and concerns of expressing opinions publicly may make respondents inclined to give socially-desirable answers to sensitive questions (Paulhus, 2002), which can be somewhat reflected by the negative encounters with two tourists during the

fieldtrip. In addition, Chinese people generally lack experience with social research and public engagement. It is not uncommon for people to regard the opinions of the grassroots as unworthy of higher levels of attention, which may lead to perfunctory attitudes towards the meaning of academic research. Second, eliciting responses from participants via a standardized questionnaire may still tend to fit a square peg in a round hole, representing the least common denominator in assessing people's attitudes, perceptions, and experiences (Babbie, 2007), but it is still one of the best tools we have to work with. Third, due to the nature of group tourists, and the temporal and financial limitations of this research, only individual tourists were investigated in this study. Since officially organized tours dominate the major landscape of tourist arrivals in Gutian and even China, the sampling frame of this research may not be representative of the whole population of red tourists.

This study examined the meaning-making process of red tourism from the perspectives of government, intermediaries, and tourists in a conference-type red tourism destination in China. The general issues identified in this study, such as power, guanxi, political hierarchy, institutional arrangements, and so on, are not only unique to Gutian Town, but in fact, might also be common in many other red destinations, given the nature and role of the government and the tourism industry in China. Nevertheless, future research is still needed to investigate different types of red destinations in China that might be driven by various developmental impetuses and models. Comparative studies conducted both longitudinally and horizontally are needed to demystify the dynamics of red tourism development further as well as to understand the transformative ideologies in

China. Furthermore, although the fourth stage of the circuit of red heritage and tourism framework, *social relations and lived culture*, is not considered in this study, due to the length of the research, it merits future scrutiny to investigate how the meanings at an individual level can contribute to the formation of social meanings, and how the reservoirs of discourses and meanings in turn function as raw materials for fresh cultural and heritage production. Finally, more relevant frameworks/theories, such as *network theory*, and other constructs, such as the remaining elements of the social situation analysis framework that have not been explored in this dissertation, are worthy of investigation to deepen the insights of the current study.

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APPENDIX A

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE-ENGLISH VERSION

TOURISTS' PERCEPTION AND EXPERIENCE IN RED TOURISM

==========

Thank you very much for participating in this study. I am interested in understanding tourists' experience and perceptions of their trips in Gutian. Your participation is completely voluntary and confidentially, and you can withdraw from the survey at any time. The information you offered will be used for academic research only and it will not result in any penalty or negative consequence. It will take around 15-20 minutes to fill out this survey and please put a check mark in the corresponding boxes. If you have any question about this survey, please contact Shengnan Zhao, PhD Candidate, School of Community Resources & Development, Arizona State University, Email: shengnan.zhao@asu.edu.

Thank you very much for your kind help and support!

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Section I: Travel Behavior, Experiences, and Perception

1. This is your _____ time to visit Gutian.

A. 1st B.2nd C. 3rd D 4th E. 5th and above

2. Prior to this visit, how well do you know about the historic and political background of Gutian?

1=not familiar at all 2=not familiar 3=average 4=familiar 5=very familiar

3. For this visit, how important are the following motives to you?

(5=Very important, 4=important, 3=not sure, 2=not important, 1=not important at all)

	5=Very imp 5	4	3	2	1=Not imp at all 1
Gutian is very famous and I would like to visit the place where national leaders have stayed					
Take political pilgrimage, receive ideological education, and experience revolutionary atmosphere					
Learn about historical and political knowledge					
Recall and feel nostalgic about the past life					
Enjoy beautiful natural environment					
Experience Hakka folk culture and rural tourism					

Relax and release pressure					
Seek for excitement and novelty					
Take a walk around and be physically active					
Get some dragon energy and improve personal luck					
There is little choice in tourist attractions nearby					
Spend time with family and friends					
Official reception/guest hosting					
Government's investigation group visit					
Official training and conferences					
I visited Gutian without clear purpose, just because it is near					

4. The following items can describe your primary activities during your stay in Gutian this time:

(5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=not sure, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree)

	5=Strongly agree 1=Strongly disagree 5 4 3 2 1				
Pay attention to interpretation and displays					
Consider/discuss the content and significance of the Gutian Conference					
Consider/discuss the contribution, revolutionary spirit, and talent of revolutionary predecessors					
Consider/discuss personal anecdotes of revolutionary predecessors					
Compare former revolutionary predecessors and current leaders					
Consider/discuss economic and social impacts of red tourism on Gutian					
Consider/discuss some folk mysterious legends and feng shui (e.g. there is no defoliation on the roof of the conference building)					
Appreciate natural scenery					
Experience local customs and customs					

