Heritage, Identity and Sense of Place in Sichuan Province after the 12 May Earthquake in China

by

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Declaration

I, Xuejuan Zhang, declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and that it has been produced by me as the result of my own original research.

Signed: _____

Date:_____

Abstract

At 14.28 on 12 May 2008, a massive earthquake measuring 8.0 on the Richter scale struck Wenchuan County in Sichuan Province. Causing widespread destruction, it was considered to be the most severe earthquake in China's history, and indeed one of the worst in the world. Drawing on the results of an ethnographic study carried out in the disaster areas between 2009 and 2013, this research explores the impact of the earthquake on cultural heritage, popular memory, memorialisation and tourism in Sichuan.

Critically examining the complex, overlapping relationships between heritage, identity and sense of place in post-disaster Sichuan, I argue that historical sites that come to mark tragic events are not simply commemorative or historically important because a disastrous event has occurred, but that they are instead places which are continuously negotiated, constructed and reconstructed into places of meaning through on-going human action. While traditional interpretation of these sites are usually viewed as static ones, they are actually dynamic sites that both generate and are informed by official, popular and individual memory through acts of localised and non-localised place production and consumption.

By focusing on the practice of disaster tourism in post-disaster Sichuan, this study aims to contribute to the growing body of research on 'dark' tourism. It demonstrates the central role played in studies of cultural heritage by cultural and geographical concepts of identity and representation, highlighting the politics of heritage. It will also contribute to a growing literature on the significance of embodied practice, in this case with regard to the use and performance of tragic places. To sum up, the research explores culture, the politics of space and the relationship between consumption, memory and identity to reveal the tensions and paradoxical agendas which surround heritage tourism landscapes in a post-disaster context. The findings of this research are relevant to planners, conservationists and other public agencies involved in cultural recovery processes in Asia's emerging economies, and they also have policy implications for the various levels of government involved.

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Acknowledgements

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Chapter 1: Introduction

On 12 May 2008, a massive earthquake measuring 8.0 on the Richter scale struck Wenchuan County in Sichuan Province. More than 120 million people in Sichuan and the adjoining provinces of Gansu, Shaanxi, Yunnan and Chongqing were exposed to the either moderate or very severe shaking effect of the earthquake (The United Nations Children's Fund, 2008). The earthquake had a major impact on cultural heritage in these areas.

The central aim of this research is to explore the impact of the earthquake on cultural heritage, popular memory, memorialisation and tourism in Sichuan. The key questions of the research are concerned with how cultural landscape is affected by a major disaster, how it is remade and reinterpreted afterwards, and what some of the politics of space are. This thesis contrasts the 'top-down' planning model – addressing not only the physical reconstruction and recovery process but also how new meanings are inscribed to the cultural landscape – with other, more 'bottom-up' processes of cultural change. A central concern is how post-disaster heritage and place identity are represented and their meanings affected. The objectives of the thesis are therefore to:

1. Trace the transformation of cultural sites in Sichuan affected by the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, exploring the transformation from 'cultural landscape' through 'disasterscape' to 'touristscape';

2. Study how interpretations of heritage and identity diverged in the wake of the earthquake, focusing on the contradictions between the top-down approach (specifically the authorised heritage discourse as disseminated by the Chinese Communist Party) and more spontaneous, bottom-up forms of place-making.

3. Investigate how popular memory of place is practiced and embodied in a post-disaster context, particularly from a Chinese perspective;

4. Examine the reality of tourism and heritage sites in post-disaster Sichuan, with a particular focus on experiences of the practice of tourism.

In recent decades, a range of new approaches to the study of the cultural landscape in post-crisis situations has been adopted by cultural, historical and urban geographers, as well as by specialists from disciplines such as archaeology, sociology and architecture. The present research integrates the study of cultural heritage into the wider realm of contemporary cultural geography, drawing broadly on the contributory research of Graham (2000, 2005, 2007, 2008), Ashworth (2000, 2005, 2007) and Tunbridge (2000, 2007) regarding geography of heritage, and following Foote's (2003) theory of post-disaster and violent landscapes, along with more specific research from other scholars of tourism geography such as Winter (2007) and Edensor (1998), who locate post-colonial tourist sites within the broader contexts of post-conflict reconstruction, nation building and socio-economic rehabilitation. A central emerging theme in this research on cultural heritage and tourism is the idea of 'dark tourism', which forms a fundamental element of this study. The publication of Lennon and Foley's (2004) *Dark Tourism: The Attraction of Death and Disaster* introduced dark tourism to a wider audience, stimulating a significant degree of academic interest and debate, and more recently Sharpley and Stone's (2009) work on *The Darker Side of Travel: The Theory and Practice of Dark Tourism* has brought these debates into more specific practical contexts. However, the academic literature has rarely documented this subject with regard to China, and in particular, little fieldwork research has been conducted

into the broader social and cultural issues arising from the growing 'dark tourism' industry in Asia.

In my research, I adopt Tilley's understanding of landscape as "a signifying system through which the social is reproduced and transformed, explored and structured" (Tilley, 1994, p.34), and investigate the changing interpretation of cultural heritage and place identity in post-disaster sites (in this case, Sichuan). I explore the overlapping and complex relationships between identity, memory, heritage and the cultural landscape. The thesis uses dark tourism as a means to understand and interpret these landscapes and places, and to establish a theoretical framework for the interpretation of the cultural landscape at tragedy sites. By focusing on investigating dark tourism at a post-disaster site, this study aims to contribute to the small but growing body of research that places tourism interpretation at the centre of the cultural geographical debate, and in so doing help us to understand the political and social impact of the earthquake. The thesis will also demonstrate the centrality of theories of identity and representation in studies of heritage tourism, and highlight the prevalence of authority discourse. It will then develop the theory of dark tourism, linking it with disaster recovery and heritage preservation. The findings of this research are relevant to planners, conservationists and other public agencies involved in the cultural recovery process, and it also has policy implications for the different levels of government.

Following Winter's (2007) discussion of the remapping of the post-colonial cultural landscape in Cambodia, this study also presents a post-disaster remapping of

the cultural landscape, as seen in Figure 1.1. It recognises the geography of heritage and place identity theories as an umbrella covering all discussions in the context of post-disaster heritage and contested space. Within this framework, it is combined with sustainable post-disaster cultural recovery theories, in particular as regards dark tourism. This thesis explores culture, development, the politics of space and the relationship between consumption, memory and identity to reveal the aspirations and tensions, the anxieties and paradoxical agendas, which tend to form around a heritage tourism landscape in a post-disaster setting.

Figure 1.1: Theoretical framework diagram
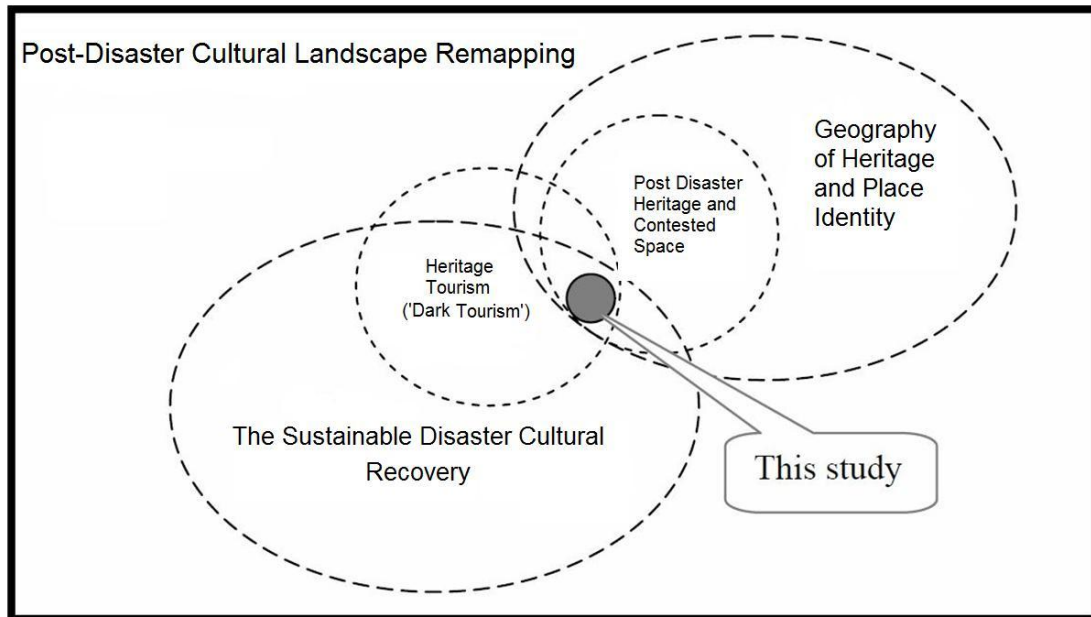
Source: Diagram compiled by the author Zhang, (2013).

Structure of the Thesis

The purpose of this thesis is to provide a means of understanding the social, political and economic changes in Sichuan during the earthquake transition period, analysing how both official and popular understandings have been articulated and negotiated in the changing cultural landscape of commemoration and tourism. An overview of the following chapters is outlined below, in order to elucidate the relationships between these different components and their contribution to the thesis as a whole.

Chapter 2 Sichuan and the 12 May Earthquake

Chapter 2 focuses on the background to the research, introducing the region of Sichuan and its cultural heritage, and presenting details of the earthquake and its effects. The Sichuanese people, heritage and places are linked together in a complicated and constantly-mutating variety of ways. The cement binding these three elements together is a process of identification: the people of Sichuan identify with the places where they live because these places have a unique character or perceived identity. Sichuan's heritage, the means by which Sichuanese people today associate themselves with those of the past, is a major factor in the creation of Sichuanese identity. This process was interrupted, however, by the sudden earthquake of 2008. In general terms, this chapter has aimed to establish a background which enables the reader to develop an understanding of Sichuan and its cultures, and of the earthquake and its impacts, as well as looking at the development of tourism in Sichuan and the tourist industry's comparative advantages in the post-disaster context.

Chapter 3 Heritage Studies, Tourism Studies and Undertaking Dark Tourism

Chapter 3 reviews the relevant literature on topics related to this study, including heritage studies, heritage in tourism studies, dark tourism literature, and related research carried out in China. My understanding of heritage is shaped through three conceptual lenses. The first of these is based on the influential work on the geography of heritage of Graham (2000, 2005, 2007, 2008), Ashworth (2000, 2005, 2007) and Tunbridge (2000, 2007). I rely on a geographical approach to analyse heritage, looking particularly at post-disaster heritage landscapes. My second inspiration is the work of Smith (2006), who emphasises the role played in heritage by Authorised Heritage Discourse. I am particularly interested in how tourism serves as an agent to express and facilitate this authorised discourse. Thirdly, and based on the ideas of McDowell (2008), I argue that heritage engages with memory and the performance of remembering, and from a geographical perspective, with sense of place.

Chapter 4 Researching Heritage, Identity and Sense of Place in Sichuan Province after the 12 May Earthquake

Chapter 4 explains the formation and evolution of the research methodology. Discussion includes the application of research methods, data collection and analysis. In this research, a multi-method qualitative approach is used to study post-disaster landscapes, and the specific methods employed are in-depth interviews, visual methodology, participant observation and documentation. This research is timely but potentially a very sensitive subject and issues of ethics and positionality will be addressed at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 5 Transformation of Cultural Sites in Sichuan: from Cultural Landscape through Disasterscape to Touristscape

Chapter 5 offers a global picture of Sichuan's cultural heritage within a broad historical and geographical background, mapping the transformation of cultural heritage sites and objects before, during and after the earthquake. This transformation has seen the emergence of a particular and new category of disaster-making heritage, which shows that damage and destruction should be seen as integral to post-disaster heritage. I argue that heritage is not only an object in its historical context, but that on-going tragedies such as wars, natural and man-made disasters and accidents, atrocities and violent crimes also constitute heritage, and that therefore the reproduction of post-disaster heritage involves a dynamic relationship between different stakeholders enacted in different time periods at post-disaster sites.

Chapter 6 Complexities and Tensions in the Chinese Communist Party's Vision of Post-Disaster Heritage

Behind the various 'scapes' discussed in the previous chapter lies a move towards a broader vision of the networks of meaning that create heritage, linking it with markers in both real and symbolic environments. Chapter 6 applies Smith's (2006) concept of 'authorised heritage discourse' to a wider non-Western context (namely China), with a broader focus on a post-disaster context. It evaluates how heritage is contested and displayed at the tragedy site, and examines in greater detail the top-down approach of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to the issue of the politics of space, particularly 'authorised heritage discourse'.

Overall, the chapter has two themes. First of all, it looks at the attitudes and values with which the CCP has responded to the earthquake and which are integrated in the production of post-disaster heritage, focusing in particular on unpacking the discourse of the official response through a close reading of the main planning documents on the post-disaster tourist industry. I contend that dark tourism is on the one hand a tourist development brand designed to generate economic development at the post-disaster site (albeit one with highly ambiguous and uncertain connotations), and on the other it serves as an ideological means of reasserting state control in an era of earthquake transition, when hegemony and ideological conformity have given way to pluralism or even, to a certain extent, confusion.

The chapter also explores the politics of post-disaster heritage production by examining the relationship between the national government's earthquake relief mechanisms and the CCP's promotion of textual political propaganda, such as in museums. It argues that the CCP's Communist political ideology is incorporated into national earthquake relief campaigns, branding them in the name of patriotic and moral education with the aim of strongly promoting patriotism and nationalism, and in so doing exposing the fact that post-disaster heritage is marked by a strongly Communist character, recognised as being 'cosmopolitan' and 'utilitarian', 'Marxist revolutionary' and 'people-oriented'.

Chapter 7 Popular Memorials as Sites for the Creation of Tragic Heritage in the Post-Earthquake Transition Period

Chapter 7 launches a constructive perspective on heritage and explores the bottom-up model within the post-disaster context. I argue that heritage is a cultural process which involves embodying acts of remembrance and commemoration while negotiating and constructing a sense of place and belonging, and creating meaning in the present. What emerges is a sense of the importance of memory, and of performing acts of remembrance at post-disaster sites. I then go on to investigate what exactly people 'do' or 'sense', both spontaneously and in cultural terms, at post-disaster sites, concluding that the popular memorial is a site of creation of post-disaster heritage. Special attention needs to be paid to the types of duality inherent in this type of memorial performance, and to the dynamic and mediated construction of the popular post-disaster heritage process. At the end of the chapter, the top-down and the bottom-up national memorial established as a form of dialogue are contrasted.

Chapter 8 Exploring Dark Tourism: A Case Study of the Beichuan Tourism Region

Chapter 8 seeks to explore the 'practice' dimension of heritage, focusing particularly on dark tourism. This combines my own fieldwork experience and interviews with tourists with study of how tourism infrastructure shapes the practices and the understanding of heritage. Drawing upon two visits to the Beichuan earthquake memorial region in 2010 and 2012, the chapter demonstrates distinctive ways in which post-disaster heritage works and changes the reality of a region: by turning ruins into heritage, by creating 'new' places (taking the form of a museum, for example), and by using the opportunity

to remake places (as in the case of tourist sites). I then analyse the sites of memory or commemoration that emerge, and examine how and why they are interpreted, preserved and exhibited, and how they provide valuable insight into the complex relationships between landscape, memory and identity.

Chapter 9 Conclusion

This chapter sums up the findings of the research. Four theoretical innovations will be discussed, referring back to objectives established at the beginning of this chapter, which may be summarised as:

- Transformation of Place: Heritage, Identity and Time

- Top-Down Authorised Heritage Discourse

- Bottom-Up Popular Memorials

- Dark Tourism: Uses of Heritage in Practice

This chapter has provided a summary of different dimensions of heritage within the post-disaster context, followed by a brief postscript detailing recent changes in the case study sites. It ends with recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2: Sichuan and the 12 May Earthquake

There is an old Chinese saying, "*yi fang shui tu yang yi fang ren, yi fang ren zhu yi fang cheng*", which translates as "on the one hand, the unique features of local environment always nurture special characteristics in its inhabitants, and on the other, the inhabitants who live there continue to construct the place and build a unique 'home' with a special identity". In other words, the people, heritage and places of Sichuan are linked together in a complicated and constantly-mutating variety of ways. The cement binding these three elements together is the identification process: the people of Sichuan identify with their places because these places have a unique character or perceived identity. Sichuan's heritage, the means by which Sichuan people today associate themselves with their counterparts in the past, is a major factor in the creation of Sichuanese identity. This process was interrupted, however, by the sudden earthquake of 2008. In this chapter, I shall begin by introducing the region of Sichuan and its cultural heritage, and then move on in the second section to document the earthquake and its effects on tourism in detail.

2.1 Sichuan and its Cultures

Figure 2.1: Map of China, with Sichuan highlighted

Source: PlanetWare Inc. (no date) Digimap [Online].

Situated in south-west China, the Province of Sichuan covers 485,000 km² and has a population of 87 million people (see Figure 2.1). Its jurisdiction covers 21 municipal districts (prefectures) and 181 cities and counties. The Province is hemmed in by mountains, and its terraced fields and vast expanse of plains are criss-crossed by rivers and ditches. The climate is mild, with sufficient rainfall. The Province's economy is based on agriculture, natural resources (particularly mineral resources), and also on industry, with advanced sectors specialising in high technology, for instance military and nuclear (Study in China, no date).

However, its location in inland China, difficulty of access to other regions, and its large expanse of rural areas make Sichuan a rather poor region. According to data from

The National Bureau of Statistics of China (2010), it ranks as the ninth Province in China for GDP, but only 26th for GDP per inhabitant because of its large population.

Sichuan is also a multi-ethnic area. At present, in addition to the dominant Han ethnic group, 14 ethnic minorities are to be found — Yi, Zang, Tujia, Miao, Qiang, Hui, Mongolian, Lisu, Manchu, Naxi, Buyi, Bai, Dai and Zhuang — which together comprise a total population of more than 30 million people in Sichuan Province (Zhang, 2009). The earthquake's epicentre, Wenchuan County, is in the Aba Tibetan-Qiang Autonomous Prefecture. With an area of 4,084 km^2, this county lies along the Wen River, and has six large towns and seven smaller ones, and a population of 106,119, of which 34% are ethnic Qiang, 18.6% Tibetans and 46% Han Chinese. The area is essentially rural, with a relatively low level of development, and ethnic minorities represent an important part of the population.

Sichuan is located in inland China, where transport is not easy. The following historical texts cited from Sage (1992, p. 1) reflect the unique Sichuan landscape:

> The road to Shu is as difficult as ascending to heaven.
>
> —Tang dynasty poet Li Bai, 701-762 A.D.

> I came back by bus from the war areas, and remember of the long journey south only how wonderful it was to cross the range of the Ch'in-ling Mountains, which separate North China from Sichuan. One crosses through the pass, and in half an hour, one has left behind the eroded hills that face the arid country of the north to find oneself in the warm moist air of Sichuan, where bamboo begins to grow on the south face of the range.
>
> —Theodore White, a journalist, reminiscing in 1943 A.D.

Travelling the same road twelve centuries apart, Li Bai and Theodore White expressed similar feelings: Shu (Sichuan) may be hard to reach, but it is worth the effort. Spatial disparities characterise Sichuan Province. There is a stark contrast between the flat areas of the Province and the mountains, located in the west, some of which are more than 4,000 metres high. Most of the towns, population and wealth are concentrated in the flat areas, as is the transport infrastructure. The mountainous areas do not have efficient transport and are quite hard to access; these are rural areas and a significant part of their population is comprised of ethnic minorities, who sometimes cannot speak Mandarin Chinese, which causes additional difficulties as regards their economic integration. There is thus a clear contrast between the plains, dominated by the city of Chengdu, and the remote, poor, rural and mountainous areas (Hou, 2010).

In ancient Chinese history, Sichuan was considered a rural, wild and undeveloped area. Most of the historical references to Sichuan start from the Qin dynasty: "The classical ancients a thousand years and more before Li Bai's time regarded Sichuan as somewhat off-centre in their conception of the world. And so it is, far removed from the Yellow River and the loess soil lands and central plains, the hallowed northern Chinese core of literate East Asian civilization. Sichuan is mentioned but scantily in ancient literature, and ambiguity shrouds its relevance to the core zone. But truly historical references are rare prior to the annexation of Sichuan by the state of Qin in 316 B.C., and before then the annals treat Sichuan as quite foreign, contradicting the myths." (Sage, 1992, p. 1).

The wild natural environment and poor transport links marginalised Sichuan from central political and economic power, and this marginalisation in turn allowed Sichuan to develop and sustain a distinctive historical culture. This culture is a multi-faceted one: Sichuan cuisine, for example, is famous for its hotpot, which could in itself be considered a type of place identity, given that the image of a mixed hotpot or stew can also be used as an analogy for the Sichuan people themselves. The Sichuan population is composed mainly of immigrants from other Provinces, and because of this, Sichuan's cultural heritage is particularly diverse. A brief history of the territory of Sichuan will illustrate these issues in more detail.

The name Sichuan means "four streams," but it was not used for the region until the Song and Yuan dynasties in the thirteenth century A.D. Prior to that time, the Sichuan basin had usually been divided into two or more administrative entities. According to Sage's (1992) research, the ancient Chinese themselves spoke of Sichuan by joining the names of two sub-regions within the basin, Ba and Shu, as Ba-Shu. Ba was that portion lying along the Yangtze and some tributary streams in eastern Sichuan, while Shu included the present provincial capital of Chengdu, its surrounding plain and adjacent territories in western Sichuan (Figure 2.2).

Shu has both a geographic and an ethnic connotation. Shu lands centred on the Chengdu plain of western Sichuan and included the valley of the Min river, a major tributary of the Yangtze that in ancient times was considered the headwater of the Yangtze itself. Shu also occupied the upper Han river valley. When used as an ethnic term, Shu refers to the distinct people who inhabited these lands in and around western

Sichuan. The term Ba, on the other hand, refers to several confederated peoples living along the Han river and by the Jialing and Yangtze rivers in eastern Sichuan. Remembered for their legendary ferocity in battle, the Ba were distinguished by their bronze weapons and war drums. When mentioned in historical chronicles, they were often involved in armed confrontation with Chu, a mighty state straddling the middle Han and Yangtze (Sage, 1992). The Ba were forced westward by the Chu and deeper into Sichuan, towards Shu, and a shared Ba-Shu culture began to evolve from this contact. Among its other accomplishments, the mixed Ba-Shu society practised an incipient form of literacy unique to Sichuan (Sage, 1992, p. 47).

Figure 2.2: Historical settlements of the Ba-Shu culture
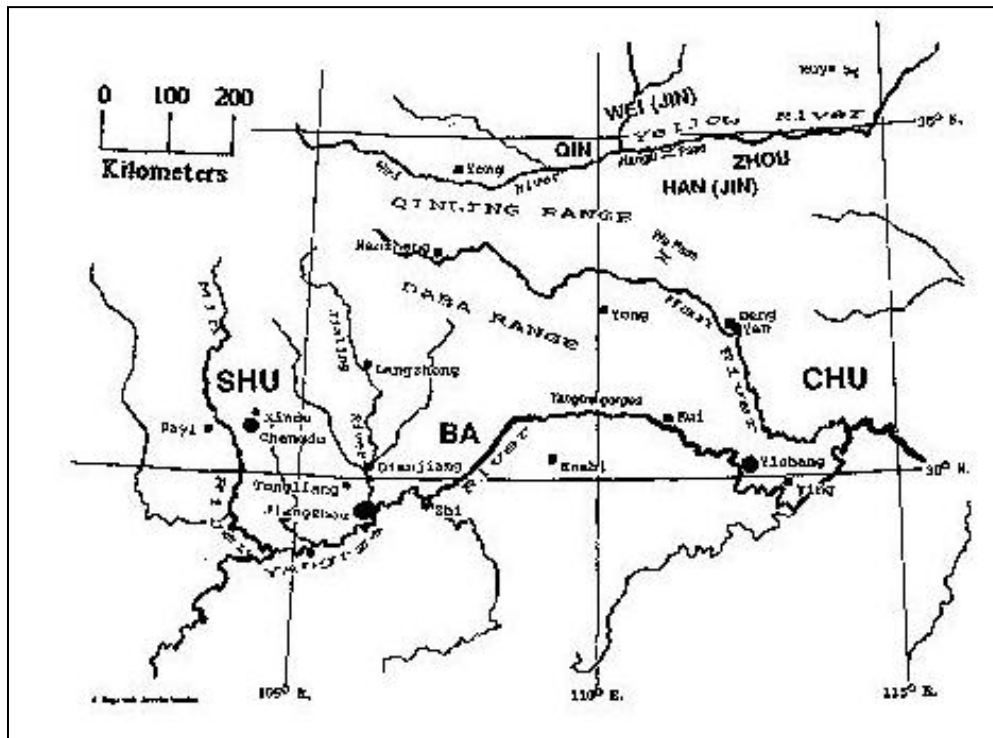
Source: Sage (1992, p.48).

Sichuan was also famous for its innovative culture and creativity: because of the wild land and isolated location, the people living here were forced to change their environment and create new technologies. The Dujiangyan irrigation system, for instance, is an example of ancient Sichuanese wisdom and a milestone in Chinese civilisation. This project was a practical application of the old Chinese insight "*tian ren he yi*", which means "to develop a harmonious relationship between the earth and human beings". Noted for its design based on damless diversion, the system is not only an eminent wonder of Sichuanese water conservancy engineering, but also a unique example of its kind in China and even in the world. Chapter 5 of this thesis will explore this project in more detail.

Furthermore, with its location in a relatively favourable and isolated basin, Sichuan has the reputation of being a very relaxed Province that emphasises culture and relaxation. The large cities contain many new Western-style buildings, and people enjoy a satisfyingly relaxed and slow pace of life.

Sichuan may also be called a Province of teahouses, as they can be found in every city, town and village. It is one of the few remaining regions in China which still hosts an authentic teahouse culture. For example, in the provincial capital of Chengdu, there are thousands of teahouses scattered about the city which provide locals with a place for social gatherings or for entertainment, a place where they can get together with relatives, make new friends and meet up with old ones. Over the centuries, the people of Chengdu have formed the habit of visiting teahouses. Sichuan is also famous for its relaxed lifestyle, and the games played there play an important role in the leisure time

of its residents. The two most popular are *mah-jong* and the card game *dou di zhu* (fight the landlord). *Mah-jong* is a game enjoyed throughout China and around the world, but nowhere is it more popular than in Sichuan. Almost every resident of the Province knows how to play the game, from the oldest citizen to the youngest schoolchild. Everywhere one goes, one will find people playing *mah-jong*: it can be seen on the streets, in teahouses, in *mah-jong* houses, and at home.