Buy souvenir and local products					
Taste local food					
Participate in rural tourism (e.g. picking fruits, staying in farmhouse inn)					
Take photos					
Stroll around					

5. During this visit to Gutian, you can remember the following items:

(5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=not sure, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree)

	5=Strongly agree 5	4	3	2	1=Strongly disagree 1
The content and spirit of the Gutian Conference and its significance in the history of army and party building					
Introduction of the nine conferences and eleven frontier committee members					
The significance of Gutian for the current leader group					
Poor facilities, hard conditions, and predecessors' spirit of enduring hardship					
Auspicious/superstitious legends and *feng shui* stories					
Displays and buildings					
Natural environment					
Rural view, farm tools and agronomic activities					
Local Hakka culture and customs					
Local food					
Tourism souvenirs and local products					
Positive impacts of tourism on local community (e.g. improvement of road and housing conditions)					
Negative impacts of tourism on local community (e.g. inflation, environmental pollution)					

6. The impacts of this trip on your personal perceptions:

(5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=not sure, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree)

	5=Strongly agree 5	4	3	2	1=Strongly disagree 1
I admire and appreciate these revolutionary martyrs more					
I believe more in the achievements of our party in the past decades					
My advocacy of the CCP is firmer					
My nationalism is enhanced					
I feel more proud of being a Chinese					
I feel more positive towards the future development of our nation					
It encourages me more to work hard for our nation and people					
Comparing with the past hard conditions, I appreciate more of our current hard-won happy life					
Red tourism can improve my personal morals and values					
The feelings of martyrs' stories only exist at that moment and I will forget about it after I return back to the reality					
Since I have visited Gutian for several times, or there are lots of red resources nearby, I just got used to it and do not have much feelings					
As the time is different now, I think it is unnecessary to compare the past and current ways of leadership					
As the time is different, I think it is unnecessary to compare the past and current living conditions					
Comparing to conference site and revolutionary bases (e.g. the Gutian Conference site, the Jinggangshan revolutionary base), the places of grand massacres (e.g. Nanjing Massacre Memorial Hall) can better enhance my nationalism					

Comparing to red tourist attractions, controversies in China's international affairs (e.g. Senkaku islands incident) can better enhance my nationalism					

7. Who travelled with you this time?
A. Myself B. Families C. Colleagues and friends D. Work partners/guests
E. Other_____

8. What is the cost of your visit to Gutian this time (including transportation, accommodation, shopping etc.)?

A. Less than 200 RMB B. 200-500 RMB C.500-1000 RMB
D.1000-2000 RMB E. More than 2000RMB F. Paid by others

9. How long is your stay in Gutian this time?
A. Below 2 hours B.2-4 hours C. 4-6 hours D. Stay overnight E. Two and above days

Section II: Socio-Demographic Characteristics

1. Gender A. Male B. Female

2. Year of Birth: Year 19_____

3. Education
A. Below elementary school C. Junior high D. Senior high E. One-three years of college F. Bachelor's degree H. Graduate degree

4. Personal income level

A. No income yet B. Below 2000 RMB C. 2000-3999 RMB
D.4000-5999 RMB E. 6000-7999RMB F.8000 RMB and above

5. Political status
A. Communist Party member (or Preliminary Communist Party member)
B. Communist Youth League Member
C. Democratic Party Member or figures without Party affiliation
D. Masses E. Other

APPENDIX B

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE-CHINESE VERSION

红色旅游游客感知体验调查问卷

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您好！非常感谢您参与本社会调研。本研究旨在了解和分析游客在古田旅游参观的体验和感知。您的参与是完全自愿和匿名的，并且您有权随时终止参与这项活动。您所填写的内容仅供学术论文研究之用并得到严格保密，将不会对您带来任何的风险和不良后果。完成此次问卷需要大约 15-20 分钟，请在相应的地方打”√“。如您有任何问题，请联系: 赵晟楠 亚利桑那州州立大学社区资源与发展学院 博士研究生 Email:shengnan.zhao@asu.edu