From the above analysis, it is clear that both natural place features and the social construction of place work together to nurture unique identities in Sichuan. As we mentioned at the beginning of this section: "*yi fang shui tu yang yi fang ren, yi fang ren zhu yi fang cheng*": in this way, the uniquely Sichuanese features of the local environment nurture special characteristics in the people, and at the same time, the Sichuanese people continue to construct the place and build their own special identities.

There is an abundance of cultural heritage in Sichuan. In cultural terms, Sichuan's language, opera, tea and wine drinking, food, silks and brocades, and salt all have a strong local flavour. Aspects of Sichuanese culture such as dialect, opera, tea, wines, cuisine, medicine, embroidery, brocade and bonsai all incorporate strong features of local cultural heritage. Meanwhile, Sichuan takes pride in its natural landscapes and its many places of historical and cultural interest; Chapter 5 will discuss the architectural richness and cultural distinctiveness of Sichuan in more detail and is particularly concerned with a detailed analysis of cultural sites in Sichuan that were affected by the earthquake.

Because of its rich culture, Sichuan Province is a popular tourist destination in China, with more than 550 tourist attractions (Lei, 2008). Most of the sites related to cultural heritage will be identified in Chapter 5 of this thesis. Infrastructure and tourism services, such as travel agencies, hotels, etc., are important indicators of the tourist industry. Sichuan today has a convenient transport system, with high-speed or high-grade motorways from the provincial capital Chengdu to nearby cities and states, and Chengdu Shuangliu airport has now opened more than 30 international routes and more than 200 domestic ones (Lei, 2008). As of 2012, Sichuan Province had 533 star-rated hotels, 707 travel agencies, 137 national A-class tourist areas, 36 national industrial and agricultural tourism demonstration sites, and 24 of China's most popular tourist cities. The number of tourism-related employees in the Province has reached more than 70 million (Sichuan Tourism Administration, 2012). However, the tourism sector was significantly impaired by the sudden earthquake of 12 May 2008, and in the following section, I shall examine the earthquake and its impact in greater detail.

2.2 The 12 May Sichuan Earthquake and its Impact

2.2.1 The 12 May Sichuan Earthquake

At 14.28 on 12 May 2008, a massive earthquake measuring 8.0 on the Richter scale struck Sichuan Province's Wenchuan County. This devastating earthquake hit the eastern edge of the Tibetan plateau, destroying buildings and killing thousands in major cities along the western Sichuan basin. This is considered to have been the most serious earthquake in China, and even in the world, in the last 30 years. The earthquake, with

its almost inconceivable strength, ripped open the spatial and temporal frames of reference in just an instant: time stopped at 14.28 on 12 May 2008, and space has been rendered immobile. Figure 2.3 shows Hanwang, where the clock stopped at the moment when the earthquake hit. The focus of this section is to look at the earthquake and its impacts in depth.

Sichuan is one of the two most seismically-active areas in China. China itself is located on the two greatest seismic belts in the world: the Pacific belt and the Eurasian belt (Shi, 2008). The 2008 Sichuan earthquake occurred in an area deformed as a result of the collision between two tectonic plates, the Indian and the Eurasian (Tectonics Observatory, 2008). Figure 2.4 demonstrates the intensity of the earthquake in the affected areas. The earthquake's epicentre was located in Wenchuan, about 90 km from Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province. The quake reached a magnitude of about 8, rupturing the front of the Longmen Mountain fault, which marks the eastern edge of Tibet where the steep escarpment of the Longmen Mountain range overrides the Sichuan basin (Tectonics Observatory, 2008). The rupture started at the epicentre and over the next 50 seconds travelled a few hundred kilometres (about 100 miles) towards the north-east, where damage was even more severe than at the epicentre. In some places, the slip (displacement of the two land masses with respect to each other along the fault line) was as large as 12 metres. Figure 2.5 shows this phenomenon (with the purple bag giving an idea of the scale). Moreover, the earthquake led to secondary disasters: "tremors in the highly populated basin were amplified by sediments, while tremors in the mountain range triggered landslides that [...] caused temporary

damming of waterways" (Tectonics Observatory, 2008). In the days of the earthquake, more landslides were expected and some of the dams were expected to undergo catastrophic drainage, causing severe flooding.

Figure 2.3: Hanwang square clock tower and Hanwang County centre

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2009).

Figure 2.4: Map of area affected by earthquake, showing intensity
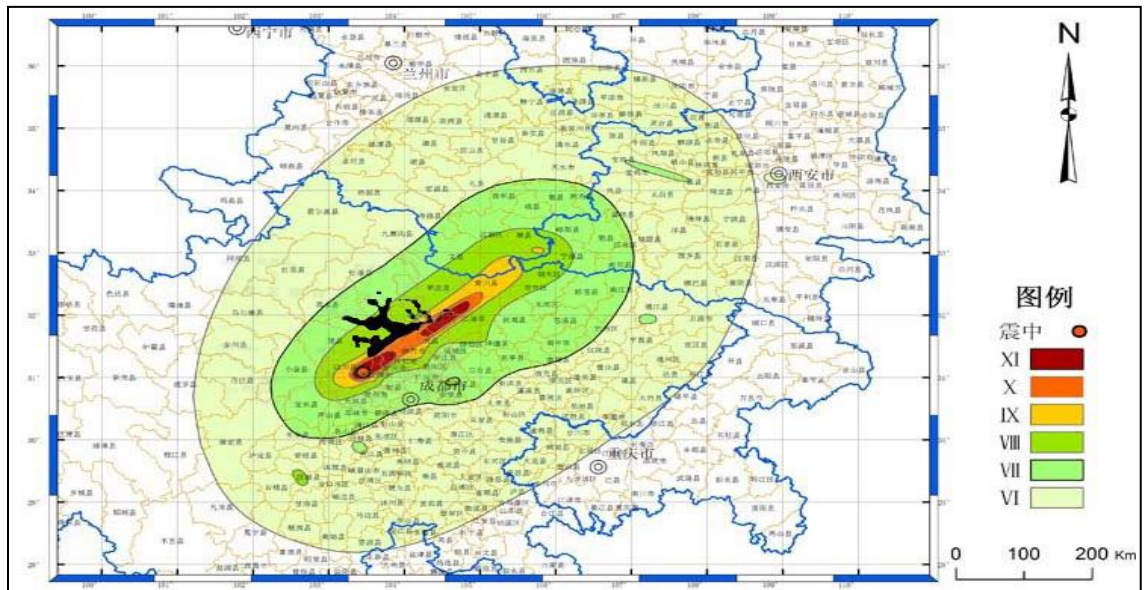
Source: Sichuan Tourism Administration, (2008a).

Figure 2.5: An example of the 'slip' along the fault line

Source: Photograph taken by the author Zhang, (2009).

The earthquake was particularly devastating and resulted in huge losses of life and property: around 90,000 people died, 400,000 were injured and 46 million were affected by the disaster (UN China, 2008). There was also economic and social damage, with economic losses in Sichuan reaching RMB 771,717 billion Yuan. Figure 2.6 shows a sectorial repartition of losses attributed to the earthquake. A large volume of construction and infrastructure was destroyed or damaged, and this had a significant impact on the local economy and people's living conditions. According to the Integrated Risk Governance Project Report (Shi & Jaeger, 2008), the earthquake damaged the following pieces infrastructure: 24 expressways, 163 national and provincial highways, seven important railways and three smaller ones, and 22 airports. The electricity, communications, radio, television and water conservation infrastructures were also damaged: six counties and 125 cities lacked electricity, and more than 30,000 communication stations, 1,096 radio and television stations, 2,473 major reservoirs, 822 power stations, 1,105 dykes and 20,769 pipes were damaged. Roads were cut, making access to some areas difficult. There were also major losses for industry and agriculture in Sichuan: 17,826 companies were affected, 5,645 major industrial companies stopped production, and 137,000 hectares of crops and 486,000 hectares of forest were destroyed (Hou, 2010).

Figure 2.6: Sectorial partition of earthquake losses
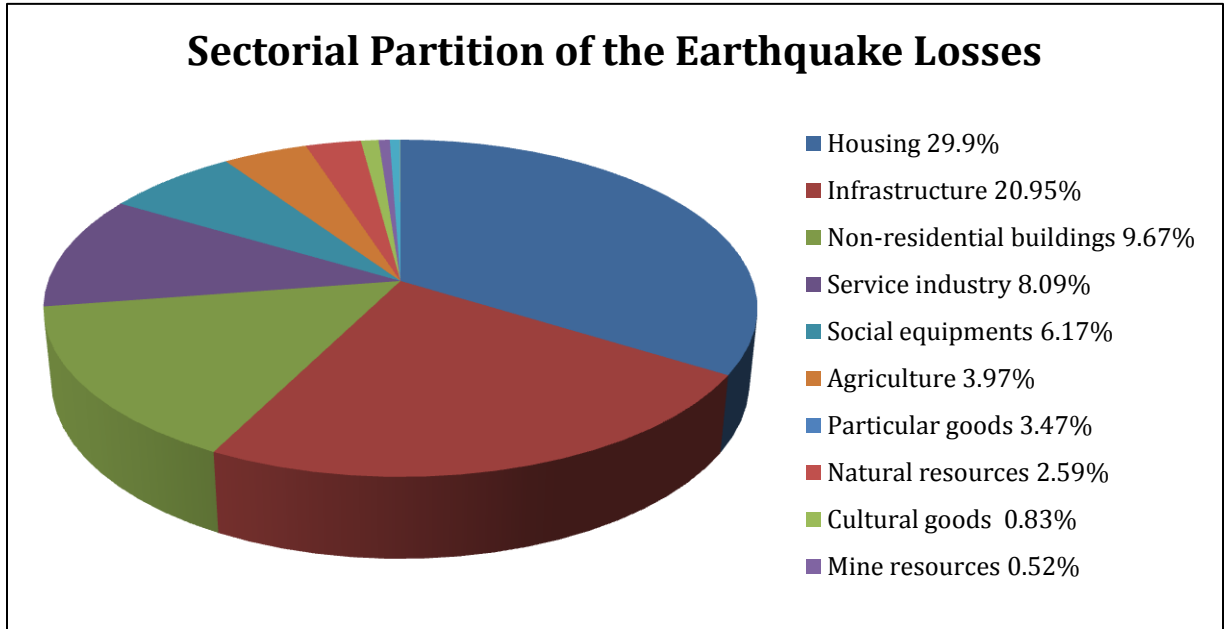
Source: Adapted from Hou (2010). Data from China Wenchuan Earthquake Disaster and its Loss Assessment (Shi, 2008).

With the turmoil caused by the disaster, Sichuan received global attention, which manifested itself in two phenomena. On the one hand, the sudden earthquake brought the previously unknown Sichuan dramatically to the world's attention, and on the other, different stakeholders, including the state and local governments, international organisations and societies, etc., responded to the earthquake immediately. It could therefore be said that in a sense the earthquake brought the world to Sichuan. In the next two sections, I shall analyse these issues in greater detail.

2.2.2 Media Coverage of the Sichuan Earthquake

After the earthquake, the official domestic media provided timely and extensive coverage of the earthquake and the rescue efforts. The names 'Sichuan', 'Wenchuan' and 'Beichuan' suddenly achieved prominence across the country and internationally. The media played an important role in spreading information. News stories and images of compassionate government leaders, heroic survivors, aid workers, soldiers and volunteers, as well as the tragic tales of the victims, moved the nation and the world. About half an hour after the quake, the news channels of China's Central Television Station (CCTV) began to provide live, round-the-clock coverage of the earthquake and the rescue efforts. According to a CCTV Program survey (CCTV Program, 2008) between 12 and 24 May, CCTV's news channel alone aired 260.5 hours of live coverage, averaging 21.7 hours per day. From the second day of the earthquake, both central and local government agencies began to hold frequent news conferences to provide information about rescue efforts, and statistics about the death toll and casualties were updated daily.

In addition to TV, newspapers were important vehicles for delivering timely information, and they played a very important role in informing Chinese public opinion. Figure 42.7 sums up the front pages of widely-distributed newspapers in China on 13 May 2008. From the pictures, it is clear that the Sichuan earthquake shocked the whole nation and stunned the world.

Meanwhile, Internet coverage was also open and timely, and made extensive use of audio and visual formats such as digital images and videos. Online versions of official

news channels, such as xinhuanet.com and cctv.com, set up special sections to provide in-depth coverage. According to a CCTV report (CCTV, 2008), the website cctv.com published 15,100 news items, 6,700 images, and 6,529 video stories between 12 and 23 May. All the major commercial websites, such as sina.com.cn, sohu.com and netease.com, did likewise. In addition to predominantly domestic media, international media also provided timely and extensive coverage of the earthquake and the rescue efforts. This was the first time in the history of Sichuan that the region had received so much media attention. It seems clear that Sichuan was globalised by the earthquake.

Figure 2.7: Summary of the front pages of widely-distributed newspapers on 13 May 2008

Source: Retrieved from respective newspaper agency websites on (13 May 2008).

2.2.3 Responses to the Sichuan Earthquake

In addition to bringing news of Sichuan to the world, the earthquake also brought the world to Sichuan. After the earthquake, the government of China worked around the clock to organise and carry out a massive rescue and relief operation to save lives and address the needs of earthquake survivors. Meanwhile, a national wave of concern and support arose, and it became common to see cars and buses filled with food, water and volunteers making their way to Sichuan to offer whatever help they could. Scenes of young volunteers taking leave from their schools and jobs and working day and night to provide services or earthquake victims were witnessed all over Sichuan. Moreover, the magnitude of the earthquake and the wave of mass media attention caused foreign nations and organisations to respond immediately too, offering condolences and assistance. In the subsequent section, these issues will be analysed from three aspects: the response to the earthquake of the central government, of local government, and of the international community at large.

Response of the Central Government to the Earthquake

As soon as the Sichuan earthquake was reported, the State Council set up the Earthquake Disaster Relief Committee. Premier Wen Jiabao, assumed the role of commander-in-chief and made a personal appearance on the scene to provide guidance on disaster response and relief. Under the unifying guidance of the Relief Committee, various government departments of the State Council each attended to their own duties and dedicated themselves all out to the task of disaster relief, working together with the local government in disaster-affected areas. According to the Asian Development Bank's

consultant report (Jiang, Wang & Liu, 2008), the primary specific actions taken by the central government in response to the Sichuan earthquake were as follows:

- Establishing a timely supreme command system to lead disaster response and relief
- Establishing an emergency response mechanism, and mobilising the army and rescue forces to undertake rapid disaster relief
- Allocating emergency funds
- Launching an appeal for disaster relief
- Seeking assistance from international emergency rescue
- Starting a mechanism for building temporary shelters
- Establishing a policy on a three-month temporary living subsidy
- Creating regulations on dealing with human remains and establishing a compensation system
- Defining relevant policy on assisting the wounded, orphans, elderly and disabled people
- Setting up a standard for farmers for reconstructing their houses
- Establishing a system for each Province to assist one heavily-affected county
- Enacting the "Regulation on Post-Sichuan Earthquake Disaster Recovery and Reconstruction," and systematically regulating post-disaster reconstruction efforts
- Establishing a mechanism for applying output from the science and technology sector

To sum up, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CCCPC) set up the Earthquake Disaster Relief Committee of the State Council immediately after the earthquake occurred on 12 May, and nine working teams were formed under the aegis of this committee. Meanwhile, under the unified guidance of the Central Military Commission of the Communist Party of China, a rescue force was organised which included the army, air force, armed police corps, public security, fire-fighters and the reserve militia for disaster relief; the total number of troops reached 139,000. Moreover, by 25 August 2008 the central government had allocated 27.482 billion Yuan for disaster relief, and local government at all levels also allocated emergency funds for disaster relief (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2008).

Response of Local Government and Society to the Earthquake

Under the leadership of the central government, the Sichuan local government and civic society responded quickly to the disaster, taking effective measures to save those affected by the earthquake. In particular, the contingency plan launched by the Sichuan provincial government at provincial, city and county levels facilitated rapid and effective rescue and relief activities in the affected areas. According to the Asian Development Bank's consultant report (Jiang, Wang & Liu, 2008), the local government in Sichuan Province took the following response and relief actions:

- Setting up a headquarters and a command system to organise emergency response and relief
- Taking action on rescue
- Mobilising and delivering emergency relief supplies
- Repairing damaged infrastructure
- Carrying out evacuation and relocating affected people
- Maintaining social safety and stability
- Providing subsidies to farmers

Generally, local government immediately organised officials, militia and local people to undertake immediate rescue activities, coordinated and organised the People's Liberation Army and armed police corps to conduct search and rescue activities, and organised medical teams and ambulances to rescue the wounded. The local emergency relief headquarters deployed emergency forces from different sectors to deliver medicine, food, milk powder, drinking water, tents, clothing, quilts and other urgent supplies as soon as possible to the affected areas. They were very quick to repair damaged infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, telecommunications, and water and electricity networks. They also paid attention to the safety of the reservoirs in the

affected areas by monitoring the situation and taking urgent measures to reduce risks related to dangerous reservoir conditions, after consulting the relevant experts.

Response of the International Community to the Earthquake

The international community responded quickly to the earthquake, providing emergency assistance and support to China. This was mainly focused on the following areas (Jiang, Wang & Liu, 2008):

- Providing funds and relief supplies
- Sending rescue and medical teams
- Providing technical support

According to possibly incomplete statistics (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2008), a total of 171 countries and regions and over 20 international organisations provided funds and relief supplies to China. The international community donated about 4.05 billion Yuan in cash and about 0.93 billion Yuan in relief materials to the earthquake-affected areas in China. Four emergency rescue teams with 212 members, from Japan, Russia, South Korea and Singapore, took part in emergency rescue work in the affected areas. A total of nine medical teams with 223 medical doctors, nurses and other technical personnel sent by the governments of the U.K., Japan, Russia, Italy, France, Cuba, Indonesia and Pakistan, as well as the German Red Cross, participated in the treatment and care of the wounded in the affected areas of Sichuan and Gansu Provinces. Some foreign volunteers also joined the rescue efforts. In Beichuan County, one of the most severely-affected areas, 16 volunteers from the U.S., the U.K. and Mexico started rescue work immediately after their arrival, and another

British search and rescue team made up of ten volunteers also came to Sichuan Province via Hong Kong (Jiang, Wang & Liu, 2008).

The 2008 Sichuan earthquake, with its huge scale of devastation along a swathe of territory running from central Sichuan to southern Gansu, thus quickly prompted a major government mobilisation. The government's response was impressive in its speed, the scope of the mobilisation, and the input of resources. The public response in China to this disaster, meanwhile, was to be on a scale quite different from previous major disasters in the country. Furthermore, because of the magnitude of the quake, and the media attention focused on Sichuan, foreign nations and organisations immediately responded to the disaster by offering condolences and assistance. All of these factors brought the world to Sichuan and turned Sichuan into a "cash cow", a term used previously by Winter (2007) when referring to Cambodia's acquisition of world attention and donations for heritage preservation after its civil war. Here, too, Sichuan became like a 'heritage factory', a factory creating post-disaster heritage for political, social and economic use.

2.3 The Sichuan Earthquake's Impact on the Tourist Industry

The tourist industry suffered greatly during the Sichuan earthquake: in fact, the tourist industry in the Province almost collapsed. The following two groups of statistics on tourist numbers, taken from the Evaluation Report on the Recovery and Reconstruction of the Tourism Sector in the Areas Hit by the 12 May Sichuan Earthquake, China (UN

World Tourism Organisation, 2010), illustrate the effects of the earthquake on the

tourist industry:

- Inbound tourist arrivals: During the period between 2001 and 2007, inbound tourist arrivals increased from 570,000 to 1.7 million, corresponding to an average annual growth of over 20%. The number of tourist arrivals in 2008 dropped dramatically by 61% to 700,000, though tourist arrivals picked up again in 2009 to reach 850,000.

- Domestic tourist arrivals: Domestic tourist arrivals increased from 63 million in 2001 to 186 million in 2007, corresponding to an annual increase of over 20%. In 2008, tourist arrivals dropped by 6.5% to 174 million, but picked up again in 2009 to 219 million.

Furthermore, the data from the Tourism Recovery and Reconstruction Master Plan for

Sichuan after the earthquake (Sichuan Tourism Administration, 2008a) shows an

estimated loss to the tourism sector in Sichuan of 46.6 billion Yuan, which can be

broken down as follows:

- 9,685 billion Yuan for tourist reception enterprises, accounting for 20.79%
- 33,853 billion Yuan for scenic spots, accounting for 72.66%
- 2,892 billion Yuan for townships as tourist destinations, accounting for 6.2%
- 118 million Yuan for the tourism sector system, accounting for 0.3%

Table 2.1 shows details of losses in the Sichuan tourist industry after the 2008 earthquake, by region:

Table 2.1: Direct Loss of Sichuan Tourism in the 2008 Earthquake

Region	Attractions	Hotels & restaurants	Travel agencies	Total
Chengdu	1228880.67	209462.04	12.00	1438354.71
Deyang	444286.00	124922.00	289.00	569497.00
Mianyang	463694.14	119339.92	375.74	583409.80
Guangyuan	26651.00	14455.25	31.44	41137.69
Yaan	141160.00	5889.60	95.00	147144.60
Aba	946079.74	490285.68	3346.00	1439711.42
Suining	357.00	136.00	3.88	496.88
Nanchong	4227.93	85.00	18.00	4330.93
Meishan	3020.00	2120.00	10.00	5150.00
Other Cities	126986.38	2042.67	0.00	129029.05
Total	**3385342.86**	**968738.16**	**4181.06**	**4358262.08**

Note*:* Amounts given in million RMB Yuan. Source: Sichuan Tourism Administration*,* 2008a.

The affected areas included major scenic spots in Sichuan and the modes of transport by which these might be reached. The seismic belt in the Longmen Mountains contains many of Sichuan's famous scenic spots, and is also the gateway to World Heritage sites such as Jiuzhai valley and Huanglong. In general, older and poorer-quality tourist infrastructure and facilities were almost completely destroyed. Tourist transport facilities were also seriously damaged, with many motorways popular with tourists in scenic areas closed, for example (Figure 2.8). Furthermore, both rural roads and urban traffic systems were damaged: for instance, the main "9 Loop" route, which links the different parts of the rural area of Sichuan, was completely closed. Consequently, there was no way to enter the Jiuzhai Valley and Huanglong scenic areas (China National Tourism Administration, 2008). According to Shu's (2009) research, during the earthquake, 568 tourist scenic spots were damaged in Sichuan, of which 111 were A-level sites. Almost all the buildings in Beichuan, Wenchuan, Maoxian and other places in the affected area collapsed, and many famous scenic spots in Sichuan were seriously damaged, with losses beyond estimation. Not only did scenic sites and infrastructure suffer devastating losses, but the Sichuan earthquake also caused travellers to doubt the safety of travelling in Sichuan. The Sichuan tourist industry suffered heavy losses to its image of security, and remodelling this image and restoring the confidence of tourists is a long process. The following sections will provide a more detailed profile of tourism-related impact on sites and people and the importance of tourism in the area affected by the quake.

Figure 2.8: Damage to infrastructure

Image 1: Xiaoyudong Bridge   Image 2: Beichuan County Centre Road

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2009).

The Sichuan Earthquake's Effects on Tourism Operators

Travel agencies suffered a major shock after the earthquake. As the earthquake occurred during the tourist season, the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA) ordered all travel agencies to cancel trips going to, or passing through, quake-affected areas. The administration also requested tourists to refrain from visiting these areas for a period of time. There are many tourist attractions in the disaster areas of Sichuan and many travel agencies rely on these attractions to survive. After the earthquake, almost all attractions were closed. As Shanghai Spring International Travel Service spokesman

Zhang Lei commented: "We could not calculate the economic losses caused by the quake, they are too huge and wide. Given the difficulties of restoring the damaged infrastructure, it would be difficult to resume trips to Sichuan in the short term, even if the CNTA were to allow us to organize them, but many tourists would be reluctant to visit affected areas for some time because of the psychological shadow cast by the disaster; Sichuan's local tourism industry's agents will suffer greater losses." (People's Daily, 27 May 2008).

At the same time, tourist hotels were also significantly affected: after the earthquake, hotels in scenic areas and in tourist centres within the cities had almost no guests. The earthquake caused serious losses to tourist facilities, and many historic tourist towns were affected. In addition, 283 tourist information centres, 8,259 travel shops and other facilities, and 3213 service centres were damaged (Baidu Encyclopedias, 2010).

2.3.1 The Effect of the Sichuan Earthquake on Tourist Sites

Many tourist sites were damaged by the earthquake: out of the 4,000 touristic sites in Sichuan, more than 568 were damaged (Sichuan Tourism Administration, 2008). In Chapter 5, a profile of changes in cultural heritage sites will be mapped from both temporal and spatial perspectives. In this section, I shall present some specific cases to illustrate the effect of the Sichuan earthquake on tourist sites.

Sichuan World Heritage Sites Dujiangyan-Qingcheng Mountain (Images 1, 3, and 4 in Figure 2.9) and Wolong Giant Panda Habitat (Image 2 in Figure 2.9) were severely

damaged. Most of the buildings at the ancient Erwang Temple in the Dujiangyan scenic area collapsed, while all the roads leading to Wolong were blocked (Sichuan Tourism Administration, 2008). Siguniang Mountain and Hailuogou scenic infrastructure were also subject to some destruction, even though the main landscape remained intact.

Figure 2.9: Damage to tourist sites

Image 1: Cracks in Dujiangyan dam   Image 2: Wolong Giant Panda habitat

Source: Cnsphoto (2008) [Online]   Source: Pandas International (2008) [Online]

Image 3: Qingcheng Mountain   Image 4: Qingcheng Mountain

Source: House Focus (2008) [Online]   Source: House Focus (2008) [Online]

Yuanwangdong, Yingchanggou (Image 3 in Figure 2.10), and Qianfo and Douchui mountains were also severely damaged, and the scenic roads leading to these sites were all blocked. Yuanwangdong Hotel's main attractions were badly damaged, and the mountain villa could not be used at all (Image 1 and Image 2 in Figure 2.10), while the Qianfo scenic route into the mountains was completely destroyed, one peak of Douchui mountain collapsed, and the basic tourist facilities for the whole area were rendered unusable (Sichuan Tourism Administration, 2010).

Figure 2.10: Damage to tourist sites

Images 1 & 2 Yuanwangdong before and after the earthquake

Source: Tour Union, (2008) [Online].

Image 3 Yingchanggou tourist site

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2009).

2.3.2 The Sichuan Earthquake's Impact on Tourism-related Employees in Sichuan

First of all, let us examine the plight of tour guides. Being a guide is a special trade: with the exception of a basic salary, tour guides' income depends almost entirely on the number of travellers. After the earthquake, the China National Tourism Administration stopped travel either to or through affected areas, and this, compounded by tourists' safety worries, caused the number of tourists in Sichuan to decrease suddenly. The travel business almost came to a standstill, many travel agencies suspended their business, and most tour guides faced 'zero income' and short-term unemployment. Certain travel agencies deployed some of their staff to other branches, such as in Shanghai, Yunnan and Guangxi. This offered re-employment opportunities to the guides, but being a guide is a strongly regional profession. When guides give a guided tour to a place, they need to prepare information and be familiar with the route, which is a long process (Li, 2011). Many guides could therefore not work immediately due to lack of familiarity with routes and other facilities.

Furthermore, tourist drivers suffered difficulties. Driving is also a segment of the travel industry that is regionally restricted, as it is difficult for drivers if they are not familiar with the roads in other areas. The local drivers of Sichuan have a lot of experience of driving on Sichuan roads, but not much in other places, and so they were faced with the choice of either of selling their cars and moving elsewhere to start a new life, or of staying in the area and waiting for the tourist industry to revive.

Moreover, small businessmen in the scenic areas affected by the earthquake have experienced many problems. The Sichuan earthquake caused destruction to part of the landscape, and not only will it take a long time to rebuild or restore these attractions and sites, but the source of funding is also a major problem. The small businesses which relied on these tourist sites to make a living therefore suffered unemployment as a consequence of the earthquake. Because of the scarcity of tourists, the leisure resorts and small businesses which relied on tourism to survive were unable to carry on. Even if the businesses did manage to remain open, most of the employees lost their jobs as there were so few customers.

From the above analysis, it is clear that the tourist industry was seriously damaged by the earthquake, especially tourist attractions, roads and facilities. As a result, reconstruction work poses significant opportunities for the industry. In the following section, I shall look at the importance of developing the tourist industry in the area affected by the earthquake.

2.3.3 The Importance of Developing the Tourist Industry in Quake-hit Areas

The restoration and rebuilding of the tourist industry after a disaster has many effects, which may be attributed to the following reasons. Firstly, "the tourism industry itself possesses great power for the recovery of elasticity instead of showing weakness, and with the crisis controlled and eliminated effectively, the tourism industry will burst into much more vitality and energy" (Shen et al., 2009). As a result, the tourist industry's capacity for self-repair is advantageous to the restoration and rebuilding of the tourist

industry after the disaster. Secondly, compared with other industries, the tourist industry is a single comprehensive service industry. Unlike agriculture, the steel and building materials industries, etc., which need long-term restoration and rebuilding after damage to local resources and environment, the tourist industry has a comparative advantage at post-disaster sites. The tourist industry also has a strong effect in promoting and furthering the development of related industries, as well as setting a good example to other industries. Finally, the unexpected occurrence of a tragedy has a tremendous negative impact on the image of the post-disaster site, creating an image of danger and causing further economic losses. The rebuilding of the tourism industry is therefore very important as a window to show the area to the public, and also as a bellwether of economic development and social order at the post-disaster site.

From my fieldwork, I surmised that tourism is re-emerging in Sichuan, and the development of the tourism industry is playing an important role in post-earthquake Sichuan. First of all, there are rich and unique tourism resources in Sichuan: after the basic restoration of tourist attractions and evaluation of the damage caused by the earthquake to the tourist attractions, these may gradually be re-opened to the public. Secondly, with the present industrial structure in Sichuan, the tourist industry is prioritised, and even viewed as the most important industry. For this reason, rebuilding the tourism industry after the earthquake will optimise the industrial structure and adjust industrial patterns in Sichuan. Furthermore, compared with the tourist industry, the development of manufacturing or other industries in Sichuan has many more

limiting factors, such as transport links. In addition, the tourist industry plays a major role in promoting and furthering the development of related industries in Sichuan, and developing the tourist industry in Sichuan will lead to the upgrading of its image.

Overall, this chapter has aimed to establish a background enabling the understanding of Sichuan and its cultures, and of the earthquake and its impacts, as well as looking at the development of tourism in Sichuan and the tourist industry's comparative advantages in the post-disaster context. The following chapter will introduce the conceptual framework for this thesis.

Chapter 3: Heritage Studies, Tourism Studies and Dark Tourism

This chapter reviews the relevant literature on topics related to this study, and the first section sets up the conceptual framework. My understanding of heritage is shaped through three conceptual lenses. The first of these is based on the work on the geography of heritage of Graham (2000, 2005, 2007, 2008), Ashworth (2000, 2005, 2007) and Tunbridge (2000, 2007). I rely on a geographical approach to analyse heritage, looking particularly at post-disaster heritage landscapes. My second inspiration is the work of Smith's (2006), who emphasises the role played in heritage by Authorised Heritage Discourse; I am particularly interested in how tourism serves as an agent to express and facilitate this authorised discourse. Thirdly, and based on the ideas of McDowell (2008), I argue that heritage engages with memory and the performance of remembering, and from a geographical perspective, with sense of place. Founded on these ideas, the second section of this chapter takes a closer look at contemporary studies of tourism, with special emphasis on the social and cultural values of the study of tourism, while the third section reviews dark tourism research in detail within the post-disaster context, focusing in particular on related heritage and tourism studies in China in the fourth section.

3.1 Heritage Study

The definition of heritage varies greatly in different fields. As numerous authors have intimated, heritage is very difficult to define (Graham, Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000; Harvey, 2001; Larkham, 1995; Schouten, 1995; Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996). Heritage

is not only multiple but also plural, Graham and Howard (2008, p.2) elaborate on this

point, stating that:

> Even within a single society, past, heritages and identities should be considered as plurals. Not only do heritages have many uses but they also have multiple producers. These may be public/private sector, official/non-official and insider/outsider, each stakeholder having varied and multiple objectives in the creation and management of heritage. In addition, societies, notably in Western countries, are experiencing greater socio-spatial segregation as they become more culturally diverse (and more self-consciously so), a fragmentation which raises issues as to how this heterogeneity should be reflected in heritage selection, interpretation and management.

My understanding of heritage is shaped by Graham (2000, 2005, 2007, 2008),

Ashworth (2000, 2005, 2007) and Tunbridge's (2000, 2007) work on the geography of

heritage. In particular, I follow Graham and Howard's (2008) constructive perspective

understanding of heritage, which regards "the concept as referring to the ways in which

very selective past material artefacts, natural landscapes, mythologies, memories and

traditions become cultural, political and economic resources for the present" (Graham

& Howard, 2008, p.2).

More specifically, the main task of this research is to explore what Smith (2006,

p.17) identifies as a particular 'strand' of heritage study: the idea of heritage as a

cultural process or performance of meaning-making. Heritage, therefore, becomes not a

thing or a place, but rather an intangible process in which social and cultural values are

identified, negotiated, rejected or affirmed. Thus, it is what is done at, or with, heritage

sites that is significant, rather than the places themselves. Smith explains that heritage

does not have a defining action or moment, "but rather a range of activities that include

remembering, commemoration, communicating and passing on knowledge and

memories, asserting and expressing identity and social and cultural values and meanings" (2006, p. 83). Further:

> As an experience, and as a social and cultural performance, it is something with which people actively, often self-consciously, and critically engage in... [t]he product or the consequences of heritage activities are the emotions and experiences and the memories of them that they create. (Smith, 2006, p.83)

There is a long history of heritage studies and heritage literature development, as elucidated by Smith (2006), who notes that the current concept of heritage emerged in Europe, and particularly in Britain, France, and Germany, within the context of nineteenth-century modernity. The Industrial Revolution and associated urbanisation of the nineteenth century left many people dislocated from a sense of social and geographical security. The French Revolution also altered the European sense of historical consciousness (Anderson, 1991; Jokilehto, 1999). Smith points out that in the twentieth century, the desire to propagate these values found synergy with the liberal education movement, wherein a sense of pastoral care identified a moral responsibility to educate the public about their civic and national duties, and to promote social stability by fostering a sense of national community and social responsibility. Alongside the institutionalisation of museums as repositories and manifestations of national identity and cultural achievement, many European nations also turned their attention to the conservation and management of non-portable antiquities and historic buildings. The main tendencies in the recent development of heritage studies have been well documented by Harvey (2008) who states that there have been important transitions in how official heritage has been expressed, from obsessions over site or artefactual

integrity, to viewing emotion and embodied practice as legitimate and valuable vehicles through which history cultures may be practised. Secondly, developments in technology — and the control of this technology — have gone hand in hand with developments in how heritage is produced and consumed. Lastly, there have been huge changes in the politics of that production and consumption, along with questions of access, as the means to promote, display and enjoy heritage play a crucial role.

The debates and arguments explored in this research draw on and attempt to contribute to the rise in approaches to ethnographic and cultural geography that aim to understand the nature of heritage and how the past is constituted and used in the present. This thesis seeks to explore the reproduction of 'multivocality' of heritage within the context of a post-disaster site in China, with particular focus on the 'practice' dimension of 'dark' heritage tourism. Its purpose is to fill a gap in heritage practice study, in which there is a sense of 'action' or critical engagement on the part of non-expert users of heritage, as heritage is often considered to about receiving the wisdom and knowledge of geographers, historians, archaeologists and other experts (Smith 2006). This obscures the sense of memory work, performativity and acts of remembrance that commentators such as Nora (1989), Urry (1996) and Bagnall (2003) identify as occurring at heritage sites.

Before continuing the discussion it is necessary to present a framework for the definition of heritage for the purposes of this research. Three approaches to heritage are therefore employed within this thesis: a geographical approach, a political viewpoint, and an embodied performance way of thinking. These will be analysed in the following section.

3.1.1 Expressing Post-disaster Heritage Meaning: A Geographical Approach to Heritage and the Post-disaster Heritage Landscape

A Geographical Approach to Heritage

Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000) integrate the study of heritage into the wider realm of contemporary cultural and economic geography, identifying four dimensions in which heritage and geography intersect. "In the first instance, heritage is inherently a spatial phenomenon. All heritage occurs somewhere, and the relationship between a heritage object, building, association, or idea and its place may be important in a number of ways"(Graham, Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000, p.3). Secondly, "heritage is of fundamental importance to the interests of contemporary cultural and historical geography, which focus on signification, representation and the crucial issue of identity." (Graham, Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000, p.3) Thirdly, "the conceptualization of heritage as meaning rather than artefact inevitably ensures that it is a field of social conflict and tension, carrying differing and incompatible meanings simultaneously". (Graham, Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000, p.4) Lastly, "heritage is both a cultural and an economic good and is commodified as such. This multiple use and consumption occurs with virtually all heritage and is a potent source of conflict between the various interest groups involved". (Graham, Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000, p.4)

A geography of heritage perspective suggests that within heritage study there has been a recent tendency from representational theory toward non-representational theory. The idea of place is vital to the understanding of heritage and identity, as "places are distinguished from each other by many attributes that contribute to their identity and to the identification of individuals and groups within them. Heritage is one of these

attributes. The sense, or more usually senses, of place is both an input and an output of the process of heritage creation" (Graham, Ashworth, & Tunbridge, 2000, p.4). Representational theory is important in heritage study, as Graham (2000) and other scholars point out that the easiest way to understand heritage is through the idea of representation. Representational theory is important in heritage study; as Graham (2000) and other scholars point out, the easiest way to understand heritage is through the idea of representation. They refer to Hall's (1997) argument that culture is essentially concerned with the production and exchange of meaning and their real, practical effects. 'It is by our use of things, and what we say, think and feel about them - how we represent them - that we give them a meaning' (Hall, 1997, p. 3) However, the relation between heritage and identity, is not simply representational. That is to say, heritage does more than simply construct or represent a range of identities or memories. The values that inform any sense of identity or underlie memory are also used to construct ways of understanding and of making the present meaningful. Heritage is about a sense of place, not simply in constructing a sense of abstract identity, but also in helping us position ourselves as a nation, community or individual and finding our 'place' in our cultural, social and physical world (Smith, 2006). As Smith (2006) explains, material representations of heritage provide a physical anchor, or geographical sense of belonging, and allow us to negotiate a sense of social 'place' or class/community identity, in addition to a cultural place or sense of belonging. The term 'place' is used here in both of Escobar's (2001, p.140) meanings — as a sense of geographical space, as 'a constructed reality', but also as a sense of social position and value production as 'a category of thought'. In a very real sense, heritage becomes a

cultural tool that nations, societies, communities and individuals use to express, facilitate and construct a sense of identity, self and belonging, in which the 'power of place' is invoked in its representational sense to give physical reality to these expressions and experiences.

Critical attention to the idea of place related to heritage has increased in recent years, particularly in response to debates about globalisation, but also as scholars "working at the intersection of environment, culture and development… [are] confronted with social movements that commonly maintain a strong reference to place and territory" (Escobar 2001, p.141). Although critical debates about the nature and role of 'place' exist, particularly within geography and anthropology (see, for instance, Keith & Pile, 1993; Cresswell, 1996; Law & Lawrence-Zúñiga, 2003), similar discussions are infrequent in heritage studies (though see Graham et al., 2000). Despite the general lack of focused critique, the term 'place' is becoming increasingly used within the heritage literature and management and conservation policies and practices, moving away from the term 'site', which traditionally dominated heritage discourse, a legacy of the dominance of both archaeology and architecture in the management of material culture (Smith, 2006). There has been a gradual but increasing shift towards the word 'place', as demonstrated by its use in the Australian Burra Charter (Australia ICOMOS, 1999) and in major policy documents including the English Power of Place policy manifesto (English Heritage, 2000). This shift embodies the recognition of the word 'site' being a relatively restrictive term that tends to invoke a well-defined archaeologically- or architecturally-mapped location or locale, primarily of archaeological/architectural or other scientific/aesthetic value. Conversely, the idea of

'place' allows for a more fluid sense of physical boundaries; more importantly, it incorporates the sense of the concept of heritage having a direct link to the construction of identity in a way that 'site', with its often implied preceding 'archaeological' or 'architectural' descriptor, does not (Smith, 2006). Winter's (2007) works demonstrate these issues in more detail, more specifically in regard to nationalism, post-conflict recovery, sustainability, postcolonial identities and urban development. Accordingly, the idea of place invokes a sense of belonging: it represents a set of cultural characteristics and says something about where one lives, comes from and who one is, providing an anchor of shared experiences between people and a physical demonstration of continuity over time (Crang, 2011, p.102).

A geography of heritage perspective also provides me with a dynamic temporal and spatial approach to heritage. As Lowenthal (1998, p.X) argues, as Lowenthal (1998, p.X) argues, "heritage is not history, while it borrows from and enlivens historical study, heritage is not an inquiry into the past but a celebration of it, not an effort to know what actually happened but a profession of faith in a past tailored to present-day purposes." Or as Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996, p.6) put it, "the present selects an inheritance from an imagined past for current use and decides what should be passed on to an imagined future." More specifically, Howard's (2003) research emphasises that heritage is a process, which further underlines its temporal and contextual character. Heritage sites thus pass through a process that moves from discovery, designation, and protection, to perhaps commodification, where each stage is beset with contestations of different kinds (Howard, 2003). Cultural heritage is thus not fixed but developing and in

a process of constant negotiation, contestation, and (re-)interpretation (Svensson, 2005). Ashworth and Graham's (2005) book *Sense of Place: Sense of Time* highlights the time dimension when engaging with heritage. Graham (2008) further develops the idea of present-centredness as a recurrent theme in recent literature on heritage. He summarises Lowenthal (1998), Peckham (2003), and Halbwachs' (1992) works and demonstrates their present-centred heritage point of view. Similarly, as Smith (2006, p.4) states:

> Heritage is not necessarily about the stasis of cultural values and meanings, but may equally be about cultural change. It may, for instance, be about reworking the meanings of the past as the cultural, social and political needs of the present change and develop, or it may be about challenging the ways in which groups and communities are perceived and classified by others. Heritage is about negotiation — about using the past, and collective or individual memories, to negotiate new ways of being and expressing identity.

Based on these understandings, this research focuses on exploring the cultural connotations of heritage in a post-disaster site, in order to understand post-disaster societal change from a cultural geography perspective. More specifically, this study will look at the heritage landscape within the post-disaster context and the following section will discuss post-disaster heritage landscape.

Post-disaster Heritage Landscape

A tragic event can come to mark the significance of a place; increasingly tragic sites are now being regarded as 'heritage landscapes'. There is a growing interest in the heritage associated with pain and shame in the world. Williams (2007, p.viii) sees a "seemingly unstoppable rise of memorial museums" as a "global rush to commemorate atrocities".

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UNESCO listed Auschwitz as a World Heritage site in 1997; the Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Dome in 1997, and Robben Island, the site of Nelson Mandela's imprisonment, was inscribed in 1999 (Logan & Reeves, 2009).

Most research is case-oriented; there is some limitation to its scale and scope. Natural disasters (such as earthquakes in India, Pakistan and Southeast Asia) and man-made disasters (such as September 11, and the wars in Afghanistan and the Balkans), in particular, have drawn people's attention to the post-crisis heritage landscape. A concrete example is the case of September 11, where social critics Sorkin and Zukin (2002), among others, consider the attack and its aftermath in the broadest context. Their work offers a manifesto for a more democratic New York, one where voices from all the city's communities count. Other sites include Afghanistan, where the Taliban destroyed the largest standing Buddha statue in the world, triggering fierce debate in academia (Manhart, 2004). Another case is the wealth of Post-Tsunami heritage rehabilitation research that appeared following the 26 December 2004 Asian Tsunami disaster in which over two million people died in India, Indonesia, Thailand and Sri Lanka. For example, the Asian Disaster Management News reported "Cultural Considerations for Post Disaster Reconstruction Post-Tsunami Challenges" (Boen & Jigyasu, 2005); the Office of the UNESCO Regional Advisor for Culture in Asia and the Pacific reported "Post-Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme Using Traditional Performing Arts and Musical Expressions in the South and South-East Asian Sub-Region". Similar research includes Robbie's (2008) "Touring Katrina: Authentic Identities and Disaster Tourism in New Orleans", which considers the Post-Hurricane situation in New Orleans. The academic literature, however, has rarely documented this

subject in China. This thesis focuses on the 2008 earthquake in China and tries to expand on these areas and explore post-disaster cultural heritage issues from social and cultural perspectives.

In the Post-disaster field, the impact of tragedy and violence on landscape has been studied by scholars such as Foote (2003, p.7), who categorises public responses to violence and tragedy in the United States in terms of sanctification, designation, rectification, and obliteration. This thesis uses this initial scheme to describe the Sichuan post-disaster sites.

The sanctification response involves the creation of what geographers term a 'sacred' place — a site set apart from its surroundings and dedicated to the memory of an event, person, or group (Foote, 2003, p.8). In Sichuan post-disaster sites, Yingxiu town is an example (see Section 5.3). Foote (2003, p.8) defines designation as being closely related to sanctification, wherein a site is marked simply for its significance, omitting the rituals of consecration. An example of this is the Luobozhai Qiang ethnic village, as presented in this thesis (see Section 5.3). He further defines rectification as the process through which a tragedy site is put right and used again (2003, p.13). The World Heritage Site- Dujiangyan Irrigation Project illustrates this (see Section 5.3). Obliteration is presented as actively effacing all evidence of a tragedy to cover it up or remove it from view (Foote, 2003, p.24). Lingbao church exemplifies this (see Section 5.3).

Similarly, in Cambodia, Winter (2007) locates Angkor within the broader contexts of post-conflict reconstruction, nation-building, and socio-economic rehabilitation. He suggests that "through heritage tourism, culture and cultural

landscapes will continue to be valuable resources for developing countries seeking growth and economic prosperity. Transforming while they entrap, restoring while they erode, and cultivating while they restrict, there is little doubt that the contradictions and paradoxes inherent to heritage and tourism will continue as we advance into the twenty-first century" (Winter, 2007, p.149). In an attempt to offer some insights into such processes, Winter suggests that scholars of tourism and heritage need to pay closer attention to the residues of historical power within today's globalisation, the myriad challenges posed by post-conflict reconstruction, and how, within such contexts, places, cultures, and histories become expedient resources for economic and political gain.

In a similar vein, Till (2005) describes Berlin as a city haunted by ghosts from difficult pasts and "remembered futures," a place where past, present, and future collide in unexpected ways as individuals and groups search for what it means to be German. She moves through the spaces and times of a city marked by voids, ruins, and construction cranes, to search through material and affective landscapes of international forgetting and painful remembering. Her work deepens our understanding of the practice and politics of place-making and of how particular places embody and narrate distinct national pasts and futures, stories of belonging, and the absences and presences of social memory-work. Chapter 7 of this thesis, which features a bottom-up analysis of Sichuan's social memory, takes cues from her research.

Recently, Logan and Reeves (2009) have critically examined sites that represent painful and/or shameful episodes in a nation or local community's history, and the ways that government agencies, heritage professionals and the communities

themselves seek to remember, commemorate and conserve these cases — or, conversely, choose to forget them. They argue that these sites and their significant heritage values can be and are being interpreted and conserved through planning and management interventions. According to Leopold (2007, p.1), it is the local official at a site who has the most impact on its interpretation through the way in which he/she decides what to say and what to leave out.

Following these ideas, this study will critically examine the overlapping and complex relationships between heritage, identity and sense of place in post-disaster Sichuan. I argue that post-disaster landscapes are dynamic sites that both generate and are informed by official, popular, and individual memory through acts of local and non-local place consumption.

Logan and Reeves (2009) propose that tragic heritage places are commonly lieux de mémoire, acting, as Nora (1989) suggests, as sites harbouring memories that serve to maintain a group's sense of connection with its roots in the past. Such places have political functions, and are used and abused by governments (Graham et al., 2000). A frequent motive is nation-building, which accompanies the formation and strengthening of states. Governments encourage particular memories and provide rituals and venues for memorialisation, which may be benign if such actions promote the development of tolerant states and societies based on human rights. In many cases, however, state authorities engage in retelling history, inventing traditions and celebrating heritage in ways that serve their own interest, which are often as crude as maintaining a grip on power. Connerton (1991, p.1) refers to this as the 'wilful distortion' of collective memory by governments, a distortion strategically aimed at

manipulating the collective by manipulating its history, by 'explaining' its history in order to win support for a particular set of policies or for the maintenance of their hegemonic power in the present social order. This can be seen in Chapter 6, which describes the Chinese Communist Party's official view of post-disaster heritage production.

The contestability of memory has implications for the way in which particular cultural heritage sites have evolved over time. This in turn has implications for contemporary understanding and management of the built environment and sites of significance. Ashworth and Tunbridge (1996, p.21) regard atrocity heritage as 'particularly prone to many types of dissonance'. Chapter 7 discusses popular memorials as sites of tragic heritage creation in the earthquake transition and will illustrate these issues in more depth.

3.1.2 Authorised Heritage Discourse and Authorised Tourism

As the above discussion shows, any detailed investigation of a particular heritage item or site will soon reveal a vast array of actors and stakeholders (Schröder -Esch & Ulbricht 2006). While the view of heritage in any given society will inevitably reflect that society's dominant political, social, religious or ethnic force, the sheer number of actual and potential participants and stakeholders in transnational societies means there is no simple binary relationship of insider/outsider, coloniser/colonised, or even hegemonic/resistant (Smith, 2006).

Following her research, one of the arguments developed in this thesis is that there is a dominant Western discourse about heritage — termed 'authorized heritage

discourse' (AHD) by Smith (2006) —which works to naturalise a range of assumptions about the nature and meaning of heritage. Although this discourse is inevitably changing and developing, and varies in different cultural contexts and over time, there is nonetheless a particular focus and emphasis — primarily the attention devoted to things. Smith (2006) observes that "the authorized heritage discourse focuses attention on aesthetically pleasing material objects, sites, places and/or landscapes that current generations 'must' care for, protect and revere so that they may be passed to nebulous future generations for their 'education', and to forge a sense of common identity based on the past". She further explains that this often self-referential discourse simultaneously draws on and naturalises certain narratives and cultural and social experiences, often linked to ideas of nation and nationhood. Embedded in this discourse are a range of assumptions about the innate and immutable cultural values of heritage that are linked to and defined by the concepts of monumentality and aesthetics.

Following Smith's (2006) argument, this thesis draws particularly on a critical understanding of discourse as well as the suggestion that the language we use to discuss and think about heritage issues is not to be seen as incidental. This is because discourse affects, contributes to, and is constituted by the production and reproduction of social life, including arrangements of power (Richardson, 2003, p.26). Smith (2006) explains AHD as a naturalised discourse which works to sustain the privileged positions of a range of experts — along with their interests — while simultaneously thwarting or marginalising the interests of others. This occurs as a consequence of the systematic uptake of AHD within national and international policy and practice. As such, AHD is able to operate from a position of power because it legitimises and authorises a

particular pattern of management. Smith's (2006) argument borrows from Gramsci's notions of hegemony, and his position that dominant groups will teach their values, beliefs and interests to 'the general public'. Indeed, if "education lies at the heart of hegemony", as Richardson (2003, p.36) suggests, then the role of expertise within the realm of heritage works to mediate and influence AHD through its pedagogic roles within the management process. Heritage is imagined as something old, beautiful, tangible and of relevance to the nation, selected by experts and made to matter (Waterton, 2005, p.318). Individuals and interest groups who are not professionals are rarely acknowledged as playing any sort of active role in the defining, conserving and maintenance of heritage. Instead, they are characterised as audience, visitor or consumer. In this research, I will use tourism as a tool to develop these issues in depth; the following section looks at the authorised heritage tourism practices in literature.