非常感谢您的热心协助与支持！

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第一部分：游客旅游行为、体验和感知

1. 这是您第_____次来古田参观？

A.1 次 B.2 次 C.3 次 D.4 次 E.5 或 5 次以上

2. 来这里之前，您是否了解古田会议的历史和政治背景？

A.完全不了解 B.不了解 C.一般 D.了解 E.非常了解

3. 在此次旅游中，以下这些动机对您的重要程度如何？

	5= 非常重要	4= 重要	3=不确定	2=不重要	1=非常不重要
古田名气大，国家领导人来过的地方我也想来走一走					
进行政治朝圣、接受思想教育、感受革命氛围					
了解学习历史政治知识					
怀旧回忆过去的日子					
享受自然生态环境					
体验客家文化风土人情和乡村旅游					
放松心情、排解压力					
寻求刺激和新奇					
四处走走，活动一下筋骨					
来沾沾龙气、提升运气					
周边可选择旅游地少					
陪家人朋友一起出游					
公务接待客人					
政府公务考察					

公务培训/会议					
无明确目的，只是因为近过来走走					

4. 以下哪些项目能够描述您这次古田之旅的主要活动和行为：

	5=非常 同意	4= 同意	3=不确定	2=不同意	1=非常不同意
关注讲解和陈列物品					
思考/讨论古田会议的内容和意义					
思考/讨论革命前辈功绩贡献、革命精神、能力才干					
思考/讨论革命前辈的个人轶事					
思考/讨论对比革命前辈和现今领导班子					
思考/讨论红色旅游对古田经济社会发展的影响					
思考/讨论民间神奇的流传故事、风水学说（如会址屋顶上常年无落叶）					
欣赏当地历史建筑					
欣赏自然风光					
体验当地风土人情					
购买纪念品、当地特产					
品尝当地美食					
参与乡村旅游活动（如采摘水果、住农家乐宾馆）					
拍照留念					
随意闲逛					

5. 在这次古田之旅中，您对以下项目较为关注或者留下了深刻印象

	5=非常 同意	4= 同意	3=不确定	2=不同意	1=非常不同意
古田会议内容、精神、及其在建党建军史上的重大意义					
关于九次会议和十一位前委委员的介绍					
古田对于现今领导班子的重大意义					
简陋设施、艰辛环境和革命前辈吃苦耐劳的精神					
民间神奇的流传故事，风水学说					

陈列摆设和建筑场所					
自然生态环境					
乡村风景、农具和农事活动等					
当地的客家文化民俗					
当地餐饮美食					
旅游纪念品、当地特产					
旅游发展对当地的正面影响（道路住房改善等）					
旅游发展对当地的负面影响（物价上涨、环境污染等）					

6. 这次古田之旅对您的个人感知的影响：

	5=非常同意	4=同意	3=不确定	2=不同意	1=非常不同意
我对革命先烈更加充满敬佩和感激之情					
我对我们党在过去几十年取得成就更加肯定					
更加坚定了我对中国共产党领导的拥护					
我的爱国主义情感得到提升					
我更为身为中国人感到骄傲和自豪					
我对国家的未来发展充满了希望					
更加激励我努力奋斗为国家和人民做出贡献					
通过对比过去的艰苦环境，我更加珍惜来之不易的幸福生活					
红色旅游能够积极改进我的个人道德价值观					
对先烈事迹的感受只在当下，我回到现实中很快忘记					
来过古田很多次，或者周边有很多红色资源，我已经习以为常					
时代不同了， 我认为没有必要对比过去和现在的领导方式					
时代不同了， 我认为没有必要对比过去和现在的生活条件					
相对于会议会址和根据地型景点（如古田会议会址、井冈山根据地），重大历史惨案发生地（如南京大屠杀纪念馆），更能					

激发我的民族感情、提升我的爱国情感。					
相对于红色旅游而言，中国国际关系事件争端，如钓鱼岛问题，更能激发我的民族意识和爱国情感					

7. 您是和谁一起来古田的？（不定项选择，可多选）
A. 自己一个人　B.家人　　C.同事朋友　D.工作伙伴/客人　E. 其他_____

8. 您这次来古田的旅游花费（包括路费、餐饮住宿、购物等）大约为：
A.200 元以下　B.200-500 元　C.500-1000 元　D.1000-2000 元　E.2000 元以上　F.他人支付

9. 这次在古田您一共呆多久？
A.2 个小时以下　B.2-4 个小时　C.4-6 个小时　D.过夜　E.两天及以上

第二部分：社会人口统计特征

1. 性别　A.男　B.女

2. 出生年份：　19_____年

3. 个人教育背景

A.小学及以下　B 初中　C.高中　D.大中专　E.大学本科　F.研究生

4. 个人月收入水平：
A. 无收入　B.2000 元以下　C.2000-3999 元　D.4000-5999 元　E.6000-7999 元　F.8000 元及以上

5. 政治面貌：

A.中共党员（或预备党员）　B. 共青团员　C. 民主党派或无党派人士　D.群众

E.其他_____