Authorised Heritage Tourism

In this section, I emphasise that heritage tourism is a complex and highly political phenomenon in which many social elements are hotly contested at various levels (Hall, 1997). When examining heritage tourism — 'the things we want to keep' — one is obliged to explore the notion of who the 'we' is, and whether it is at the level of the nation, the community, or even the individual (Hall & McArthur, 1993). It is not always easy to predict who may possess the agency — the capital, knowledge, and connections — to craft these narratives. An increased focus on authorised heritage and tourism issues may of course add to the discussion about the relationship between heritage and tourism, and in this section it is necessary to review a number of key approaches to

authorised heritage and tourism, with a view to deepening our understanding of heritage tourism.

The various conventions, charters, recommendations and other texts enacted by UNESCO and ICOMOS play an important role in the maintenance of the authority of heritage discourses. Among these, the most important are the International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites, known as the Venice Charter, the World Heritage Convention, the Burra Charter and The International Programmes for Safeguarding and Protecting Intangible Heritage. The Venice Charter has been recognised as one of the primary and foundational texts of heritage conservation philosophy and practice (Starn, 2002), while the World Heritage Convention establishes the World Heritage List in which cultural and natural sites of 'universal' importance are recorded. The 1999 Burra Charter, on the other hand, explicitly attempts to deal with plurality and multivocality, while the International Programmes for Safeguarding and Protecting Intangible Heritage focus on intangible heritage. Out of these, the most important for the study of tourism is the World Heritage Convention, which will be analysed in more detail in the following section.

The World Heritage Convention was adopted by UNESCO in 1972, and became effective in 1975. As signatories to the Convention, party states are obliged to identify, protect and preserve heritage of "outstanding universal value" (UNESCO, 2006). The Convention established the World Heritage List, firstly as a means of recognising that certain places are of sufficient importance as cultural or natural sites to be the responsibility of the international community, and secondly as a tool for conservation

purposes. By joining the Convention, a nation agrees to look after its World Heritage Sites (WHS) as part of protecting its national heritage.

Since the adoption of the Convention in 1972, the World Heritage concept has been celebrated, honoured and used not only for the purposes of conservation but for tourism as well. World Heritage Site status is used as an accreditation scheme for heritage tourism attractions. Accordingly, World Heritage Site status has become a measure of quality assurance, a trademark and an 'authenticity stamp' for the heritage tourist, as well as an arena for the presentation of prestigious national heritage, integral to nation-building projects (Rakic & Chambers, 2007). In this sense, the concept of World Heritage has drifted away from its original intention. Having begun as a system for identifying, protecting and preserving heritage of 'outstanding universal value', which represents and belongs to all humankind, it has essentially become an accreditation scheme for heritage sites, used either to serve the purposes of the tourism industry or for the purposes of nation-building.

It is often suggested that World Heritage status increases the popularity of a location or destination. World Heritage Sites have been described as "magnets for visitors", and World Heritage designation represents "virtually a guarantee that visitor numbers will increase" (Shackley, 1998, p.293). Bandarin (2001) indicates that it is inevitable that the very reasons a site is chosen for inclusion on the World Heritage List are also why millions of tourists visit the site. Many WHS are being exposed to increasing numbers of tourist visitors; each year some 63 million people visit WHS, with 15 sites recording over a million visitors per year (Sigaty & Thorsell, 1998). Hall and Piggin (2001) acknowledge that World Heritage Sites very often serve a sightseeing

role and represent an attraction for visitors to the sites themselves and to surrounding areas.

The underlying relationship between World Heritage and tourism was made explicit by UNESCO itself in its 1976 World Heritage Convention, which described tourism as "more than an economic phenomenon with social and cultural effects … a phenomenon of civilization" (UNESCO, 1976). It was suggested that the profits generated by tourism activities would enhance the preservation of such sites, create new jobs, improve the education of local people, and promote greater public awareness of the sites' cultural or natural values, thereby increasing the chances of future preservation (Nicholls & Vogt, 2004). At many WHS, certainly, the development of tourism represents the only means to overcome the poor economic situation of the present day.

The relationship between heritage and tourism at World Heritage Sites may, however, be fragile, and it is often problematic. For many WHS, the increasing number of visitors and associated rapid development of tourism may also serve to degrade the natural and cultural values for which the site was included. Many recent studies have drawn attention to conflict over the use of resources in WHS, with a particular focus on the development of tourism (Bianchi, 2002; Drost, 1996; Wager, 1995; Yuksel et al., 1999). The dialogue between tourism and heritage is often characterised by a series of contradictions and conflicts (Jansen-Verbeke & Lievois, 1999) in which conservationists perceive tourism as compromising conservation goals for the benefit of profit, leading to the commodification of culture (Boniface & Fowler, 1993) and an increase in demand on resources (Ashworth, 2000). Multiple use and consumption is common to virtually

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all heritage sites, and is a potent source of conflict between the various interest groups involved. Stakeholders, which are likely to include the World Heritage Committee, international organisations, the national state, local communities, private businesses and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), all interact, value and make use of resources located in WHS in different ways.

Meanwhile, the relationship between tourism and heritage ce over time; the process and outcomes of listing for World Heritage (WH) status may influence the nature of that relationship. Hede (2007) suggests that the prospect of WHS listing is a catalyst for decision-making and the development of networks between the various stakeholders in heritage and tourism; heritage stakeholders seem to be grappling for power during this stage. Once the listing process is successful, heritage then seems to gain the balance of power, and tourism interests appear to be less successful in exerting control over the situation.

As such, there has been growing recognition of the relationship between World Heritage status and the development of tourism, and of the need for the active involvement of all stakeholders to ensure sustainable development (Cooper et al., 1998). Hall and McArthur (1998) recognise that many of the problems of heritage conservation and management lie not within the resource itself, but in the interaction between the stakeholders and the resource, and in the role of the heritage manager as the mediator between the two.

More generally, Smith (2006) points out that authority comes in part from the influence that such organisations have within the policy process at both the national and international levels. Authority is also derived from the persuasive power of the

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AHD, which frames the charters and conventions that influence national and international heritage conservation and preservation policies and practices. In turn, the AHD, along with the assumptions, values and ideologies embedded within this discourse, are themselves reinforced and perpetuated through the policy and technical processes driven or underlined by the various charters and conventions.

The World Heritage Convention represents a dominant form of discourse, one that tends to privilege European — and more generally Western — assumptions about the meaning and nature of heritage. The persuasive power of the Western AHD, which frames and legitimises the various programmes and texts discussed above, is continually reasserted and legitimised both in and by these documents and the practices they guide. As Smith (2006) notes, a community of heritage practitioners and conservationists is created by these documents, and their identity is defined by their respect for the commitment to a set of principles and underlying philosophies. In short, these documents themselves form part of the process of heritage in that they identify and create meaning and identity, which is carried out through the creation of a community of practitioners and experts, but also through the creation of a sense of 'world' or 'national' identity.

To sum up, as places are transformed into heritage tourism destinations, they become the stages on which communities and nations enact their identities. Porter (2008) claims that strict distinctions between guests and hosts often break down, as communities take an interest in how their homes and neighbourhoods are preserved while visitors report feelings of returning 'home' upon arrival. This sense of stewardship that is tightly woven into the notion of heritage tourism unsurprisingly

sets up potential conflicts between groups over how sites are to be presented, preserved and accessed. These debates should be viewed as conflicts between interest groups which promote their own agendas at the expense of the interests of other groups or the wider public. In this thesis a handful of groups that regularly play a role in crafting heritage tourism destinations are isolated for the purposes of analysis. These groups include nation-states, NGOs, local development agencies, and the visitors to heritage tourism destinations themselves. In many cases, a combination of these groups both cooperates and collides in the production of heritage tourism, the empirical chapters will aim to demonstrate this in greater detail.

3.1.3 Heritage Engaging with Memory and Remembering Performances

From the above heritage literature review, the representational and symbolic value of heritage in constructing and giving material reality to 'identity' is well recognised. Furthermore, as many scholars emphasise memory is also an important element in the construction of heritage, memory and commemoration are connected to the heritage process (McDowell, 2008). With a geographical concern, I follow Alderman and Dwyer's (2009) works, where 'text', 'arena' and 'performance' are used as metaphors to analyse geographers looking at memory linked with memorials and monuments. The 'text' metaphor emphasises a critical reading of the histories and ideologies given voice (and silenced) in the content and form of memorials and monuments, as well as the dynamic nature of (re)inscribing memory into space. The 'arena' metaphor focuses on the capacity of memorials and monuments to serve as sites for social groups to actively debate the meaning of history and compete for control over the commemorative

process as part of larger struggles over identity. The 'performance' metaphor recognises the important role that bodily enactments, commemorative rituals, and cultural displays occupy in constituting and bringing meaning to memorials and monuments, suggesting that the body itself constitutes a place of memory. The meanings of these metaphors — 'text', 'arena' and 'performance' — will be implied to post-disaster sites and illustrated in more depth in subsequent empirical chapters.

There is much scholarly research on the study of memory (see, for example, Lowenthal, 1985; Edensor, 1997; Johnston, 1999; Lahiri, 2003, McDowell, 2008). McDowell (2008, p.40) catalogues multiple types of memory: "official; unofficial; public; private; collective; communal; local; national; societal; historical; emotional; post memory; literal; and exemplary". At post-disaster sites in particular, memory is reflected in a number of different ways, including, for example, procedural memory (the memory of fact), autobiographical memory, cognitive memory, flashbulb memory (the memory of important or emotionally-charged events), habitual memory, and collective or social memory (Misztal, 2003). I shall highlight the fact that the forms of memory most often associated with heritage in post-disaster sites are collective (or social) memory and habitual memory; Chapter 7 will demonstrate and explore these issues.

Meanwhile, the traditional Western account of memory tends to emphasise its national and collective scale. McDowell draws attention to the fact that national memory is frequently thought of in conjunction with official memory that, in most societies, emanates from the state and its institutions, often representing the hegemonic needs and values of the general public (Koshar, 1998). McDowell (2008, p.40) further points out "nation-states play leading roles in the construction of heritage as they

subscribe to a set of ideas that are consequently embedded through socialization and education. As a result, the state is usually the official arbitrator of public commemoration and, therefore, of national heritage, and as such, it assumes responsibility over planning, maintaining and funding memorial monuments, programmes and events". Within this post-disaster context in China, concepts of national and collective memory are particularly important and these ideas will be illustrated in the empirical chapters.

However, beyond this national perspective, this research has another dimension in the understanding of memory and heritage: it emphasises that memories within the post-disaster context should also consider the 'small' scale, such as popular and individual memory. As Burk (2003, p. 317) notes, these can be "from the individual or private which may involve personal experiences such as loss or suffering". This understanding quickly evolve with heritage identity debates Smith emphasises that, as much of the globalisation literature (erroneously) proclaims the end of the nation state, critical attention has begun to focus more assiduously on expressions of sub-national, and particularly 'local', constructions of identity and the role of heritage therein (Inglehart & Baker, 2000; Berking, 2003). From this has emerged a greater critical analysis of how specific class identities are articulated and communicated through heritage (Bruno, 1999; Dicks, 2000a; DeBlasio, 2001; Linkon & Russo, 2002; Macdonald, 1997; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998); of how ethnic and cultural identities are defined in multicultural contexts (Hayden, 1997; Knecht & Niedermüller 2002, 2002; Littler & Naidoo, 2004, 2005); of how gender and sexuality are identified (Butler, 1993; Holcomb,

1998; Dubrow, 2003); and of how regional and local communities, among others, articulate a sense of identity (Derry & Malloy, 2003; Jones, 2005).

Furthermore, Smith has identified that the ways in which links between identity and heritage are developed and maintained is an area that has not received much scrutiny in heritage literature. Some scholars (Urry, 1996; McLean, 2006) have indicated that what people actually do at heritage sites, and how these links are constructed and maintained, are often assumed and not presumed to be problematic in the literature. This thesis will therefore follow Smith's line of thought, with a view to contributing to this 'identity work'. That is to say, it is itself a constitutive cultural process that identifies things and places that can be given meaning and value as 'heritage', reflecting contemporary cultural and social values, debates and aspirations. This thesis aims, therefore, to follow current human geography non-representational theorists (Thrift, 1996; 1997; 2000; Nelson,1999; Thrift & Dewsbury, 2000; Nash, 2000; Harrison, 2000; Gregson & Rose, 2000; Crouch, 2001; Dewsbury et al., 2002; Whatmore, 2002; Cresswell, 2002; Smith, 2003; Jacobs & Nash, 2003; Latham, 2003a; Castree & MacMillan, 2004) and expand performance theory into heritage study, and into the post-disaster context in China more specifically. In this way, however, heritage is not the site itself, but the act of passing on knowledge in a culturally correct or appropriate context and time. The sites are more than aides-de-mémoire, but rather, following Samuel (1994), they are "theatres of memory", or Nora's (1898) "sites of memory". As with heritage, memory is not an object to possess: memories are not "like books in a library that we can pull down, open up, and read" (Conway, 1997). Instead, memory is an active cultural process of remembering and of forgetting which is fundamental to

our ability to conceptualise the world (Misztal, 2003). Wertsch (2002) argues that remembering is an active process in which the past is continually renegotiated and reinterpreted, both collectively or individually, in relation to past experiences and present needs. The past can never be understood solely on its own terms, given that the present continually rewrites the meaning of the past and the memories and histories we construct about it within the context of the present. McDowell (2008) points out that "Individuals, groups or communities in society all tend to remember different aspects of the past, but they tend to do so in diverse ways and with alternative methods. Interpretation is predetermined by the social, economic, political and/or local context. Societies justify current attitudes and future aspirations by linking them to past traditions which helps bond and unify factionalism." She cites "the landscape itself [as] an active agent in constituting that history, serving both as a symbol for the needs and desires of the people who live in it" (Mitchell, 2003, p.93). Chapter 7 will explore such issues in post-disaster sites, considering different ritual remembering performances from different groups, different levels of scale such as national or personal, and different motivations marked as deliberate or spontaneous.

3.2 Tourism Study and Heritage Tourism

3.2.1 Tourism Study

Tourism is a complex phenomenon encompassing a number of disciplines. While researchers tend to approach tourism studies from within the specific boundaries of their main discipline, this thesis studies tourism primarily from the perspective of cultural geography within a social science framework.

The geographer's perspective on tourism rests on an understanding of how the places and spaces of tourism are produced and consumed. Staiff (2006) observes that for a place to be produced for tourist consumption, it has to be first marked out in some way (after MacCannell, 1989) or defined, and then secondly, commodified so that it can be consumed by the tourist as either a discrete existential experience (Urry, 1990) or as a photograph or some other record (Taylor, 1994). A specific example of this can be seen in Minca and Oakes's (2006) work, which looks at the meaning of home and belonging and at how places are made and remade in the tourism industry. 'Place', in this sense, is not a material entity that exists autonomously, but rather a praxis whereby the material place and its geography are defined by a series of discourses that then become inseparable from the place itself (Duncan & Ley, 1993). In other words, the physical terrain of place is like a blank canvas upon which a series of representations are layered, producing a 'place' that is uniquely identifiable.

The bulk of the study of tourism has traditionally been found in texts focusing on business or economics. "Research textbooks are often focused on tourism as a business and either ignore alternative social science approaches to tourism research or provide them with little attention" (Ritchie, Burns & Palmer, 2005, p.ix). Over the last few decades key writers such as MacCannell and Urry have developed a more comprehensive investigation of tourism as a sociocultural phenomenon. The former argues that "tourism is not just the aggregate of merely commercial activities; it is also an ideological framing of history, nature and tradition; a framing that has the power to reshape culture and nature to its own needs" (MacCannell 1989). This suggests that tourism shapes politics, creates identities, manufactures history, and commodifies

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heritage. In contemporary societies, 'culture', 'society' and 'tourism' are not discrete entities, but are entirely fused together (Rojek & Urry, 1997). In this section, I shall briefly review some influential theories on tourism which are relevant to this research.

In the 1990s, tourism research was particularly inspired by the visual dimension of tourism. Studies of tourism tended to focus on how bodies were rendered as exotic 'Others' by the tourist gaze. In Urry's *The Tourist Gaze* (2002), tourism behaviour was explained as the pleasurability of seeing or gazing upon the different and unusual, in contrast to the familiarity of everyday life. Influenced by Foucault, Urry's work has convincingly shown that tourism is predicated on a particular type of gaze. His analysis focuses on the sociocultural dimensions of the tourist gaze or, as he puts it, the tourist gaze as a "constructed gaze" that is "socially organized and systematized" (Urry, 1990). Tourism is conducted in precisely constructed and decoded semiotic fields, wherein tourists are held to be collectors of views and gaze on objects and landscapes that reference or symbolise something else, an essence. The tourist gaze may be thought of as the intersection of 'site' with 'sight', which lends it a strong spatial and geographic dimension (Staiff, 2003). As Urry (1990, p.11) argues, "tourism results from a basic binary division between the ordinary-everyday and the extraordinary".

In recent years, a growing volume of tourism studies has underlined the importance of reconsidering the phenomenon in relation to the organisation of everyday life and its practices (Crouch, 1999; Franklin & Crang, 2001; Franklin, 2003; M. Crang, 2006; Obrador-Pons et al., 2009). Franklin (2003) argues that "tourism is no longer something that happens away from the everyday life world. Rather tourism is infused into the everyday and has become one of the ways in which our lives are

ordered and one of the ways in which consumers orientate themselves, or take a stance to a globalised world". From this perspective, tourism is a cultural activity and not merely a commercial exercise. It cannot be seen as an industry which is separable from all other industries and from our everyday lives. Munt's (1994) phrase "tourism is everything and everything is tourism" neatly sums up the shift towards understanding tourist consumption as a banal process.

Tourism did not, of course, invent the 'myth of a place', but it does continue to stage it. At the heart of the myth of place is desire and anticipation — the twin, interlocked strands that are the vital life forces of a commodity culture (MacCannell, 1989). A number of authors have shown interest in the study of tourism as a performance (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998; Coleman & Crang, 2002; Lasansky & McLaren, 2004). These accounts form part of a recent shift towards understanding tourist consumption as a process — to what Crouch (2003) has termed "embodied semiotics". The late twentieth-century focus on the subjective nature of place has informed more detailed accounts of tourist consumption as a multi-sensory, embodied process. Winter (2007) illustrates that Urry departed from his ocular-centric *The Tourist Gaze* (1990) to consider why the heritage and tourism industries deploy sounds, smells and textures to signify particular places or memories, while Edensor, in his detailed account of the Taj Mahal (1998), revisits Goffman's (1990) theatrical metaphor to interpret consumption as a series of spatially scripted performances. According to Edensor, the Taj serves as a highly symbolic stage which enables tourists to act out a variety of identity constructions. Similarly, Yalouri (2001) draws upon Bourdieu's

notion of habitus to interpret visits to the Acropolis as spatialised cultural productions, known and enacted through the body.

In recent years, there has been a shift towards understanding tourism in terms of "performativity [which] views the production and consumption of tourist spaces as contingent and mutually constitutive processes" (Winter, 2007, p.12). In such a scenario, places are no longer regarded as the static recipients of 'guests' who come and go, but instead there is an awareness of how people and places are concurrently changed through the economies and cultures of tourism. The review of tourism literature here does, however, show a lack of studies revealing how sensory, embodied practices are informed by processes of signification. Franklin and Crang (2001) and Meethan (2001) argue that a more rigorous understanding is still required as regards the subject/discourse or symbolic/material relations which constitute tourism consumption. In response, this thesis explores such relationships by viewing 'embodied experiences as part of the semiotic relations within tourism'.

This thesis identifies another important aspect of tourism studies, namely within the socioeconomic sphere. Edensor (2001) summarises several authors who have located a post-modern tourism within a late twentieth-century capitalism, wherein economic restructuring, the intensive search for new areas to commodify and the increasingly global operation of capital have led to a proliferation of images and signs (Lash & Urry, 1994), "time/space commodity production" (Featherstone, 1991), and an intensifying of local, regional and national instability. Corporations and state organisations, marketplaces, attractions, people, customs, landscapes and histories

intensify competition between localities for investment, as they attempt to reconstruct themselves as tourist spaces (Britton, 1991, p.465).

In recent years, it has been acknowledged that the tourist industry provides an effective medium for creating and/or enacting a national 'brand' on the international stage. Winter (2008) indicates that Richter (1993), Peleggi (1996), and Picard and Wood (1993) have all demonstrated how coherent, state-endorsed images of the nation projected externally also become important mechanisms for nation-building or the ethnic profiling of a population.

A concentrated example can be seen from Dahles' (2001) account of cultural tourism in Indonesia, which was seized upon by the New Order government to enhance its political legitimacy and boost economic growth. Dahles concludes that a seemingly innocuous policy of promoting a tapestry of ethnic diversity for an international tourist audience provides a mask for the state's broader ideological interests. She states that:

> In Indonesia culture and art have become an arena in which seemingly 'unpolitical' visions of national identity are stated. Applying a strategy of 'culturalization' of identity, the government is not only accommodating differences but actually producing them… the concept of culture has gone through a process of aestheticization, stylization, relativization, and standardization. This is not a harmless exercise in semantic associations but a strategy of domination. (Dahles, 2001, p.16)

For Dahles, the transformation of a localised Javanese culture is clearly primarily driven by state policy. Although she recognises that this cultural and political twinning gains momentum through the prospect of financial gain, her account speaks less about the power of capital in transforming those places designated for tourism. To address such questions, authors such as Harrison (1992), Wood (1993), and Jackson (2004) have insightfully demonstrated how government programmes that aim to promote

places of tourism in developing countries invariably lead to tensions between the state and local communities, as disproportionate levels of wealth are accrued by a small elite within a panorama of imbalanced modernisation. The analysis presented in the empirical chapters draws these various political and economic threads together. Accounting for these influences requires an understanding of the mediation of different discourses from different stakeholders, which may be identified in guidebooks, in documents like the Disaster Reconstruction Plans made by the State Disaster Reconstruction Planning Office (DRPO), and in films and other media. In the empirical chapters, a diverse range of representations and framings — including tourist itineraries, earthquake and reconstruction documents, and films or television news coverage — will be compared with the various ways in which tourists talk and walk about the site. In short, the thesis aims to explore the interconnections between the symbolic economies of post-disaster tourism and the material practices involved in actually performing tourism in the post-disaster site of Sichuan.

3.2.2 Heritage Tourism Study

The interaction between tourism, culture and society provides a dynamic scenario in which to reflect upon a broad range of issues and processes. Tourism studies of the 'other' are not, however, just about the studied object of tourist desire, but also about the past culture of tourist destinations, which encompasses tourism and heritage issues. As Porter (2008) states, when combined, heritage and tourism result in a particular type of travel aimed not at exploring the unknown or the exotic, but at learning, celebrating, and displaying one's relationship with the past. Heritage tourism, which

typically falls under the purview of cultural tourism, is one of the most widespread types of tourism and is indeed among the oldest forms of travel. Voase (1999) defines heritage tourism as involving the connection of tourists with a sometimes constructed, often mythical past which promotes "a vicarious experience that depends on using objects or locations as means of entering into or living in the past". In this thesis, the understanding of heritage tourism is not merely as tourist activity in a space where historic artefacts are presented, but rather as a phenomenon based on "the relationship between the individual and the heritage presented and, more specifically, on the tourists' perception of the site as part of their own heritage" (Poria et al., 2004, p.20). Furthermore, the "differences in perceptions of a site are reflected in differences in reasons for visiting a site . . . the link between the individual and the site is at the core of the understanding of heritage tourism as a social phenomenon" (Poria et al., 2004, p.26). At heritage sites, visitors experience a "merging of the real and imagined which makes the visit more meaningful" (Kruse, 2005, p.89); as such, heritage sites are highly symbolic, given that they connect visitors to the personal and collective memories that comprise their identities.

Timothy and Boyd (2006) note that the pervasiveness of heritage resources has placed heritage tourism at the forefront of the industry in many parts of the world. It is one of the most significant types of tourism in terms of visitors and attractions, involving hundreds of millions of people every year. Heritage tourism has become one of the most researched subjects in recent years. Porter (2008) emphasises that some general approaches to heritage tourism studies are noticeable. First of all, some studies have a markedly applied tone in terms of their research goals, and as such constitute

interesting statements on the nature of heritage tourism. Some scholars, for example, establish heritage tourism as a unique sector in tourist economies, which devise ways to manage destinations and the particular kinds of tourists they attract, and place emphasis on planning visitors' experience, satisfaction and interpretations, as well as their impact on local communities (for examples see Garrod & Fyall, 2000; Moscardo and Greenwood, 2001; Nuryanti, 1996). At the same time, scholars interested in heritage as a phenomenon embrace the investigation of heritage tourism with a view to understanding the connection between travel and modern society's engagement with the past (Bender, 1998; Breglia, 2006; Yalouri, 2001). Other studies are more concerned with the ways in which places such as World Heritage Sites act as powerful and often contested heritage tourism destinations.

The Consumption of Heritage Tourism

It is clear that "heritage is not simply the past, but the modern-day use of elements of the past" (Timothy & Boyd, 2003, p.4). Heritage is about the political and economic structures of the present using the past as a resource. It is valuable not merely in social, emotional, aesthetic and historical terms, but because it is now also an integral component of contemporary tourism products at both the attraction and destination levels. A clear summary of this situation can be seen in the 9th Annual Cambridge Heritage Seminar Report (2008), which notes that heritage is a commodity which can be bought and sold in an increasingly capitalist global market. Heritage objects, places and symbols are constantly being re-appropriated and sold as destinations, used as marketing tools for unrelated products, remade into souvenirs, and sold into private

hands. 'Heritage products' (e.g. heritage tourism, etc.) 'lure' tourists by appealing to their historic and/or intellectual curiosity, nostalgia or antiquarian interests, as well as their search for roots, pilgrimage, etc. In this way, heritage is often repackaged and converted to suit the needs and tastes of tourists.

The advent of mass heritage tourism, in harness with the economic rationalist discourse of the market that took hold in the 1980s and 1990s, has brought the lexicon of 'consumption' into the heritage debate (Dicks, 2000, p.33). On the one hand, heritage can be viewed as a resource, in particular an economic and cultural resource that is exploited everywhere as a primary component of strategies to promote tourism, economic development and rural and urban regeneration. A comprehensive summary of this may be seen in Rakic and Chambers' (2007) research, which describes studies dealing with heritage tourism management and marketing issues (Hall & Piggin, 2003; Leask & Fyall, 2006; Shackley, 2001); policy and conservation issues (Harrison & Hitchcock, 2005; Kavoura, 2001; Rakic & Leask, 2006); and tourists' understanding of the significance of World Heritage Site status (Moscardo et al., 2001; Smith, 2002).

On the other hand, there is also a concern that 'heritage' and its commodification as an economic and cultural resource inherently stifle cultural creativity and encourage reactionary nostalgia. During the 1980s, a strong critique of heritage emerged, focusing on the development of mass consumption and tourist marketing of heritage attractions. A focus of this critique was the idea that tourism reduced heritage to simple entertainment, with the derogative motif of 'theme park' becoming central to this critique. An example of this is Wright (1985), who warned that Britain had become one gigantic heritage theme park, which Hewison (1987) believes to be integral to the

cultural decline of the country. This critique has been echoed in other countries, where heritage has been accused of stifling creativity and sanitising or simplifying the historical messages of the past (McCrone et al., 1995; Brett, 1996; Choay, 2001; Burton, 2003). While the Disneyfication of tourism marketing and interpretation is an issue of real concern (Smith et al., 1992; Hollinshead, 1992; Waitt, 2000), this critique has been extended to heritage interpretation more generally. Hewison (1987) scornfully identifies a 'heritage industry' which commodifies, sanitises and creates a false past, and stifles cultural development and creativity. Subsequently, it has become embedded in 'common sense' views of heritage tourism consumption that it is a passive process in which mass consumers are manipulated by the narcotic effect of the media or tourism marketing (Abercrombie & Longhurst, 1998, p. 5).

This thesis will demonstrate and confirm Smith's point of view, arguing that even with the consumption of tourism, the nature of heritage is still an active social process or experience. In the bulk of the literature, heritage within tourism consumption is not defined as an active process or experience, but rather as something visitors are led towards and instructed about. The 'glass case' display mentality, which Merriman (1989) identifies in the context of museum exhibitions, is equally present in the traditional interpretation and presentation of heritage sites and places (see also Hall & McArthur, 1996). While it cannot be denied that heritage is an economic resource, the reduction of heritage to solely or largely a product of the marketplace helps to reinforce the idea that heritage is a 'thing' that is passively and uncritically consumed, rather than being an active social process or experience. All of these issues will be examined in Chapter 7.

3.3 Dark Tourism

Places associated with death, disaster or suffering have always attracted tourists; however, it is only over the last decade or so that academics and the media have turned their attention to the subject, and that the specific term 'dark tourism' has been used.

As a category in the study of the tourism of history and heritage, dark tourism has primarily examined the movement and motivation of visitors to sites of death and disaster (Wight, 2006). A significant proportion of academic research (e.g. Seaton, 1999) focuses on tourism associated with war, battlefields and other aspects of military history. Other areas of investigation common to the field include historical sites associated with former communist, fascist or apartheid regimes (Wight & Lennon, 2007); slavery heritage (Dann & Seaton, 2001; Teye & Timothy, 2004); sites of confinement and punishment (Blackburn, 2000); holocaust tourism (Ashworth, 1996; Beech, 2000); atrocity tourism (Ashworth & Hartmann, 2005); prison tourism (Strange & Kempa, 2003); in addition to sites associated with major disasters (Sorkin & Zukin, 2002). At the same time, alternative terminology has been applied to the phenomenon. For example, Seaton (1996) refers to death-related tourist activity as 'thanatourism', while other labels include 'morbid tourism' (Blom, 2000); 'Black Spot tourism' (Rojek, 1993); 'grief tourism' or as Dann (1994, p.61) alliterates, 'milking the macabre'. More specifically, Bristow and Newman (2004, p.215) introduce the term 'fight tourism' as "a variation of dark tourism… [where]…individuals may seek a thrill or shock from the experience".

A factor common to all these different terms or forms of dark tourism is an association between tourism and specific 'dark' sites or places. Accordingly, this thesis

focuses on exploring the links between tourism and the dark site. For example, Tarlow (2005, p.48) identifies dark tourism as "visitations to places where tragedies or historically noteworthy death has occurred and that continue to impact our lives", a definition that aligns dark tourism somewhat narrowly to certain sites and that, perhaps, hints at particular motives. A number of 'drivers' of dark tourism have been suggested in the literature, varying from a simple morbid curiosity, through schadenfreude (Seaton & Lennon, 2004), to a collective sense of identity or survival "in the face of violent disruptions of collective life routines" (Rojek, 1997, p.61). More specifically, Tarlow (2005) links the attraction of dark sites with either 'reflexive' or 'restorative' nostalgia, though he too resorts to suggesting a wide variety of potential motives for dark tourism consumption. Perhaps the most comprehensive list is provided by Dann (1998), who identifies eight possible factors. These include the 'fear of phantoms' (i.e. overcoming childlike fears); the search for novelty; nostalgia; the desire to celebrate crime or deviance; a more basic bloodlust; and, as noted above, 'dicing with death'. The latter might include visits to specific destinations or, more generally, when travel becomes travail as tourists place themselves in peril (often, to subsequently recount their 'survival'). Dann (1998) notes that these categorisations are largely descriptive and may be related more to specific attractions, destinations or activities than the motivations of individual tourists.

As evident from the above, there now exists a diverse and increasingly comprehensive literature on the phenomenon of dark tourism, the earlier works focusing on definitional and management issues being more recently complemented by attempts to develop conceptual frameworks for its study. However, a full understanding

of the phenomenon of dark tourism remains limited. In particular, the relationship between dark tourism and its wider socio-cultural context remains unclear, while a number of key practical issues and challenges require consideration. The present thesis integrates the study of cultural heritage into the wider realm of contemporary cultural geography. It plans to draw on the broader social and cultural issues arising from post-disaster space in Sichuan — more specifically, to explore the values and meanings associated with cultural heritage in post-disaster sites from a newly emerged 'dark tourism' perspective, providing valuable insight into the complex relationships of landscape, memory and identity. The next section will review some influential theoretical perspectives in this field.

To return to the origins and development of academic interest and research in dark tourism, the notion of dark attractions was first introduced by Rojek (1993), who considers the concept of 'Black Spots', or "the commercial development of grave sites and sites in which celebrities or large numbers of people have met with sudden and violent death" (1993, p.136) as tourist attractions. Urry (1990) discusses the nature of the Gestapo Museum in Berlin within the context of Foucault's 'gaze'. However, the term 'dark tourism' was first coined by Foley and Lennon (1996a, 1996b) in a special issue of the *International Journal of Heritage Studies*; subsequently, the publication of Lennon and Foley's (2004) *Dark Tourism: The Attraction of Death and Disaster* introduced the term to a wider audience, stimulating a significant degree of academic interest and debate. Their work was not the first to focus upon the relationship between tourism attractions and an interest in death, whether violent, untimely or otherwise. That is, sites associated with war and atrocity have long been considered within a broader

heritage tourism context, in particular from an interpretative perspective. For example, Uzzell (1989b) argues for the 'hot' interpretation of war and conflict sites (interpretation that is as intense or passionate as the site/event) as a means of conveying the 'true' significance or meaning of events to visitors, while Tunbridge and Ashworth's (1996) work on 'dissonant heritage' develops an important conceptual framework for the management of such sites. Indeed, the challenge of heritage dissonance is perhaps most starkly evident in the context of dark tourism, particularly that associated with the heritage of atrocity (Ashworth, 1996). Dissonant heritage is concerned with the way in which the past, when interpreted or represented as a tourist attraction, may be distorted, displaced or disinherited for particular groups or stakeholders. As Ashworth (1996) states, "atrocity heritage is both a highly marketable combination of education and enjoyment and a powerful instrument for the transference of political or social messages". The interpretative/dissonance theme remains central to a number of studies of dark sites. For example, Wight and Lennon (2007) examine selective interpretation within particular dark heritage sites in Lithuania, suggesting that 'moral complexities' ensure that important epochs remain unchallenged and uninterpreted in the nation's collective commemoration of the past. Similarly, Muzaini et al. (2007), assessing historical accuracy and interpretation at the Fort Siloso visitor attraction in Singapore, argue that dark tourism privileges the 'visual' and the 'experiential' over historical rigour. In this research I will follow these ideas, proposing both a top-down and bottom-up analysis of these contested and dissonant dark tourism landscapes in Sichuan, and expanding these debates into communist China.

Seaton (2002) proposes another perspective on dark tourism: it is essentially a behavioural phenomenon, defined by the tourist's motives as opposed to the particular characteristics of the attraction or destination. Dark is not an absolute form; there exists a 'continuum of intensity' dependent upon the motive(s) for visiting a site and the extent to which the interest in death is general or person-specific. Based on this behavioural perspective, Seaton suggests five categories of dark travel activities:

1. Travel to witness public enactments of death. Though public executions now occur in relatively few countries, Rojek's (1997) sensation tourism at disaster sites may fall under this heading.
2. Travel to see the sites of individual or mass deaths after they have occurred. This embraces an enormous variety of sites, from battlefields (e.g. Gallipoli); death camps (e.g. Auschwitz); and sites of genocide (e.g. Cambodia's 'killing fields') to places where celebrities died (such as the site of James Dean's death in a car crash); the sites of publicised murders (e.g. the California house where Nicole Simpson, the estranged wife of O.J. Simpson, was found stabbed to death in 1994); or the homes of infamous murderers.
3. Travel to memorials or internment sites, including graveyards, cenotaphs, crypts and war memorials. The reasons for such visits are diverse, from an interest in brass rubbings or epitaph collections (see Seaton, 2002) to pilgrimages to the resting places of the famous, the Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris being an oft-quoted example.
4. Travel to see evidence or symbolic representations of death at unconnected sites, such as museums containing weapons of death (e.g. the Royal Armouries in Leeds, UK) or attractions that reconstruct specific events or activities. As Dann (1998) observes, these 'morbid museums' may focus on selected themes and thus be 'less concerned with historical accuracy'.
5. Travel for re-enactments or simulation of death. As Seaton (1996) suggests, this originally took the form of plays or festivals with a religious theme, though over the last century, 'secular derivations' such as the re-enactment of famous battles by groups or societies have become increasingly popular.

Source: Sharpley & Stone (2009, p.16)

A wide variety of dark tourism consumption practices may seem to be defined by or related to the social world of the tourist; that is, dark tourism experiences may be

consumed in order to give some phenomenological meaning to tourists' own social existence (Sharpley & Stone, 2009). In other words, an emotional response becomes part of the dark tourism experience. This thesis utilises dark tourism maps and itineraries and further investigates tourists' embodied experiences as part of the semiotic relations within dark tourism.

Generally, two distinct bases for its analysis are evident in the emergent work on dark tourism. Seaton (2002) explores dark tourism as a behavioural phenomenon, pointing to the existence of the 'dark tourist'. For Seaton, dark is a form of tourism consumption. Significant attention is paid equally to dark sites or attractions, which are the objects of dark tourism consumption in general, and their definition, interpretation and management in particular. In both cases, little attempt is made to look at the relationship between the two, to exploring differing approaches to and meanings of dark tourism's production and consumption. More specifically, dark tourism, in its numerous forms, variations and guises, is evidently a function of both production and consumption (Miles, 2002). In this thesis, there is a need to consider both consumption and production, and the relationship between the two, to explore different dimensions of dark tourism.

3.4 Heritage and Tourism Studies in China

Given the complexity and diversity of heritage and tourism studies illustrated above, this section examines the tourism literature with a regional geographic focus on China. I will first briefly review the country's redefinition of cultural heritage and explain tourism studies in China. I argue that the study of the social implications of dark

tourism landscapes remain largely underrepresented. I believe that my work contributes towards this specific area.

3.4.1 Redefinition of Cultural Heritage

When Chinese socialism was established in 1949, its leaders criticised traditional Chinese culture for being unscientific, feudal, anti-modern and anti-socialist (Sofield & Li, 1998). Any social science research related to cultural heritage was considered to be bourgeois and connected with capitalism and the West, and any endorsement of cultural heritage was considered an impediment to new development. Thus, cultural heritage from previous dynasties, not to mention cultural preservation, was ignored.

The Cultural Revolution in China from 1966 to 1976 was the movement that destroyed most of its traditional culture. The movement was waged in the name of getting rid of 'the old fours' – old thoughts, old customs, old habits and old culture. During the Cultural Revolution, most Chinese traditional culture was replaced by a 'new socialist culture' by Mao's Red Guards (Sofield & Li, 1998, p.364). A vast amount of highly valuable cultural heritage was destroyed, including both tangible and intangible objects. After the Economic Reform in 1978, development of tourism related to cultural heritage became a symbol of modernism. The preservation of cultural heritage became a way for the Chinese government to make a statement of democracy and diversity to the world. Cities and towns are aware of the concept of restoration and the rehabilitation of tangible heritage. However, there are disparate interpretations of 'historic preservation' that reveal a gap in understanding between the locals and the central government. The central government treats the preservation and conservation of traditional culture as

an immediate task because of the high cultural capital it generates and its enhancement of national unity and international identity (Sofield & Li, 1998). On the other hand, locals have seen tourism development as a money-making machine that brings economic enhancement to their community. For both central and local governments, the attraction of international tourists is the first priority for cultural re-establishment. After being disconnected from the rest of the world for nearly 30 years, China re-opened itself beginning with Deng Xiaoping's 'Open Door' policies of 1978. The desire for modernity and the influence of the West has challenged traditional culture in Chinese society and has accelerated the destruction of historic cities. If they are to survive, historic cities with high cultural value must become economic resources for the domestic and international tourism industry under the pressure of a globalising atmosphere.

In this context, the sudden earthquake that hit Sichuan province in 2008 forced its cultural heritage into challenging times. The earthquake provided a catalyst, drawing the Chinese government's attention and prompting a rapid response to cultural heritage re-construction. The urgent need for the economy to recover took precedence over the loss of lives and homes. As such, the re-making of dark sites for tourism became a common interest of affairs. This thesis will analyse these issues from a top-down and bottom-up perspective. The next section will look at tourism studies in China.

3.4.2 Tourism Studies in China

The tourism industry has been vigorously growing in China since the 1980s. Research on the development of China's tourism industry spans a wide variety of topics and

themes and has been pursued by both Western and Chinese scholars, in English as well as Chinese.

A wide range of topics are covered in the research field of China's tourism industry, including development (Lea, 1988; Oudiette, 1990; Xu, 1999); tourism and modernity (Oakes, 1998, 2000, 2005; Wang, 2000); authenticity (Oakes, 1997, 2006); gender and ethnicity (Oakes ,1999); and regional identity (Oakes, 2000). Gaubatz (1996) explores the landscape and socio-political transformation of China's frontier region. The social and cultural implications of landscape changes in the tourism development setting, however, are missing in the literature encompassing tourism development in China.

The majority of books and essays/papers in Chinese provide an overview of China's tourism development (Bao et al., 2003; Deng et al., 1994; He, 1999; Sun, 1989; Wei et al., 2003; Yang & Shen, 1996; Zhang et al., 2000). The book '*Geography of Tourism'* (Bao & Chu, 1999, 2002) marks the sophistication of the discipline within China. A more recent trend is the study and practice of tourism planning in China (Bao et al., 2003; Bao, Zhong, & Liu, 2003; Wu, 2002; Xu, 2003a, 2003b). While the trend of research exchange continues to grow, Western research methodology is being introduced to tourism studies in China. A few examples of existing research projects demonstrating this trend include "The application of cultural anthropology in tourism planning" (Wu, 2002, p.39-46); "The new regionalism" (Miao, 2005, p.593-9); and "The cultural turn in economic geography" (Miao & Wang, 2003, p.577-81). In addition, '*Tourism Sociology'* (Zhang & Xiao, 2000, p.53-8) has called for more research efforts.

Theoretical research on China's tourism in the Chinese language has been advancing in recent years in humanities and social science disciplines, including human geography. An inspection of literature concerning cultural heritage tourism in China revealed that studies focus largely on seven aspects (Yang & Yu, 2004), including: (1) experiences from other countries; (2) the value of cultural heritage sites; (3) conflict between urban development and cultural heritage conservation; (4) protection and utilisation of cultural heritage sites; (5) tourism development at cultural heritage sites; (6) the management of cultural heritage sites; and (7) technology and cultural heritage sites. Studies of World Heritage Sites have been limited to the narrative of the designation application process, selection criteria, and description of specific World Heritage Sites (e.g. Liu & Yang, 1999; Lu, 1994; Tao, 2001).

The vast majority of work, however, focuses on the practical, that is, tourism development and relevant policies in China. Among the existing literature, issues including ecotourism, sustainable development, environmentalism, and planning, are gaining growing scholarly attention. For example, the analysis of the relationship between tourism and culture (Liang, 2005, p.61-2); the differentiation between cultural tourism and tourism culture (Xu, 2005, p.67-72); tourism culture studies (Xie & Hua, 1999, 2002; Xu, 2003; Xu, 2005); and tourism aesthetics (Wang , 2000, 2002), represent improvement in the cultural studies of tourism in China. Based on research essays in the previous decade on leisure and recreation in China, research on tourist behaviour has been significantly improved, whereas there have been calls to strengthen effective development of tourism destinations and environmental protection (Zhou & Dong,

2002, p.5-10). Using dark tourism perspectives, this thesis will apply these issues to post-disaster sites, exploring the new characteristics and phenomena of these ideas.

Conclusion

This chapter reviews the relevant literature on topics related to this study, including heritage studies, heritage in tourism studies, dark tourism literature, and related research carried out in China. It sets up a conceptual framework for the research. My understanding of heritage is shaped through three conceptual lenses. First of all, I will use a geographical approach to analyse heritage, based on this understanding, the following empirical Chapter 5 will explore post-disaster heritage landscapes, particularly tracing the transformation of cultural sites in Sichuan affected by the 2008 Sichuan earthquake.

Secondly, my understanding of heritage is inspired by authorised heritage discourse; empirical Chapter 6 will exam how heritage and identity were contested after the earthquake. The key issue here is the tension between a top-down approach, specifically the authorised heritage discourse as disseminated by the Chinese Communist Party which will be discussed in Chapter 6, and more spontaneous, bottom-up forms of place-making which will be discussed in Chapter 7.

Thirdly, I argue that heritage is a process of engaging with memory and remembering performances; from a particularly geographical standpoint, heritage is engaged with a sense of place. Chapter 7 will empirically explore such issues in post-disaster sites, considering different rituals and remembering performances are enacted by different groups, at different scales, and with different motivations. The last

empirical chapter is particularly interested in exploring the experience of tourism and

heritage sites in post-disaster Sichuan, with a particular focus on the practice of tourism

in the Chinese context.

Chapter 4: Researching Heritage, Identity and Sense of Place in Sichuan Province after the 12 May Earthquake

In this chapter, I shall explain the formation and evolution of my research methodology. The purpose of this thesis is to provide a means of understanding the social, political and economic changes in Sichuan during the earthquake transition period, and to establish how official and popular understandings have each been articulated and negotiated in the changing cultural landscape of commemoration and tourism. The research explores the impact of the earthquake on cultural heritage, popular memory, memorialisation and tourism in Sichuan, and the aim is to investigate the meanings, representations and emotions of the culture of commemoration and tourism rather than the brute impact of the earthquake. As such, the subject matter requires both richness and quality in sources and data, and not merely quantitative evidence. This research project is therefore primarily a qualitative study in character, supported by quantitative information.

4.1 Methodological Framework: A Multi-method Qualitative Approach

Each research method has its own strengths and weaknesses, and this investigation is based on a form of mixed multi-method research. Mixed-method research is both a methodology and a method: it involves collecting, analysing, and mixing qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study or a series of studies (Cresswell & Clark, 2007). Researchers can use multiple methods and different sources to try to maximise

their understanding of a research question: mixing methods helps us to think creatively, or 'outside the box', to theorise beyond the micro-macro divide, and to enhance and extend the logic of qualitative explanation (Mason, 2006).

Using mixed research methods is a useful approach for gaining insight into the cultural processes of landscape construction and the human experiences that accompany them. In this research, a multi-method qualitative approach is used to study post-disaster landscapes, visual images and documents, and the views of individuals obtained by means of qualitative interviews. This research is timely, but potentially a very sensitive subject, too. It is recognised that social research is a human learning process, and it draws on insights from ethnography. Bishop (1999, p.13) claims that ethnographic enquiry, based in a cultural context, represents a phenomenological and empirical approach to research. It is "holistic and naturalistic," and ethnographers seek to document the cosmology of a culture. Bishop proposes that a multiple-method approach, with interviews, direct observation and analysis of artefacts, can achieve the kind of 'thick description' advocated by Geertz (1973).

As Geertz (1973) maintains, human beings are suspended in cultural webs of significance that they have spun themselves, and therefore the analysis of culture is an interpretive process in search of meaning. This process, in Geertz's view, is facilitated by thick description, and social events, behaviours, institutions or processes can be thickly described within a specific context. Geertz also emphasises that anthropological writings are interpretations of cultural processes rather than exact understandings of what they mean, and that we are in fact "explicating explications" (1973, p. 9). In this

research, all the texts, such as interview records and photographs, have been interpreted in this context.

The specific methods involved in this study are resident surveys, personal interviews, visual methods, participant observation and field observation. The materials were collected by visiting relevant work units, institutions and resorts in Sichuan post-disaster sites in the course of several fieldwork visits. A pilot study was conducted in April 2009, followed by four months of fieldwork from January to April 2010. In the pilot study, site observations and a questionnaire survey were conducted, in order to collect first-hand data and to test methods. At the time, the terms dark tourism and disaster heritage were unheard of or unfamiliar to many people, and for this reason the survey was not as successful as it could have been, as dark tourism was in its 'budding' stage, with limited finished routes and infrastructure. A number of necessary changes were then made, based on the results of the pilot study. At the same time, I drew upon Valentine's (2005) 'snowballing' method, which uses one contact to help recruit another, who in turn recruits someone else. I used personal contacts in this way, to enlarge my circle of contacts in Sichuan. References, both formal and informal, led to chain connections on some occasions, widening the scope of my research. During the fieldwork in 2010, I dedicated myself to conducting in-depth interviews with different stakeholders, and at the same time I made contact with staff working for Save the Children in Sichuan, as well as tourism operators providing disaster tours, which enabled me to undertake participant observation and other research work. These methods are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

4.2 In-depth Interviews

Interviews are regarded as one of the most basic tools of the qualitative method. In-depth interviews provide an alternative means for exploring issues in more depth than is generally possible through the use of questionnaires. Valentine (2005) discusses the merits of conversational interviews as a means of data collection. The advantage of using conversational interviews for the purposes of this research is that they are sensitive and people-oriented, allowing interviewees to construct their own accounts of their experiences by describing and explaining their lives in their own words. The conversations offered the chance for myself and the interviewee to have a far more wide-ranging discussion. As discussed by Valentine (2005, p.11):

> In the course of the interview, researchers have the chance to go back over the same ground, asking the same questions in different ways in order to explore issues thoroughly; and interviewees can explain the complexities and contradictions of their experiences and can describe then mundane details of their everyday lives (Bryman, 1998). One of the additional strengths of this approach is that it allows respondents to raise issues that the interviewer may not have anticipated (Silverman, 1993). The material generated in this way is rich, detailed and multi-layered (Burgess, 1984), producing 'a deeper picture' (Silverman, 1993, p.15). It is analysed using a textual approach, relying on words and meanings, rather than statistics.

During the fieldwork in 2010, I conducted in-depth interviews with a variety of different stakeholders: residents, local communities, tourists, tourism operators, planners and officials (both local and national). I interviewed a total of 206 respondents. Out of these, 45 were local residents, 53 tourists, and 25 visitors with deeper personal involvement in the memorial sites, while 28 were gift shop or stall owners, and 34 managerial staff, including museum and governmental administrative leaders. The

remaining 21 worked in the service industry in tourism-related fields, including 11 tourist guides and 10 museum commentators, shop assistants, peddlers and taxi drivers. The respondents included both males and females, ranging in age from 20 to 60. Their occupations varied from college student to unemployed worker, from migrant worker to retired government official. Conversations covered their life stories and the activities they engaged in, their understanding of the earthquake's impact, their memories and interpretation of landscape changes, and their perception of the transformation brought about by the earthquake.

I conducted interviews through the use of a two-step data collection method, using questionnaires to select samples, and then arranging in-depth interviews with selected interviewees. A semi-structured interview format was developed to ensure that a consistent range of questions was covered: the use of open-ended questions allowed flexibility of response, and each interview conversation lasted between fifteen minutes and over an hour. Digital recordings of the interviews were transcribed for data analysis and were coded based on different categories and sub-groups for later analysis. It should be noted that all the first-hand materials were in Chinese, given that few respondents were conversant in English. All the interviews were then transcribed and the transcripts were translated into English by the author.

The data collected was then evaluated and presented. Many texts present comprehensive (sometimes overly prescriptive) lists of interview procedures (Fink & Kosecoff, 1985; Foddy, 1993), and I shall not repeat their contents: my intention is simply to highlight key issues that affect interview materials. For example, here is an

extract from an interview with Fan Tuoyu, vice-director at Dujiangyan City Cultural

Relics Bureau, Sichuan Province, an interview that is discussed in Chapter 6.

> After I went in to the temple I was really shocked. It was extremely shocking, fortunately, the extent of the damage was not as bad as we heard it was at the time when it happened, when we heard that the whole temple had basically collapsed. In fact, we learned through statistics later that the [collapsed] area was only about ten per cent. But why did it shock people so much? Because the most important section of the Two Kings Temple, which had the double-three character rhyme, had collapsed. Moreover, the ruins, the fragments and all the cultural relics were all over the floor, so it really shocked people. Although I wasn't born here, I came here in 1966 with my father and I grew up here. I grew up with the temple for 40 years. It kept me company for 40 years. It had already formed a deep impression on my memory and suddenly it was not there, so it really shocked people. It was a terrible feeling.

> (Fan, interview, 2010)

His words not only demonstrate his shock at the earthquake, but they also imply

that the historical environment had already formed a deep impression on his memory.

Part of his habitual way of looking, his way of living, was suddenly not there, and he felt

a sense of loss. The discourse of the above interview entry was interpreted as follows:

First of all, the word "shocked" occurs frequently, a clear indication of the

emotional reaction experienced and suffered as a result of the earthquake. During my

fieldwork, on multiple occasions the word "shocked" was repeatedly used by the

respondents to express the emotional reaction that occurred when they revisited their

experience during the interview.

And then the interviewee goes on, "although I wasn't born here, I came here in

1966 with my father and I grew up here. I grew up with the temple for 40 years." As one

can see, a connection is being drawn here to illustrate his memory of the past and the

nostalgia felt as he explains his life experience, and one can really feel the meaning it holds for him and the attachment he has to his memories.

In this context, in the phrase "It kept me company for 40 years" shows the temple itself becoming symbolic of an anthropomorphic entity. While the temple remains a non-living object, it still manages to exude the very human characteristic of being able to keep him company, much like a life partner. This understanding proves to be a reference point as regards his sense of place and habitual way of life.

4.3 Visual Methodology

In the course of this research, besides conducting interviews, I also took pictures, observed the landscapes, and searched for relevant visual records, and it is thus important to also discuss visual methodology. Photographic analysis and photo-documentation are techniques which have been used successfully by researchers from a number of social science disciplines, such as anthropology, psychology and geography (particularly cultural geography), in order to better understand the importance of place to people. I used photography as a visual methodology in three distinctive ways. First of all, photography is used as part of my methodological observation strategy to capture the 'texture' of places. Secondly, I critically analyse the iconography of the disaster and post-disaster heritage, and thirdly, I explore different people's visualisation of post-disaster heritage, focusing especially on the 'tourist gaze'. These three aspects are illustrated by the following examples.

First of all, I employed a visual methodology including ethnographically-inspired observation and photography to examine the process of production of post-disaster landscapes in Sichuan. I produced a photographic record of the Sichuan post-disaster site which to date consists of over 1000 digital photographs and which constitutes a set of ethnographic field notes in addition to my written notes and audio recordings. The photographs are dated and keyword-coded for information such as location, specific material items in the landscape, personal identification and activities, all of which are used in the data analysis. Furthermore, photographs form a highly useful documentary, a "visual notebook" that provides data on the sites themselves and the activities that take place within them, while they may also be used as a form of narrative in and of themselves (Edwards, 1999). The importance and usefulness of 'making photo essays' as a tool for producing ethnographic knowledge has been discussed by several scholars (e.g. Pink, 2001, Larsen, 2003). My research, for instance, Chapter 5 Transformation of Cultural Sites in Sichuan, uses photographs as a means of representing changes in Sichuan's cultural heritage before and after the disaster, and photos and pictures are used widely as a narrative device in that section. A very important reason for using photographs as documentation for mapping the changes in Sichuan's cultural heritage is that photographs are particularly good at capturing the 'texture' of places, as well as illustrating changes over time and showing us things that are hard to describe in writing in any form. Edensor's (2005a) study of industrial ruins is a good example of this: he records the ruins themselves before they are demolished or renovated or have disintegrated entirely, noting that photographs "can reveal the stages and temporalities

of decay" (Edensor, 2005). In this research, post-disaster sites play a similar role to Edensor's "industrial ruins".

Secondly, visual studies have largely focused on the analysis of visual representation and visual cultures. Hall's text representation uses "a wide range of examples from different cultural media and discourses, mainly concentrating on visual language" (1997, p.9). He considers issues related to the negotiation of visual meaning, emphasising the contested nature of meaning and "the practices of representation" (1997: 9-10). The relationship between the construction of geographical knowledge and the analysis of visual representations of place is critically discussed by Rose (1996) and Crang (1997), both of whom highlight the contribution made by geographers to the analysis of ways of visualising "landscape, spaces and places" (Rose, 1996, p.281).

In this research, visual data includes photographs (taken from newspapers, TV and the Internet), postcards and brochures. CDs and DVDs, either published or internally circulated, make up the audio-video data. For example, in Chapter 2 Background to the Research, I discuss the front pages of widely-read newspapers printed on 13 May 2008 in China: the visual images used to illustrate newspapers constitute important vehicles for delivering timely information, and in this case they played a significant role in informing Chinese public opinion. From the pictures shown in Figure 2.7, which sums up the front pages of widely-distributed newspapers in China on 13 May 2008, it is clear that the Sichuan earthquake shocked the nation and stunned the whole world. The issue concerning how to read these texts critically will be discussed in the following documentation section.

The focus in cultural studies, however, is not only on interpreting images: photographs are indeed "images (representations), but also material objects with certain specific characteristics" (Larsen 2004, p.10). Recently, greater attention has been paid to the visual and its association with social life in contemporary societies. Lister and Wells analyse photographs "without separating them from social processes" (2000, p.64), while Rose (2001; 2007) introduces five general approaches related to visual culture in order to explore the social effects of images in her influential book on visual methodologies. Through an examination of debates on visual culture, she places emphasis on the importance of the emergence of "social difference", the "effects of the social context of viewing and the visualities spectators bring to their viewing" in the production and reproduction of vision (Rose 2007, p.12).

In this research, photography is associated with the production and reproduction of the tourist gaze, and with visual consumption in tourism (Sandle, 2003, p.191). A key factor as regards photography in this research is therefore the exploration of the ways in which particular social actors, such as 'tourists' and 'local residents', as well as 'researchers,' use visual images as objects, to create and inscribe social values and meanings in the production of geographical knowledge in tourism. During my fieldwork in 2010, as a participant observer, I first of all took photographs to document visitors' activities while they were taking photographs of their travelling companions and objects of interest at the sites, or were engaging with the various features of commemorative landscapes and museums. In addition, the discussion of visual and material culture as addressed in this research includes photographs taken and

souvenirs bought by tourists, photographs and mementos included in the commemorative folk displays at the sites, and the visual and material culture of memorial museums and formal commemorative landscapes. Photographs taken by participants were also considered as subjects for analysis, with particular focus on how they link with their memories and nostalgia within the post-disaster space.

Furthermore, through the processes of production and consumption, photography has become an important tool in the production of embodied practices. Once again, Edensor's (2005) study of industrial ruins is informative. He suggests that photographs convey some of the experiential qualities peculiar to ruins: "Photographs are never merely visual but in fact conjure up synaesthesia and kinaesthetic efforts, for the visual provokes other sensory responses. The textures and tactilities, smells, atmospheres and sounds of ruined spaces, together with the signs and objects they accommodate, can be empathetically conjured up by visual material" (Edensor, 2005, p.55). In this research, photographs were also used as the subject of conversations, informal interviews and post-visit communication with participants. All in all, this research was particularly concerned with critical ways of working with visual materials. Rose (2007, p.12) suggests there are three major points to consider in adopting a critical approach to visual culture: 1) "take image seriously"; 2) "think about the social conditions and effects of visual objects"; and 3) "consider your own ways of looking at images".

4.4 Participant Observation

As well as field observation, this research also involved participant observation. "Participant observation is one type of data collection method typically done in the qualitative research paradigm. It is a widely used methodology in many disciplines. Its aim is to gain a close and intimate familiarity with a given group of individuals and their practices through an intensive involvement with people in their cultural environment, usually over an extended period of time" (Bennett, 2002, p.193). The emphasis of participatory research is on generating knowledge from the perspective of those being researched, not from the perspective of the researcher. Thus, while an outsider facilitates the process, the information is generated and analysed by the community itself. Such research methods have been widely adopted by international agencies and researchers, but there is also some debate about the politics and nature of such forms of participation.

During my fieldwork, I made contact with the staff of Save the Children in Sichuan, and I observed and took part in several group sessions within their Sichuan Emergency Programme. Furthermore, I spent numerous days on different guided Sichuan disaster tourism group tours, spending time both experiencing the sites and conversing with tourists. I also became a volunteer for the psychological treatment team at Save the Children, with a view to observing and establishing a network with my fellow participants for both on-site and future communication.

Pink (2001) notes the usefulness of keeping a reflexive diary while carrying out ethnographic research. Keeping such a diary enables the researcher to be aware of "the development of one's practices and the intentions and ideas" (Pink 2001, p.57). I kept a research diary during the fieldwork and often went back to it throughout the data analysis process. In the empirical chapters, diary entries are frequently used: in Chapter 8, for example, to illustrate a visit to Jina Qiang ethnic village, one diary entry reads as follows:

> Following the dark tourism map, today I visited Maoershi Qiang ethnic village. The minibus I took from Beichuan to Mianyang passed by this village and dropped me at the side of the road. When I walked to the village, I expected to see ruins like I saw in other places in Sichuan, but when I was there all the collapsed buildings had already been rebuilt. I did not find a tourist information centre (many places were under construction when I visited there), so I followed the tourist signs and walked around the village. A local villager told me that all the houses had been rebuilt in their original locations and the 69 families had been moved back into a complete new Qiang village. Meanwhile, a new name has been created for the village by the local government: Jina Qiang Ethnic Community (conversation with resident in Jina Qiang Ethnic Community on 13/03/2010). Jina is the name of the most beautiful goddess in Qiang folklore.

Reading the diary enables vivid recall of the area, practices, feelings and information.

4.5 Documentation

This research is based on a mixture of primary and secondary sources, with secondary sources supported by historical and administrative documents. Consequently, a rich body of research materials has been gathered, including written, visual, audio-video and electronic data. Written data includes books, newspaper reports, journal/magazine articles, introductions and guides to tourist sites. Some of the written data takes the form of formal publications, while others are internally-circulated documents,

government reports or non-copyright unpublished materials. The contents of the above-mentioned data include newspaper reports, books, journal articles and essays on, or accounts of, the general situation (the earthquake and statistical data) of a place, or the development of dark tourism sites such as museums/memorials from establishment to growth, opening, renovation, and relocation. Data also includes economic development (tourism) strategies on different levels, the construction of patriotic educational bases, ideological campaigns and propaganda, as well as local community development activities, rituals, and programmes of moral rectification. Out of these, the most useful data were key institutional reports, such as "The 5.12 Earthquake Disaster Reconstruction Planning" document compiled by the State Disaster Reconstruction Planning Office (DRPO), and disaster statistical data from local disaster management administration offices and from the report "Tourism Planning after the Sichuan Earthquake", compiled by the Sichuan Tourism Administration Office. In addition to these, UNESCO documents and Sichuan historical documents were also examined.

However, even with all these qualitative sources there remains a serious issue, which might be called 'representativeness' (Flowerdew & Martin 2005). It is well known that official documents often put a distinctive slant on the items they cover and how they deal with them. Similarly, diaries are personal products that may be written simply to record events, or else they may contain an element of self-justification or 'setting the record straight'. Photographs and film may have been staged for effect or scenes selected because of their interest or picturesque quality. The question to be

asked is always why a document or photograph was produced in a particular way at that time by that person (Flowerdew & Martin 2005). In other words, who produced the documentation? What are their interests? What does close reading of the language tell us? Careful interpretation is every bit as necessary with qualitative sources as it is with statistical data, and this research is always careful to pay attention to these issues, and to read the data closely.

4.6 Ethical Issues and Positionality

At the end of these discussions on methodology, it is important to highlight ethical issues and positionality. This research is timely, but it deals with what is potentially a very sensitive subject, and so it is necessary to address some of the ethical implications of the research. First of all, at the beginning of each survey, participants were informed of the nature of the research, and of ethical considerations and their rights in the research process. The interviews were only conducted when participants willingly gave their consent. Secondly, I also adopted indirect research: for example, I made contact with staff working for Save the Children in Sichuan, whose emergency programme provided psychosomatic trauma treatment for children in the Sichuan disaster area. At the start of my fieldwork, I spoke to a number of psychological consultation teachers who worked for this organisation, and subsequently kept them informed in detail on the progress of my research. I also provided them with my survey questions, and allowed them to carry out the surveys or interviews in the course of their personal psychological treatment of any of the children's parents who agreed to participate. After this, I collected the results from the psychological consultation teachers, and organised

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personal interviews with them at the end of my fieldwork. Meanwhile, I attended, observed and recorded some monthly local residents' meetings in Sichuan which were organised by Save the Children, and got to know my fellow residents well. As mentioned above, I also spent several days on different Sichuan disaster tourism guided group tours. I used these indirect methods to make informal contact with residents and tourists, and these contacts helped to limit the ethical implications of my research and enabled me to collect more valuable data.

In terms of positionality, Linda McDowell (1992, p.409) states that "we must recognize and take account of our own position, as well as that of our research participants, and write this into our research practice". Positionality is linked to the complex issue of how knowledge is produced and situated by researchers in their writing (Berg & Mansvelt 2000). There is no single universal knowledge in the world, however, and seems impossible for qualitative researchers to write and interpret data objectively and locate themselves objectively within their research, insofar as language is at least in part constituted by the positioned author. All knowledge produced is always situated in the context of the research and the researcher's own political ideas and intentions. During my fieldwork and writing process, I experienced for myself the anxieties and ambivalences that surround reflexivity, positionality and situated knowledge in this field.

On the one hand, being Chinese, I feel that my contribution as an academic is to provide a voice that bridges China with the rest of the world. However, as an overseas Chinese student studying in London, I found myself almost objectifying my own culture

as I gained knowledge and experience of the English-speaking world. Throughout the process of my research, my 'insider' position as Chinese might well have been narrowed through the acquisition of perspectives and insights on literatures produced by non-Chinese scholars. I have acquired a great deal of knowledge about 'China' written in English during my PhD research, and this experience seems to have led to a changeability or oscillation in my work which has perhaps limited my research perspectives and representations as academic practices. In addition, studying my own culture from outside China has made me realise that there are difficulties in elucidating the 'ordinariness' of culture in China, while I was at the same time aware that I had advantages in acquiring knowledge of it. This awareness of the limitations of my 'insider' position was exposed on several occasions, when I discussed research with Western scholars. For example, in Chapter 7, popular memory as embodied by ritual performances such as burning paper money or rice worship for commemoration victims, which are familiar to most Chinese people, is a new subject for Western scholars. In this context, I found that being Chinese and researching China is in fact quite difficult.

On the other hand, when I framed my arguments from a Chinese perspective, I suddenly discovered my own vulnerability. During my fieldwork, being Chinese but not Sichuanese, I experienced the clear division between researcher and researched. Madge (1993, p.296) is typical in her argument that when situating knowledge it is crucial to consider "the role of the (multiple) 'self', showing how a researcher's positionality (in terms of race, nationality, age, gender, social and economic status, sexuality) may

influence the 'data' collected and thus the information that becomes coded as 'knowledge'". One of the reasons I failed in the questionnaire survey during the pilot study was that I potentially assumed or expected respondents' answers before I visited the site myself. Meanwhile, much as Radcliffe (1994, p.31) argues that Western feminist geographers need "to become self-conscious about the specificity of their own positions", the same applies in Asia, too. I could sense my differences from those I interviewed. There were strong contrasts, for example, between middle-aged political leaders compared to young women of my age: the former were very strict and reserved, and the latter more flexible and open.

Based on these understandings, this research draws insights from ethnography, and emphasises research as a 'lived experience'. As Hoggart, Lees and Davies (2002) note, research processes do not merely describe social life but construct a particular 'reality'. They suggest that "an important element in making the method of ethnography less mysterious and more accessible to both practitioners and outsiders is a more open and explicit discussion of how we, as ethnographers, come to know what we know" (Johnson, 1990, p.10). During the process of doctoral research, especially by conducting fieldwork, my 'lived experience' gave me a much richer perspective on my research and allowed me to gather real-life information. This encounter with the post-disaster environment has had a major effect on my work and has also brought benefits to my life as a person.

Chapter 5: Transformation of Cultural Sites in Sichuan: from Cultural Landscape through Disasterscape to Touristscape

Introduction

Referring back to the conceptual framework outlined in Chapter 3, in which the temporal and spatial perspective of heritage study, and in particular a concern with the post-disaster context, time, such as before during and after a disaster, acts as an important anchor. Yalouri emphasises that "the study of monument is then of necessity also a study of time and of memory... the Acropolis (is) a 'vehicle of agency' which informs the way Greeks understand their national heritage and identity" (Yalouri 2001, p.17). Chapter 5 focuses on remapping Sichuan, arguing that cultural sites have been transformed from 'cultural landscape' through 'disasterscape' to 'touristscape'.

Overall this chapter has four sections, the first of which profiles the cultural heritage sites and objects of Sichuan, while in the second I investigate the damage caused by and the principal effects of the earthquake on these cultural heritage sites and objects. In the third section, Foote's (2003) terminology, which describes tragic and violent landscape production in terms of 'sanctification', 'designation', 'rectification' and 'obliteration', is used to categorise the transformation of cultural sites and objects in Sichuan, with an emphasis on the transformation from cultural landscapes through disasterscape to touristscape. The last section moves on to analyse a new category of heritagescape within the post-disaster context. The disaster is viewed as an opportunity, a chance to create new meanings for cultural heritage, either by establishing disaster-oriented physical sites, or by remaking the meaning of existing sites. Two case studies,

the conversion into a tourist theme park of the 12 May earthquake ruins, and the remaking of the meaning of Jina Qiang ethnic village, will serve to illustrate these issues in greater depth.

5.1 Cultural Heritage Sites and Objects in Sichuan

Sichuan takes pride in its natural landscapes and its many places of historical and cultural interest. The ancient ruins of Sanxingdui (Guanghan), for example, bear witness to the fact that the upper reaches of the Yangtze river form the very cradle of Chinese civilisation, while the valley of Jiuzhaigou, a natural World Heritage Site, is known as 'Fairyland' and widely viewed as an earthly paradise. There are, in addition, four more natural and cultural World Heritage Sites in Sichuan, as well as seven national-level historical and cultural cities – Chengdu, Zigong, Leshan, Yibin, Luzhou, Langzhong and Dujiangyan. There are 62 historical sites covered by the state protection programme, 10 national scenic resorts, 11 national forest parks, 15 natural reserves and 67 provincial-level scenic resorts. Compared with other provinces in China, Sichuan boasts the largest number of both World Heritage Sites and national scenic resorts (China National Tourism Administration, 2012).

This research focuses mainly on cultural heritage sites. According to a report on the preservation of cultural heritage prepared by the Sichuan Provincial Bureau of Relic Management in 2012, there are nearly 30,000 'immovable' cultural relics in Sichuan. This total includes 128 national-level cultural heritage sites (the fifth-highest total in the country), 578 provincial-level sites (the sixth-highest total), and 3,035 county-level

sites. In addition, there are 96 cultural heritage museums and memorial halls, containing collections totalling 96 million pieces, of which nearly 200,000 are categorised as 'most precious heritage'.

The number of world heritage sites in Sichuan is the highest in the country. Five sites have been included in world heritage lists (Sichuan Tourism Administration, 2012):

- Natural and cultural heritage site — Jiuzhaigou Valley National Park, approved in 1992;

- Huanglong National Park, approved in 1992;

- Giant Panda Sanctuary, approved in 2006;

- Natural and cultural heritage site — Emei and Leshan Mountains, approved in 1996;

- Qingcheng Mountain and Dujiangyan Irrigation System, approved in 2000.

A further three sites have been nominated for the List of Potential Cultural World Heritage Sites (Sichuan Tourism Administration, 2012), for sites with great potential to contribute to world heritage:

- Tibetan and Qiang Ancient Towers and Villages;

- Ruins of the ancient Shu culture, including the Ruins of Jinsha, the Joint Boat Coffin of the Ancient Shu (city of Chengdu), and the Ruins of Sanxingdui (Guanghan city);

- Brewing Heritage Sites, including the Shuijingfang site (city of Chengdu), the Luzhoudaqu Old Cellar sites (city of Luzhou), and the Jiannanchun Old Distillery sites (city of Mianzhu).

Sichuan is also a multi-ethnic area with a diversity of ethnic cultures. Among these ethnic groups, the Qiang are typical. The present Qiang population is around 30.08 million people, accounting for 92.26 per cent of the country's total Qiang population

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and mainly distributed in Mao, Li, Wenchuan and Beichuan counties, along the upper reaches of the Minjiang river. The Qiang culture is one of the oldest in China, and it has been described as a 'living fossil' of ancient Chinese civilisation. Qiang homes in western Sichuan bear testament to more than 2,000 years of history, and the ancient architectural culture they represent is a cultural heritage which is not only rare in China itself, but also precious on a global level.

5.2 Status of Damage to Cultural Heritage Sites/Objects in Sichuan

The massive earthquake which hit Sichuan on 12 May 2008 shocked the world and caused extensive damage to cultural heritage sites/objects in the area. A total of three cultural World Heritage Sites, 145 key state-level cultural heritage sites and 285 provincial-level cultural heritage sites were damaged by the earthquake, as well as more than 1,000 city or county-level cultural heritage sites. The earthquake also affected 152 museums and cultural relic sites and more than 4,100 cultural relics, including 420 precious cultural relics (State Administration of Cultural Heritage, 2008). In Sichuan province itself, the epicentre of the earthquake, the terrible event destroyed 1,071 sites, including a cultural World Heritage Site. The infrastructure and buildings of 65 museums, heritage management bodies and archaeological institutions were severely damaged, and 3,167 pieces in museum collections, out of which 220 were listed as national treasures, were broken or completely lost. Destruction of such magnitude is rarely seen.

According to the first annual report on the rescue and preservation of cultural heritage in the wake of the Sichuan earthquake (Sichuan Provincial Bureau of Relic Management, 2009), the disaster caused damage to many historic buildings and heritage sites. Sichuan's immovable cultural heritage suffered major losses. The World Heritage Sites of Qingcheng Mountain and the Dujiangyan Irrigation System, along with the potential World Heritage Sites of the Tibetan and Qiang Ancient Towers and Villages, were severely damaged, and potential World Heritage Sites of Jiannanchun Old Distillery sites and the Ruins of Jinsha also suffered a certain degree of damage. There was significant damage to 83 historical monuments and cultural relics under state protection, accounting for 65 per cent of the province's 128 sites; 174 monuments and cultural relics under provincial protection, accounting for 30 per cent of its 578 sites; and 814 monuments and cultural relics under city and prefectural protection, namely 27 per cent of its 3,035 sites (Sichuan Provincial Bureau of Relic Management, 2009).

An interview with Xiaonan Zhu, Vice-Director of the Cultural Relics Bureau of Sichuan Province, provides detailed statistics on the damage affecting the province of Sichuan (Zhu, interview, 2010). The majority of the damage was suffered by wooden buildings, of which 186 national and provincial level cultural relic protection units were affected. Among these, it is said that the Erwang-miao and Fulongguan shrines in Dujiangyan were the worst affected. As for masonry, 45 building relics incurred damage, particularly the Bi tower in Yanting prefecture and the Wenxing tower in An county. Ethnic minority buildings also suffered damage, affecting 12 cultural relic protection units. Traditional masonry-construction living residences, particularly Qiangdiao

belvedere towers, were also severely damaged. In the following section, a series of images will illustrate this damage in greater detail.

Not only did the earthquake affect immovable relics, but damage was also inflicted on museum collections of cultural relics, in a total of 3,167 cases. Since there were no museums in the districts of Beichuan, Qingchuan and Wenchuan, where the force of the earthquake was strongest, there was no large-scale damage. However, the Cultural Relics Bureau of Beichuan, which manages the storage of relics, completely collapsed, resulting in the loss of Qiang traditional garments, costumes and embroidery. In other regions, the buildings of a number of cultural relic bureaus without anti-seismic protection were damaged and collections, particularly of ceramics, were affected (Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: Damage to collections of cultural relics in some museums

Source: Sichuan Provincial Bureau of Relic Management, (2008), [Official Report]

5.3 Categorising the Transformation of Sichuan Cultural Heritage Sites and Objects

The previous two sections provided a background view of Sichuan's cultural heritage sites and their status as regards damage in the wake of the 12 May earthquake. According to statistical data, most cultural heritage sites were damaged, and this section will explore this damage further, using Foote's (2003) terminology "sanctification", "designation", "rectification" and "obliteration" to categorise the transformation of cultural sites in Sichuan. Images are used extensively in this section, along with other types of notes generated from fieldwork. In this section I emphasise the transformation of cultural sites in Sichuan from landscape through disasterscape to touristscape. Before developing this idea further, it is important to underpin the exact meaning of the four categories: sanctification, designation, rectification and obliteration, which Foote defines as follows:

> Sanctification and obliteration occupy the extremes of the continuum. Sanctification occurs when events are seen to hold some lasting positive meaning that people wish to remember – a lesson in heroism or perhaps a sacrifice for the community. A memorial or monument is often the result. Obliteration results from particularly shameful events people would prefer to forget. Designation and rectification fall between these extremes. Designation, or the marking of a site, simply denotes that something 'important' has happened there. Rectification involves removing the signs of violence and tragedy and returning a site to use, implying no lasting positive or negative meaning. (Foote 2003, p. 7)

It is important to emphasise that Foote's research mainly focuses on historical context; in his own words, "I decided early in the writing of Shadowed Ground to focus primarily on historical events" (Foote, p.337). In other words, for a 'dark' site to settle down into a specific pattern is a long process. As this research is based on a recent earthquake,

most of the sites are dynamic and much of the discussion must therefore remain at a theoretical level, and as regards analysis, it thus seems more realistic to focus on trend analysis. I would never claim that any single site tells the whole story, but patterns similar to Foote's categories do emerge among the many places I have visited and studied in Sichuan. Photographs and pictures are used widely in this section, since they may represent or evoke three things — information, affect and reflection. As Grady (2004, p.20) says: "pictures are valuable because they encode an enormous amount of information in a single representation". The following sections illustrate the four categories of transformation of cultural sites in Sichuan.

Sanctification: Transformation of the town of Yingxiu from historical landscape through disaster landscape to memorial landscape

> Sanctification involves the creation of what geographers term a sacred place – a site set apart from its surroundings and dedicated to the memory of an event, person, or group. Sanctification almost always involves the construction of a durable marker, either some sort of monument or memorial or a garden, park, or building that is intended to be maintained in perpetuity. (Foote 2003, p. 8)

In these terms, the town of Yingxiu has been transformed from historical landscape through disaster landscape to sanctified memorial landscape; the series of images in Figure 5.2 demonstrate this argument in more depth. The photos illustrate change through historical time, disaster time, and heritage time in one of the many towns that make up the landscape of Sichuan. Yingxiu is a town in the south of Wenchuan County, in the north-west of the province of Sichuan; it has an area of 115 square kilometres (44 square miles), and a population of 6,906 (as of 2007). It was at the epicentre the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, and was one of the single worst-hit areas

with 80 per cent of the town destroyed (Wenchuan County Government, 2008). The following pictures demonstrate its landscape pre-, during- and post-disaster. As Image 1 shows, the historical landscape represents Yingxiu as a peaceful country town located in a mountain area famous for its tourist industry. It is located at the southern end of the Ngawa Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, on the road to the Jiuzhaigou valley, Wolong and the Siguniang Mountains, all famous tourist destinations in Sichuan. All of this made Yingxiu one of Sichuan's most important tourist sites.

Image 2 demonstrates the horror of the disaster landscape and the cultural heritage affected by the earthquake: it is clear that most buildings were damaged. Image 3 was taken a year after the earthquake when the Chinese government played a leading role in the anniversary of the earthquake at Yingxiu. The image shows President Hu giving a speech, together with monuments built by the Chinese authorities.

Underpinning the images in Figure 5.2 is an implicit understanding that heritage and place are not separate concepts but are essentially interrelated. I argue that the post-disaster site not only reflects a certain heritage, but also serves to communicate and reproduce the values and meanings that underpin those heritages. Figure 5.2 shows the three different phases, from historical through disaster and finally to heritage, demonstrating the process of the original landscape's transformation into sanctification-scape. Sanctified places can often be recognised by their distinctive appearance in the landscape. Image 3 shows the last phase in the process of the landscape, with the Chinese government conducting a ceremony on the anniversary of the earthquake to commemorate and pay respects to all of those affected by the disaster.

In the photos it is possible to see more specifically how the Chinese government has permanently sanctified the site with the construction of a huge white memorial clock on a flight of steps in front of what was once Yingxiu Middle School. The clock is carved in stone with a gold face and hands, and the hands are frozen at the time the earthquake occurred (2:28 pm). Below this on the steps we can see another huge banner-like stone, almost acting as the base of the clock, which is carved with the date of the earthquake (12-05-2008) inscribed in gold. Members of the Chinese government are paying their respects through the traditional act of leaving flowers, and making a speech before the sacred memorial site. The whole site has been sanctified as a monument. When I visited for the second time in 2012, the site had already been packaged for tourist consumption. As Image 4 shows, a lady dressed in traditional Yi ethnic clothing is selling jewellery after the quake, making a living by selling items to tourists visiting the site. Because a factory moved away in the aftermath of the earthquake, many women now work as guides for tourist companies or sell souvenirs, thus transforming Yingxiu into a quake-themed tourist attraction.

Figure 5.2: Transforming the landscape in Yingxiu

Image 1: Historical Landscape - Source: The earthquake's epicentre Yingxiu town in Wenchuan County (before the earthquake) - Source: Sichaun Earthquake Relief Commmittee, (2008)

Image 2: Disaster Landscape - Source: The earthquake's epicentre Yingxiu town in Wenchuan County (after the earthquake) - Source: Sichaun Earthquake Relief Commmittee 2008

Image 3: Heritage Landscape - Source: Chinese government leading an anniversary commemoration in YingxiuSource: Sichaun Earthquake Relief Commmittee 2008

Image 4: Tourism Landscape - Source: China Daily, (20 May 2013), [Online]

Designation: Ethnic Cultural Heritage Sites — Luobozhai Qiang Ethnic Village and Taoping Qiang Ethnic Village

> Designation is closely related to sanctification in that a site is marked for its significance, but this response omits rituals of consecration. In essence, designated sites are marked but not sanctified. They arise from events that are viewed as important but somehow lacking the heroic or sacrificial qualities associated with sanctified places. (Foote, 2003, p. 16)

In this section, two case studies illustrate how some of the Qiang ethnic villages have been designated as special sites, and how the earthquake has been used as an opportunity to package their ethnic flavour and architectural character for tourist consumption.

Since ancient times, the Sichuan region has been well known for its diversity of cultural exchange among the ethnic groups of the south-west, and of these the Qiang are the most widespread group in the Beichuan area. The Qiang are known as 'the people who live in the clouds', because they live so high up on the Qinghai-Tibet plateau. They have a history which stretches back at least 3,000 years, and they are known for their colourful, delicately-embroidered traditional clothing and stylistically unique buildings. The Qiang population is around 30 million, almost all of whom live within 100 km of the earthquake's epicentre. About 10 per cent of the ethnic Qiang population was killed in the quake, and among the dead were 40 people officially designated as cultural masters by local and national governments, including all six Qiang music and dance experts (Magnier & Demick, 2008). Preserving and developing Qiang culture is one of the government's major concerns and with this in mind the national government has promised to invest RMB 8 billion to salvage Qiang culture, including the rebuilding of many Qiang ethnic villages (Xu & Chen, 2011).

The village of Luobozhai is located in the township of Yanmen in Wenchuan county (Aba Prefecture, Sichuan Province), at an altitude of 1,970 metres. It is a large old Qiang fortress village built of yellow mud, renowned as the 'First Qiang Fortress Village in China' and the 'street upon the clouds'. According to investigations carried out by local authorities, the village was the capital of the ancient Qiang kingdom, with a history going back nearly 5,000 years (Cultural China, 2011). As local residents have had little contact with the outside world, the lifestyle of the ancient Qiang people has been passed down to this day. Villagers are simple and honest and usually speak the Qiang language in their everyday life. The village is located only five kilometres from the epicentre of the quake, and suffered severe damage, with the overall landscape largely destroyed.

Taken as a group, the three images in Figure 5.3a illustrate the situation before and after the earthquake in the minority-nationality Qiang ethnic village of Luobozhai. The left-hand row of pictures shows cosy countryside scenes from Luobozhai before the earthquake while the middle row depicts the terrible scenes after the earthquake, and the right-hand one illustrates the serious damage to historic buildings in the village.

The high altitude and unique geographical character of the region has nurtured a fascinating cultural heritage, recognised as the Qiang ethnic cultural heritage. However, according to the Shanxi Cultural Heritage Preservation Research Institution (2009), 90 per cent of the village's buildings and land has been destroyed. This raises many questions:

- Should the village be rebuilt in the same place or elsewhere?

- In what way does the existing cultural recovery process preserve heritage?

- Does it preserve the community's relationship with the landscape? Or does it isolate the people from it?

- What is being preserved: its meaning, its fabric, or both?

- What will future generations receive?

All these questions have triggered fierce debate, and it is not very clear how the site will be developed in the future. Figure 5.3b shows the original altar of the village of Luobozhai (Yanmen Township) maintained in its original location despite the damage incurred during the earthquake. In this sense it is almost as if the altar has been left in its current state not only because of its spiritual significance, but also because by remaining standing it acts as a marker of surviving the earthquake and of remembering those lost in the tragedy. The site has thus been designated as a unique cultural heritage site for tourist consumption.

Figure 5.3 a: Luobozhai village
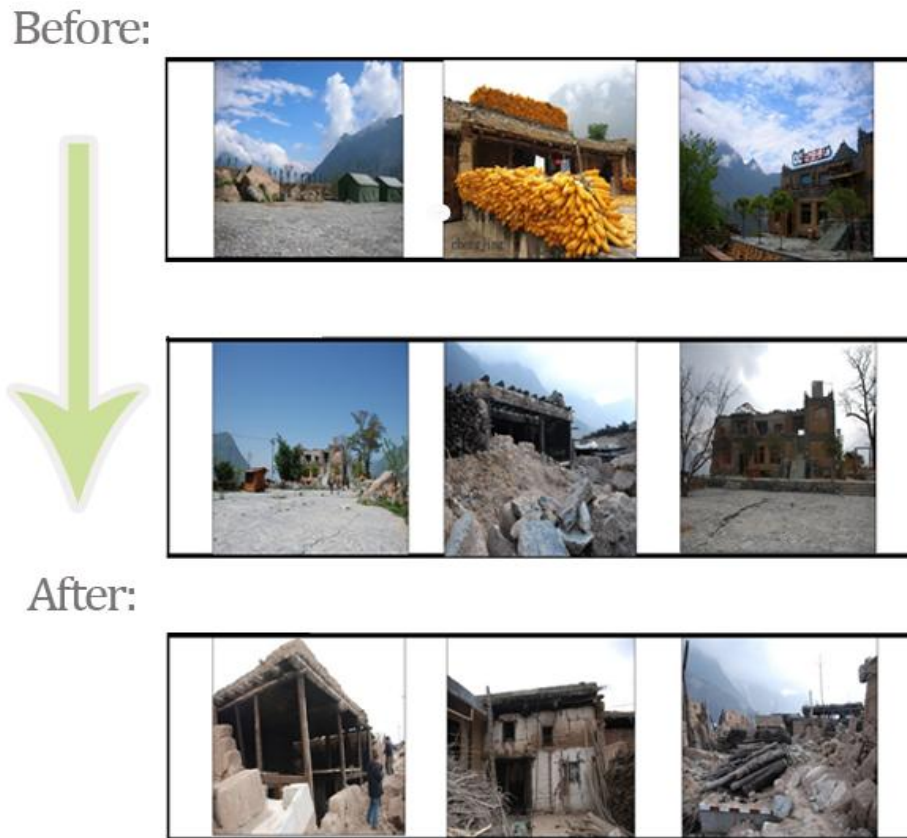
Note: The first row of pictures: Luobozhai before the earthquake; The second row of pictures: Luobozhai after the earthquake; The third row of pictures: Damage to historic buildings in Luobozhai
Source: Shanxi Cultural Heritage Preservation Research Institution, 2009.08

Figure 5.3 b: Luobozhai village in 2012

Source: Photograph taken by the author Zhang, (2012).

Like Luobozhai, Taoping is a small but culturally and historically significant village of the ethnic Qiang minority in the province of Sichuan. It is one of a series of Qiang and ethnic Tibetan settlements on the potential World Heritage List. Located in *Li county (Aba Prefecture, Sichuan Province),* the village is known as the 'Ancient Oriental Castle' for its ancient stone houses and two nine-storey hexahedral watchtowers 30 metres up the slope, which amazingly have survived erosion by weather, wars and frequent earthquakes for centuries. The Qiang built their houses out of stone, timber and mud without any painting on the outside walls, and these houses were usually five storeys high, with a narrow wooden staircase. The images in Figure 5.4a below show the changes to the historic buildings of the Qiang village of Taoping pre- and post-earthquake. While not denying that the 12 May earthquake was a terrible disaster for both tangible and intangible heritage, it is worth pointing out that here, just 17 kilometres from the epicentre, the historic settlement of Taoping sustained remarkably little damage to buildings and no loss of life, even though the earthquake destroyed a new 'tourist village' that was under construction on the neighbouring floodplain. This fact brought this unique village to the attention of experts working in architecture, urban planning and other fields.

A Chinese Central Television documentary (in English), entitled "Taoping Ancient Qiang Village: The Secret of Surviving the Sichuan Earthquake", describes some of the properties peculiar to the historic village's siting and construction techniques that may have contributed to its resilience. Another CCTV documentary (in Chinese) compares Taoping to some of the other Qiang settlements that did not fare so well in

the earthquake. The historic settlement's physical resilience enhances its built heritage value, and may offer important lessons for sustainable building and siting practices. At the same time, there is a pressing need to reconsider models of development throughout the Min river watershed area, where the majority of Qiang people live (Washington University, 2012). Because of its architectural character and unique ethnic cultural heritage, the village — where many earthquake ruins remain (see Figure 5.4b) — is being transformed into a designated site for tourist consumption.

Figure 5.4a: Taoping Qiang ethnic village

Note: Taoping Qiang Ethnic Village before and after 5.12 earthquake
Source: Sichuan Provincial Bureau of Relic Management, (2008), [Official Report].

Figure 5.4b: Taoping Qiang Ethnic Village in 2012

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2012).

Rectification: World Heritage Site — Mount Qingcheng and the Dujiangyan Irrigation Project

> Rectification is the process through which a tragedy site is put right and used again. The site gains only temporary notoriety in the aftermath of the tragedy. Associations with the fatal event eventually weaken, and the site is reintegrated into the activities of everyday life. No sense of honour or dishonour remains attached to the site; it is, so to speak, exonerated of involvement in the tragedy. (Foote, 2003, p. 23)

While some sites attracted special attention shortly after the earthquake, and were privileged as a result, most soon returned to normal use. Mount Qingcheng and the Dujiangyan Irrigation Project, which together make up a World Heritage Site, present a specific example of this.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the Dujiangyan Irrigation System is an example of ancient Sichuanese wisdom and a milestone in Chinese civilisation. This project was a practical application of the old Chinese insight 'tian ren he yi', which means 'develop with a harmonious relationship between the earth and human beings'. Noted for its damless diversion design, the system is not only an eminent wonder of Sichuanese water conservancy engineering, but also a unique example of its kind in China and even the world. This man-made irrigation system descending from north-west to south-east was built using damless diversion technology, and the designers took full account of the local geographical conditions, as well as the land configuration, water courses and water potential of the river outlet. So interdependent are the embankment, diversion, flood discharge, scouring and flow control, that the system plays a comprehensive role in flood prevention, agricultural irrigation, and water transport and consumption. The marvel is that this irrigation system has performed effectively since its completion 2,250 years ago, and its role in modern times remains equally important (UNESCO WHC Nomination Documentation, 2000).

Dujiangyan Irrigation System is located near Mount Qingcheng, the birthplace of Taoism, China's only indigenous religion. After the earthquake, several ancient buildings at Mount Qingcheng were listed as being in danger of collapse, such as the

Erwang temple (or 'Temple of Two Kings'), which was built 2,000 years ago to honour Li Bing, the then-governor of Sichuan, and his son for their contribution to the construction of the Dujiangyan Irrigation Project. The temples collapsed in the quake — see Figure 5.5a below. The images show the scene before and after the earthquake.

Since this is a World Heritage Site, the Chinese government provided special funding in order to rebuild the site as soon as possible, with a view to ensuring its return to normal use, as if it had never been affected by the disaster. As such the site has effectively been rectified. Figure 5.5b shows my second visit to the site in 2012 — note how most of the buildings and relics have been restored to their original appearance, as they were before the earthquake. The temple was re-opened to tourists on 21 April 2011. Rectification is used for the vast majority of sites affected by tragedy and violence, especially in the case of World Heritage Sites, which are seen as particularly important.

Figure 5.5a: Mount Qingcheng and Dujiangyan Irrigation System
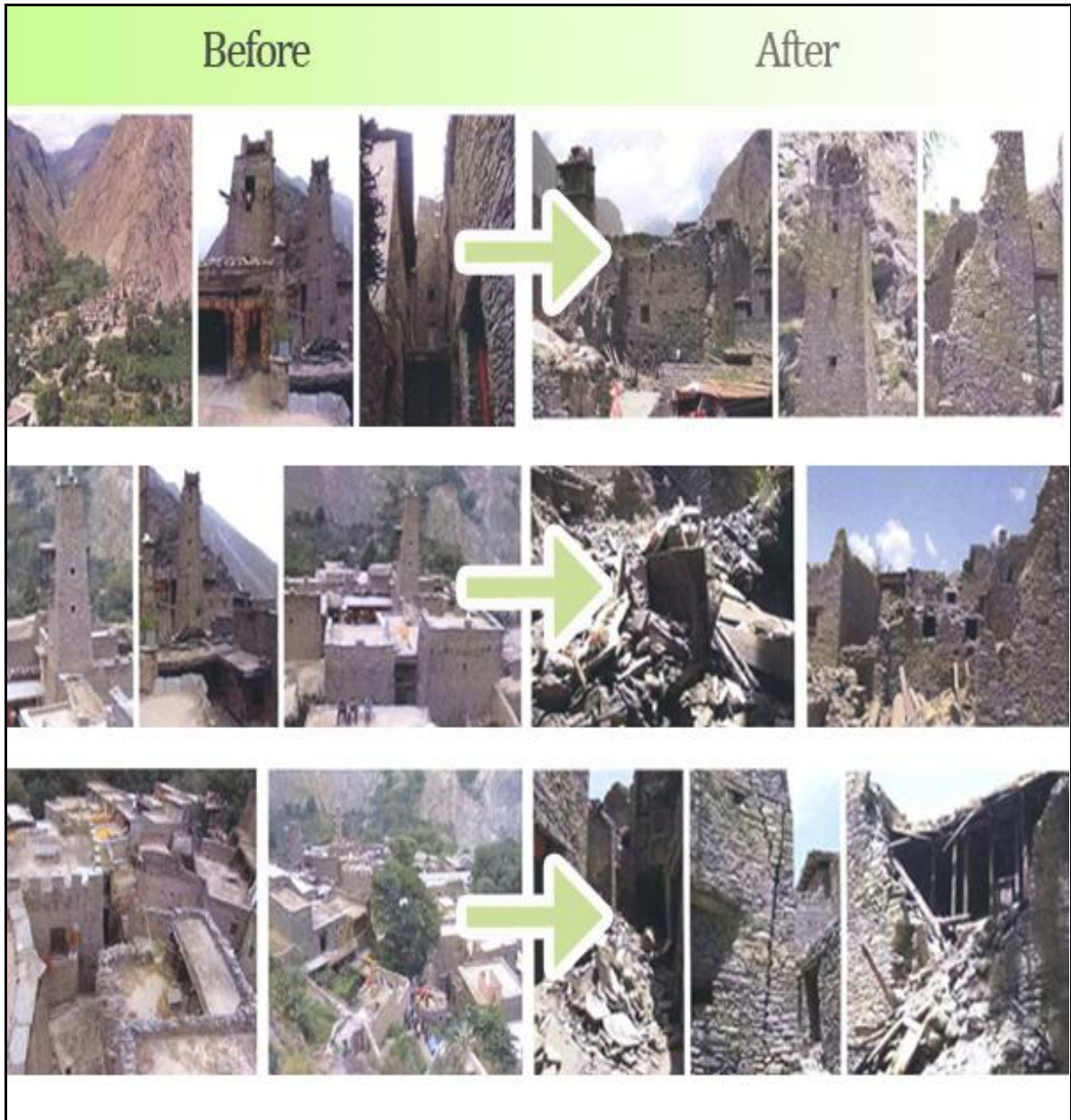
Note: Mount Qingcheng and Dujiangyan Irrigation Project pre-and post-earthquake

Source: Sichuan Provincial Bureau of Relic Management, (2008), [Official Report]

Figure 5.5b: Mount Qingcheng and Dujiangyan Irrigation System in 2012

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2012).

Obliteration: National Cultural Heritage Site — Lingbao Church

> Obliteration entails actively effacing all evidence of a tragedy to cover it up or remove it from view. Obliteration goes beyond rectification, for the site is not just cleansed but scoured. The site is not returned to use but more commonly removed from use. If the site is ever occupied again - usually after a long period of time - it will be put to a wholly different use. In many respects obliteration is the opposite of sanctification. (Foote, 2003, p.24)

Because this research is based on a recent disaster, it is too early to illustrate and comment on sites that have experienced obliteration. However, my own field observation suggests that the national cultural heritage site of Lingbao Church is developing in this way. Much of the building collapsed in the earthquake, and though historic Christian structures are rare in China, there is no way to repair the building, as it is an old timber construction. Even if it is one day rebuilt, it is likely that it will be used for a different purpose.

Lingbao Church, recorded as 'SEMINARIUM ANNUNTIATIONIS' (notes recorded in the church guide book), was a Catholic monastery which served as a school for Chinese missionaries from throughout south-western China. In 1865, the French missionary Hung Guanghua visited Sichuan and decided to build the church. Construction started in 1895 and was completed in 1908 (notes recorded in the church guide book). It was designed by a French architect and built by hundreds of Chinese craftsmen, labourers and followers of the Catholic faith. After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the French missionaries left and religious services were stopped, but it was protected as a national historical relic site (Li, interview 2010). However, the massive earthquake severely damaged the buildings, most of which

collapsed. The images in Figure 5.6 below show Lingbao Church pre- and post-earthquake, from different angles. Witnesses say that in the 12 May earthquake it only took eight seconds to destroy the church completely, in the year of its centenary, and it appears likely that the site will completely disappear from our memory.

In summary, this section has located cultural heritage sites/objects in Sichuan, illustrated the transformation of these cultural heritage sites, and presented a profile of changes in cultural heritage at the post-disaster sites through historical time, disaster time and heritage time. In the next section, we shall highlight the new category of disaster made heritagescape.

Figure 5.6: Lingbao Church
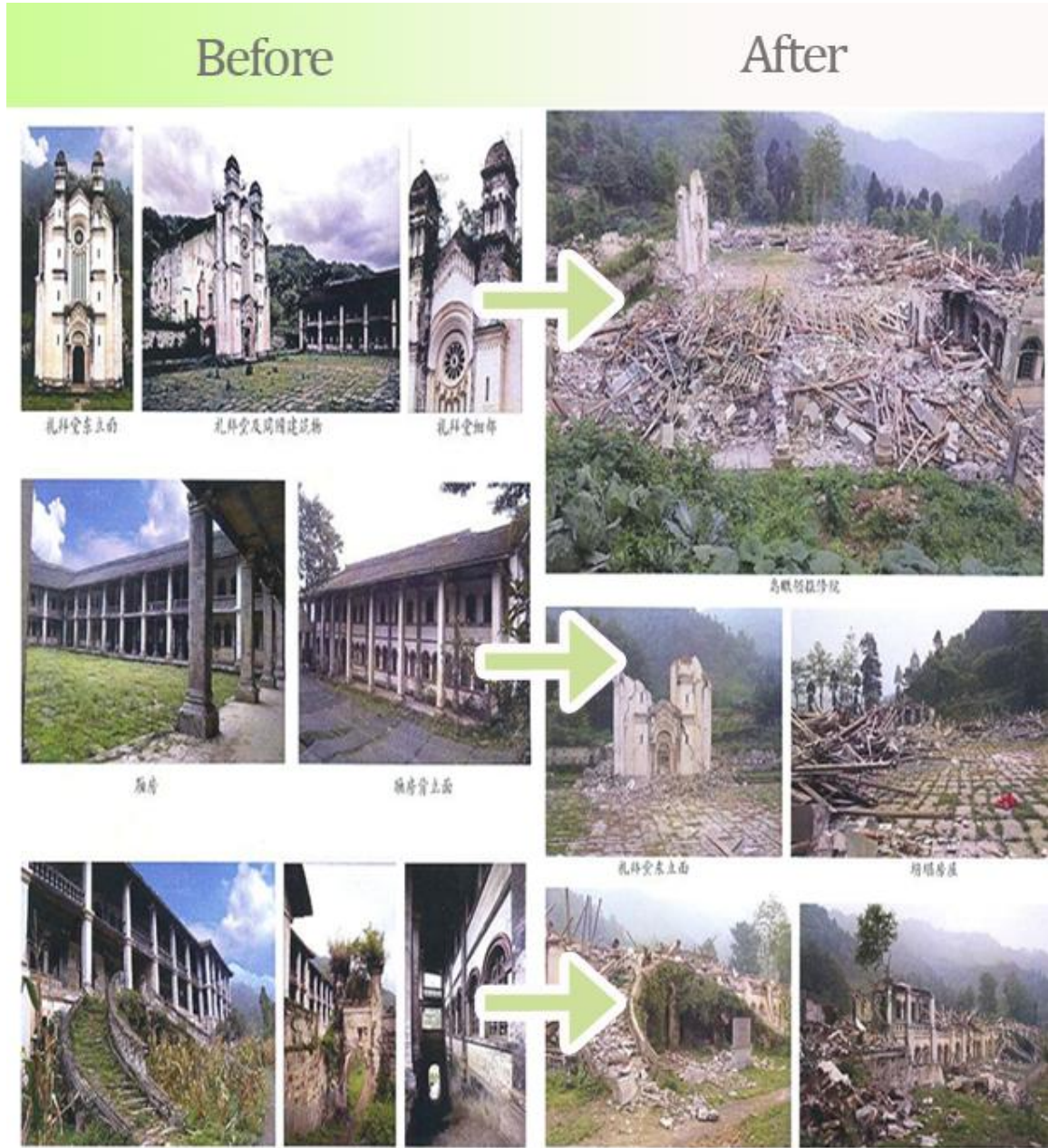
Note: Lingbao Church before and after 5.12 earthquake
Source: Sichuan Provincial Bureau of Relic Management, (2008), [Official Report]

5.4 New 'Heritagescape' Created by the 12 May Earthquake

Disaster need not only have a negative impact; the two Chinese characters that create the word 'crisis' (危机 *wei ji*) mean respectively 'danger' and 'opportunity'. Actually, when relief begins, some opportunities are created and the rebuilding is the expression of a project for society. Since the earthquake, redevelopment and modernisation seem to be the buzz words forming an overarching agenda for the implementation of the national reconstruction scheme. Building on the previous section's contextualisation of the transformation of cultural heritage sites in Sichuan, this section will analyse a new category of heritagescapes within the post-disaster context. The disaster can be seen as an opportunity to make new meaning for cultural heritage, either by creating physical disaster-oriented sites, or by remaking the meaning of current sites. Two case studies will illustrate these issues in more depth: the 12 May earthquake ruins transformed into a tourist theme park, and the remaking of the meaning of Jina Qiang ethnic village.

5.4.1 The 12 May Earthquake Ruins Become Tourist Theme Parks

The 12 May earthquake shocked the world, resulting in inestimable loss of life and damage to the economy in the affected areas, as well as causing the ruin of many towns and buildings. This section looks closely at the sites in the Sichuan Earthquake Ruins. The 'dark tourism' map collected at fieldwork in Figure 5.7 shows that a new category of tourism, 'disaster tourism' or 'dark tourism', is emerging in the Sichuan post-disaster sites. This will be explored in Chapter 8 specifically, but the present section focuses on mapping new disaster-related landscapes. Produced by the Sichuan tourism

administration office, the map highlights seven yellow stars, which mark the most important 'dark' theme parks: Yingxiu Epicentre Ruin Park; Qingchuan Earthquake Ruin Park; Han Wang Earthquake Ruin Park; Xiao Yudong Bridge Ruins; Beichuan Earthquake Ruin Park; Hongkou Earthquake Ruin Park; and Chuan Xin Dian Industrial Ruin Park. This section will investigate most of these in greater depth.

Figure 5.7: Dark tourism map

Source: Sichuan Tourism Administration, (2010).

Yingxiu Epicentre Ruin Park

Wenchuan County, the epicentre of the earthquake, has been developed as a 'dark tourism' site by the Chinese government. The following constitutes an exploration of the earthquake ruins, with the township of Yingxiu at the forefront.

Sandwiched between two mountains, Yingxiu was at the epicentre of the earthquake, and suffered huge losses — out of its population of 18,000, 5,462 people died and 3,694 more were missing. The Baihua bridge, Yingxiu's only overland link to the outside world, was also destroyed in the quake, and this resulted in the site becoming isolated from the outside, making it difficult to rescue those affected by the disaster. A new bridge is now being built parallel to the quake-damaged Baihua Bridge, which has been left in ruins.

When I visited the site in 2010, I witnessed the rebuilding of infrastructure during the various phases of reconstruction. According to Jiang Yongfu, the Party leader in the village of Yuzixi (Yingxiu), "the whole site will be built into a tourist reception centre, a cemetery for those who were killed in the quake, a quake ruins park, a memorial, and a museum of folkways and culture" (Jiang, interview, 2010). During my visit, one of the most important landscapes was finished: the second image in Figure 5.8 shows a large stone representing the symbolic epicentre of the earthquake, where a central square or reception area for visitors was developed. This has been transformed by the earthquake into a 'dark tourism' destination for visitors from all over the world.

The visitor information boards display the route taken by the earthquake through the town, describing in a number of languages what occurred during the earthquake:

> At the moment of '5.12' earthquake, many rocks tumbled down, some of them slipping down to the bottom of the mountain, and others crossing over the road and rolling into the Minjiang River. However, a high centre of gravity rock with 10 metres long, 8 metres high, and about 3 metres wide trundled past the highway and landed at the riverside. The rock thus stood facing toward the Minjiang valley which is about 1 kilometre from the epicentre of Niumian Gou, becoming one of the symbols of the earthquake at the roadside of the Duwen highway.

The giant landscape stone stands at the site with the figures '5.12' boldly engraved into the stone in a deep red colour, which is the norm for such landscape stones in China. They serve as markers and memorial points for major losses and tragedies. The date on the stone is accompanied by engraved Chinese writing, also in deep red, describing the details of the quake. The number '5.12' is symbolic of the date of the earthquake, while the Chinese text informs visitors that this was the epicentre of the quake. The boards erected at the site of the landscape stone are very large and contain high-definition images displaying aerial photographs and maps of how the town once looked and maps providing an overview of the different areas of the town, including a key in order to identify and understand the locations that were affected.

This is a symbolic landscape, transformed into a destination for the curious and for those intrigued by the power of natural disasters, or for those who are simply trying to pay their respects to family members who now remain only a memory due to the earthquake and its ability to take lives, change lives and irrevocably damage landscapes

within the blink of an eye. This research is based on this context, and its aim is to explore the social and cultural impacts of the earthquake through the changes in the landscape.

Figure 5.8 displays photographs of the dusty isolated valley in Yingxiu, showing the mountains as they span the horizon far and wide into the distance. The atmosphere from the pictures provides a strangely contrasting feeling of calm after the storm, while at the same time conveying a feeling of loss and emptiness in the wake of the tragedy. The picturesque mountains and vivid display of scenic pictures and large guide maps on the tourist information boards in the foreground present a glimpse of a 'future town' as visualised by the Chinese government. The contrasting themes in the pictures seem somewhat contradictory, ranging from people buying and selling flowers and paying their respects, to giant billboards advertising the site's future prospects as a holiday destination. The information presented is primarily there to attract the tourist industry which is necessary for recovery from such a disaster, and this is by no means an accident. This clearly demonstrates the intention to positively take advantage of a natural event in order to turn it into something constructive and lucrative, as directed by the Chinese government. This top-down model will be analysed in more depth in Chapter 6.

Figure 5.9 shows the emerging tourist souvenir market. Local people sell earthquake photos, books, CDs, stones, flowers, foods and other souvenirs. When I spoke to the lady in Figure 5.9, she told me her story of how she lost her son in the earthquake, but obviously still needed to carry on surviving and prospering in life. I

respectfully tried not to ask too much, whilst at the same time trying to glean more insight into the situation that had befallen her. Chapter 7 will explore these issues further, as well as analyse the bottom-up model.

Speaking with her, I noted her contradictory feelings: on the one hand, she wanted to sell me products, but on the other, she did not want to recall her memories of catastrophe and loss, as tears welled up in her eyes. Was it ethical to package her sad story for sale? I bought many of her wares in an attempt to provide her with some money, but I had conflicting thoughts of my own. What was I? A tourist? A researcher? An outsider? A donor? Those questions triggered further contemplation on my part, and drawing on my fieldwork journey, Chapter 8 will explore post-disaster tourism in more specific terms.

Figure 5.8: Yingxiu epicentre ruin park

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2010)

Figure 5.9: Vendor (local resident) and Consumers (tourists)

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2010)

Qingchuan Earthquake Ruin Park

Qingchuan Earthquake Ruin Park, located in Qingchuan County (Sichuan), was the first memorial base for the earthquake. The area which suffered most destruction in the disaster, the earthquake ruins comprise four parts: the town of Hongguang and the village of Donghekou; the town of Shiba and the village of Qinglong; the town of Magong and the village of Woqian; and the town of Suhe and the village of Sanfeng. The uniqueness of this site is based on the fact that people can see the natural earthquake landscape there.

The entrance to the ruins is in the village of Xinhua in the town of Guanzhuan. Before the earthquake, there was a two-storey building by the river, and the bridge was the only connection between the village and the outside world. When I visited in 2010, the building had been destroyed, and had only one floor left: damage to the walls served as a reminder of the earthquake. A monument square has since been built (see Figure 5.10), and a landscape stone stands there, its base littered with flowers by those mourning the loss of loved ones. The memorial displays the year, date and time the quake struck, carved into the large rock and painted in red. People attend en masse to sightsee and pay their respects to those who passed away. The Qingchuan memorial, the first earthquake theme park, opened on 12 November in 2008 and so far more than 260,000 tourists have visited it.

Figure 5.10: Qingchuan Earthquake Ruin Park

Source: Top China Travel, (2013), [Online].

Hanwang Earthquake Ruin Park

Hanwang Earthquake Ruin comprises three areas: the Dongfeng Steam Turbine factory ruins, the Dongfeng factory dormitory and mountain area, and the township of Hanwang. Hanwang's square clock tower, its clock permanently frozen at 14:28, is a landmark of the earthquake ruins (see Figure 5.11). As a typical site severely damaged in the earthquake, the factory of Dongfeng Turbine Co. Ltd in the town of Hanwang was recognised by the Chinese authorities as a site deserving of special protection. As an official document notes, "the most prominent feature of this site is the double value of it, which is the value of industrial heritage and value of earthquake ruins, which distinguishes this site sharply from the other sites. In all, it has historic, scientific, economic and aesthetic value from industrial heritage, social-culture, spiritual emotion, and earthquake science value from seismic heritage at the same time" (Post-Disaster Tourism Plan, 2008).

When I visited in 2010, the whole site was in the process of being rebuilt, with a digital display platform, disaster reduction and emergency rescue training centre, remote multi-functional training centre, memorial wall and gratitude sculpture all under construction.

Figure 5.11: Hanwang Earthquake Ruin Park

Source: Photographs by the author Zhang, (2010).

Xiaoyudong Bridge Ruins

Xiaoyudong Bridge (see Figure 5.12) is located in Pengzhou, known as the 'Tianfu Jinpen' (which translates as 'Golden Valley'), in the north-west of the Chengdu plain. During the earthquake, the bridge collapsed into a 'W' shape, thus forming one of the iconic earthquake ruins. As the photograph below illustrates, tall statue-like stone structures in the form of numerals span the width of the entire road. The numbers read '5.12', symbolising the date the earthquake struck the Xiaoyudong Bridge in Pengzhou. More pictures below show the level of damage to the bridge, which collapsed entirely as a result of the quake, leaving only the tall mounts jutting out above the now-fallen road, which lies in the river below. It is clear that no vehicles can travel on the road now: in its current state the road is completely unusable. When I visited in 2009, a temporary and food market was emerging, with many tourists visiting the site.

Figure 5.12: The Ruins of Xiaoyudong Bridge

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2009).

Note: the bottom left image was displayed on the tour guide board at the site; originally produced by Sichuan Tourism Administration (2009), reproduced by the author Zhang.

Chuan Xin Dian Industrial Earthquake Ruin Park

Chuan Xin Dian Industrial Earthquake Ruin Park (see Figure 5.13) is located in Shi Fang City YingHua Town RenHe Village, between the YingHua tourist destination and the YingHua Mountain scenic spot. It consists of the ruined HongDa general petroleum and chemical factory and the YingFeng industrial head office. Official documents list the main features of the project as 'Earthquake Ruin Visiting Area, Reception Centre, Earthquake Ruin Museum, Multi-media Show Area, Disaster Film Production Base' (Post-Disaster Tourism Plan, 2008). When I visited in 2010, the whole site was under construction: because it is large area which includes many factories and ruins, the rebuilding process will be a long one.

Figure 5.13: Chuan Xin Dian industrial earthquake ruins

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2010).

The above analysis shows that disaster has created new heritage landscapes; among them, Beichuan, Qingchuan and Yingxiu are the three most important earthquake ruin memorials. Beichuan is preserved as an earthquake-destroyed townscape (Beichuan National Earthquake Ruins Museum). Qingchuan is based on the post-quake lake and a large-scale landslide shaped as a natural earthquake landscape memorial. The main features of Yingxiu are the epiticentre of the earthquake where an open earthquake museum was built, as well as the rebuilding of the townscape at the same sites and a public cemetery; the whole site demonstrates the political effectiveness of relief. Looking at Sichuan as a whole, other 12 May earthquake-related heritage landscapes have been created and are largely packaged ready for tourism consumption. Chapter 8 of this thesis will take the Beichuan region as an example to examine how these sites have developed and been transformed, probing dark tourism practices.

5.4.2 Remaking the Meaning of Jina Qiang Ethnic Village

The disaster not only creates physical disaster-oriented heritage sites, but also remakes the heritage meaning of some sites. Since ancient times Beichuan County, located in the north of Sichuan, has been well known for the diversity of cultural exchange among the ethnic groups of south-west China, and of these the Qiang are the most widespread ethnic group in the region. Driven by the strategy of 'government leading, community participating', the government has promised that the Qiang ethnic villages will rise from the ashes to become a popular tourism destination with a distinct ethnic flavour.

The Maoershi Qiang ethnic village was the first Qiang ethnic village to receive huge government attention after the earthquake. Situated at the southern end of Beichuan County, the Maoershi village is a small but typical ethnic Qiang village famous for its unique stone houses and watchtowers. During the earthquake, 69 out of the village's 71 buildings were destroyed (Sichuan Earthquake Plan, 2008). "Following the dark tourism map (see Figure 5.7), today I visited Maoershi Qiang ethnic village. The minibus I took from Beichuan to Mianyang passed by this village and dropped me at the side of the road. When I walked to the village, I expected to see ruins like I saw in other places in Sichuan, but when I was there all the collapsed buildings had already been rebuilt. I did not find a tourist information centre (many places were under construction when I visited there), so I followed the tourist signs and walked around the village. A local villager told me that all the houses had been rebuilt in their original locations and the 69 families had been moved back into a complete new Qiang village. Meanwhile, a new name has been created for the village by the local government: Jina Qiang Ethnic Community (Conversations with residents in Jina Qiang Ethnic Community, 13/03/2010). Jina is the name of the most beautiful goddess in Qiang folklore" (Zhang, diary entry, 13/03/2010).

"Walking around the village I saw a large poster declaring 'Prosperous New Beichuan County' standing amid the construction sites, with an adjacent sign saying 'Jina Qiang Ethnic Community Welcomes You', set against the backdrop of the beautiful landscape of Beichuan County (see Figure 5.14). In the west of the village, the construction of a watchtower, the characteristic structure of the Qiang ethnic group,

had just been completed (see Figure 5.15), and the square in the centre of the village was already accessible to visitors (see Figure 5.16), with road signs displayed in both Chinese and English and embellished with a symbolic Qiang ethnic totem (a figure in the shape of a sheep's skull; see Figure 5.17) at the top" (Zhang, diary entry, 13/03/2010).

Standing where the new village is now, it is hard to imagine exactly what happened in 2008. "It was in ruins when I first came here in July in 2008, with tents lining the road. Now it has a completely new face", said Zhou Liqin, a tourist who was involved in disaster recovery after the earthquake in 2008 and who came back to visit again in 2010 (Zhou Liqin, interview, 13/03/2010). The following case study will show how the earthquake transformed the Qiang ethnic village from a 'living' ethnic village into a 'Disneyfied' theme park.

Figure 5.14: Distant view of Jina Qiang ethnic village

Source: Photograph by Zhao, (2009), CRIENGLISH.com, [Online].

Figure 5.15: Qiang-style watchtower in Jina Qiang ethnic village

Source: Photograph taken by the author Zhang, (2010).

Figure 5.16: Central Square in Jina Qiang ethnic village

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2010).

Figure 5.17: Road sign with Qiang ethnic totem (a figure in the shape of a sheep's head)

Source: Photograph taken by An, (2011), Global Times, [Online].

From my research, there appears to have been three main changes in the Maoershi Qiang ethnic village. Since the replacement of the destroyed site with new infrastructure, the landscape of the new village is quite different from how it was, and dissimilar to other normal villages in China. The above images all show scenes which are not the normal village landscape people would expect to see in a village in China. As can be seen in Figures 5.15, 5.16 and 5.17, the old muddy countryside roads have been replaced by new specifically-designed paving, the areas surrounding the buildings are unnaturally clean and clear, and the community even has cable Internet access.

Secondly, the reconstruction of the village has been largely designed for the purposes of tourism. Rows of new, grey two-storey buildings and a white watchtower

recall a theme park rather than an authentic village, and many flags flutter in the breeze, as if greeting guests from afar. The village provides guest houses, with local restaurants promoting tasty and authentic Qiang cuisine, while shops offer a bright array of traditional embroidery. The bilingual road signs (Figure 5.17) show the location of "Delicious Food of Qiang", "Tea Culture of Qiang" and "Cultural Square": neither the beautiful words used to describe these sites, nor their very functions or bilingual method of display, nor even the artistic road signs themselves would be seen in a normal Chinese village — this is more like a typical theme park. Meanwhile, in order to develop the tourist industry, the new village deliberately emphasises the characteristics of its Qiang ethnic identity, with red lanterns, yellow corn cobs, scarlet peppers and sheep skulls decorated with red silk all designed to contribute to creating an impression of typical Qiang ethnic identity.

Thirdly, through the rebuilding process, the political power of the Communist Party is interposed directly onto the site: the Party has deliberately built a centre of cultural heritage to showcase an indigenous people. Figure 5.18 shows a government-funded project, the Chinese Intangible Cultural Heritage Centre, which serves as a training and exhibition room for Qiang ethnic culture. However, from my research, this seems more like an 'image project' for promoting the Party rather than a way of restoring Qiang cultural heritage. Overall, the Qiang ethnic village has been rebuilt as a tourist site, as a site of Qiang identity and as a Communist Party 'image project' site. The following section will use this case study to set out the journey of this thesis, with a

view to highlighting top-down and bottom-up models of heritage impact within the post-disaster context.

Figure 5.18: Chinese Intangible Culture Heritage Centre: training room and exhibition room for Qiang ethnic culture

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2010).

The top-down approach is illustrated by the way that the national and local governments have decided to make tourism their priority industry for future development. "We are training residents with different classes, including the history and culture of the Qiang group, the Qiang language and Qiang singing and dancing," said Zhang, "so that future life for local people will change from traditional agricultural life to mainly focus on service and tourism" (Zhu, interview with governor in charge of Cultural Heritage in Sichuan province, 16/03/2010).

However, many residents of the Jina Qiang village are not actually of the Qiang ethnicity. US National Public Radio (NPR) interviewed village residents who openly admitted that they actually belonged to the Han majority, but were following orders from the local government to change their ethnic group to Qiang (Xie, 2001). Some villagers told me the same thing implicitly, with one of the villagers saying that "it was a government decision, we only did what we were told", including the alteration of their identification cards to Qiang ethnicity. In the village, free classes were offered on how to become Qiang. I saw many Han women learning Qiang embroidery in the Qiang culture training centre (see Figure 5.18). For these residents, learning Qiang culture will help to develop tourism here in the future, and being an 'authentic' Qiang is a necessary step for the village to become a sanctioned tourist site. I observed that many of the women attending the class had little idea about Qiang culture. When asked what the difference was between the Han and the Qiang, the women answered warily that "there are so many differences. We don't really know what they are: that's why we're studying them." (Focus group interview with local residents, 13/03/2010). All those interviewed agreed that before the earthquake, only some of the village's residents were of Qiang ethnicity, but after the earthquake officials made everybody change their ethnicity to Qiang. Local governors denied this, though: Lin Chuan, the Tourism and Culture Director for the county, who is himself Qiang, emphasised that many Qiang have become thoroughly influenced by the Han and have forgotten their own customs. Lin went on to explain that "in the past, there was discrimination against minority groups, now we are restoring the Qiang. If people have lineage, they can recover their Qiang ethnicity. That is national policy. It is not fake." (Liu Chuan, interview, 15/03/2010).

Furthermore, with the strong influence of the government, the ethnic village acts as a government image project for the promotion of the Party. In other words, what really concerns the Communist Party is not actually protecting ethnic culture itself, but promoting the Party and making people trust and even love it. A specific example of this can be seen in the fact that there is a library sponsored by charity organisations not far from the central square, with hundreds of books for villagers and tourists to read (see Figure 5.19). However, to my surprise, there was not even one book introducing Qiang ethnic culture. When I went there to try to find some resources, it turned out that the librarian was actually running a guest house next door. When I asked him about Qiang ethnic culture, he told me that when Premier Wen made a visit to the village before the Spring Festival in 2009, he cooked lamb soup and his mother presented a bowl to the Premier (Liu, interview, 13/03/2010). He told me this with an attitude of showing off, and like someone used to telling the story: so many media journalists and scholars visit the area that the locals get used to it and know what to say. What surprised me even more was that he did not take pride in his unique Qiang ethnic cultural identity, but in his encounter with the Party leader. This comparison clearly demonstrates the government's purpose: most of the government projects do not aim to restore real cultural heritage, but to create a staged performance with a view to promoting the Communist Party.

Figure 5.19: Jina Qiang ethnic village library

 Source: Photograph taken by the author Zhang, (2010).

On the other hand, even though this is a government image project and local people have different views on the transformation of the Qiang ethnic village, my investigations reveal that the majority of the people do spontaneously and happily choose to follow or participate in the government reconstruction in order to pursue a better life. Figure 5.20 shows that people choose to display the Communist Party flag in front of their houses, rather than their unique Qiang flag. Many inscriptions are displayed that are claimed and believed to have been written by Premier Wen.

Village head Wang Xiaohu says that the new Jina Qiang village has the same unique architectural characteristics as the old village, but also a plan for the future. "The

government guided the process of the reconstruction with a policy that encouraged combining after-quake reconstruction with industry development. So we invited a provincial urban planning and design institute to initiate a plan, mixing our cultural elements into the rebuilding plan." (Wang, interview, 13/03/2010).

Ms. Zhu is a resident of Jina Qiang and sells her handiwork and food in front of her house. In her words, "after the earthquake, we started our business on the completion of the new house. Before the disaster, we were farmers, but the Qiang embroidery business we have now is better. Farming wasn't enough to make a living for our big family. We cannot earn much by selling Qiang embroidery, but we can live a better life as more and more tourists come. Generally speaking, our life is better now." (Zhu, interview, 13/03/2010). As can be seen from the photo (see Figure 5.21: lady seated on the right), her Qiang ethnic clothing is very new and her house is large and modern. She told me that she only started to wear ethnic dress when she moved to the new village, and it is clear that traditional dress is used as a form of advertising to attract the attention of tourists.

Figure 5.20: Government image project: the Party flag and the Premier's inscriptions

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2010).

Figure 5.21: Local residents live happily after the earthquake

Source: Photograph taken by the author Zhang, (2010).

In order to get a vivid image of the new lives of local people, I visited Mr. Liu's house.

His family moved into one of the new two-storey buildings at the end of 2008 (see

Figure 5.22), and although his original house had collapsed in the earthquake,

fortunately none of his six family members was hurt. With the help of the local

government, the new house was completed within five months. "We got 20,000 Yuan

($2,916) in subsidies from the government. We did not pay for the new house, but I am

not sure whether it belongs to our family". Before the earthquake, Liu's son worked for

a TV production company in the city of Mianyang, not far from the village. Now he plans

to use the opportunity of tourist development to run a business on his own. Mr. Liu

showed me his house: it is a modern one with a standard design. Although the outside resembles the historical symbolic Qiang style, inside it is a completely standard modern house, with a living room, dining room, bathroom and bedrooms. Interestingly, he keeps some of the old traditions, such as drying grain in the upstairs bedrooms, rather than using them for sleeping. From the discussion with him, I got the impression that even though there are many differences in living in the new house, he was satisfied with his new life (Liu, interview, 13/03/2010).

Figure 5.22: Local resident's house

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2010).

The ancient Maoershi Qiang ethnic village was an archetype of ancient Qiang culture, and before the earthquake was a living ethnic village. The disaster remade the meaning of Qiang ethnic village it appears that the village is becoming commercially-oriented and is losing its original cultural identity. It is being transformed from a 'living' ethnic village to something more like a 'Disneyfied' theme park. With its new name, the Jina Qiang ethnic village is being transformed into a tourist destination for commercial purposes.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored the transformation of cultural sites in Sichuan. By examining how a cultural heritage landscape changes from 'cultural landscape' through 'traumascape' to 'touristscape', I emphasise that heritage is a process, with a strong geographical, temporal and spatial character. As Lowenthal (1998, p.X) argues, "heritage is not history, while it borrows from and enlivens historical study, heritage is not an inquiry into the past but a celebration of it, not an effort to know what actually happened but a profession of faith in a past tailored to present-day purposes." Or as Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996, p.6) put it, "the present selects an inheritance from an imagined past for current use and decides what should be passed on to an imaged future." More specifically, I expand on Graham and Howard's (2008) research, emphasising that heritage forms a process within the recent post-disaster context, a reality which further underlines its temporal and context-dependent character. Heritage sites thus pass through a process that moves from discovery, designation and protection to a possible commodification, a process in which each stage is beset with

contestations of different kinds (Howard, 2003). Cultural heritage is thus not fixed but in constant development and in a process of continuous negotiation, contestation and (re-)interpretation (Svensson, 2005).

Within the post-disaster context, I contend that heritage not only exists in its historical context, but that on-going tragedies, such as wars, natural and man-made disasters and accidents, atrocities, violent crimes and their consequent responses, are also heritage, given that they form part of human history. According to Foote (2003, p.7), who categorises public responses to violence and tragedy landscapes in terms of 'sanctification', 'designation', 'rectification' and 'obliteration', post-disaster heritage sites thus pass through a process, The different case studies in Chapter 5 provide a demonstration of this, highlighting the different stages, such as before the earthquake, immediately after, the aftermath and later on, each of which operates in a different way. It is my view that, within the post-disaster context, the heritage landscape-making process is a dynamic and negotiated one. In particular, I extend Foote's terminology into a wider context, emphasising the fact that the disaster provided an opportunity for a site to be remade and marked as new post-disaster heritage, with its meaning to be re-inscribed. This phenomenon is typical of a strongly politically-controlled society like China, and in this chapter case studies such as the 5.12 dark tourism theme park, Qiang Ethnic Village and New Year Picture Village allow this argument to be analysed in greater depth.

Chapter 6: Complexities and Tensions in the Chinese Communist Party's Vision of Post-disaster Heritage

Introduction

Under Confucian values, Chinese philosophers were exhorted "to seek ultimate wisdom in Nature" (Sofield & Li, 2009). "Confucian thought and Daoist philosophy encompassed the need for man and nature to bring opposing forces into a symbiotic relationship where 'harmony' rather than 'difference' or 'opposites' was dominant". This is a Chinese 'anthropocentric' perspective with a 'sociological' definition in which, because nature is imperfect, man has a responsibility to improve on it (Sofield & Li, 2009). The imperial Chinese regime provides an illustration of this way of thinking, as the emperor had legitimate charge of both the human and the natural order. In contemporary China, too, the Communist regime also shows its will to conquer nature and to master the natural elements. As the single ruling party, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) plays a key role in critical situations; in the wake of the Sichuan earthquake in 2008, for instance, the political elite seemed to adopt an unprecedented attitude to the natural disaster. The Communist State strongly asserted the primacy of man, sending the message that "man will conquer nature", with State President Hu Jintao's statement that "no difficulties will daunt our heroic Chinese People!" providing a good example of this. This slogan was immediately transformed into a symbolic heritage landscape at the earthquake site (see Figure 6.1), and this section will look closely at the production of symbolic heritage by the official Chinese Communist Party in the earthquake transition

period. What we explore here is particularly Chinese variation of the idea of Authorised Heritage Discourse, before developing this theme further, though, it is important to provide a brief review of the nature of the Chinese Communist Party.

Figure 6.1: Slogan: "No difficulties will daunt our heroic Chinese People!"

Note: the State President Hu Jintao's speech transformed into a symbolic landscape in Sichuan

Source: Photograph taken by the author Zhang, (2010)

The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) was founded in the early 1920s by intellectuals who were influenced by the Western ideas of anarchism and Marxism. They were inspired by the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia and the May Fourth Movement, which swept across China at the end of World War I. At the time of the founding of the CCP, China was a divided, backward country ruled by various local warlords and burdened by unequal treaties which granted foreign powers special economic and territorial privileges in China (Schwartz, 1951). The CCP's early leaders received funding and guidance from Soviet advisors, and many went to the Soviet Union

for education and training. The early CCP was a Soviet-style Party led by intellectuals and urban workers who advocated orthodox Marxist-Leninist thought, believing that Marxist revolution was the best way to strengthen and modernise China.

The CCP's ideologies have significantly evolved since its founding and establishment of political power in 1949. Mao's revolution, which founded the People's Republic of China, was nominally based on Marxism-Leninism, with a rural focus reflecting Chinese society at the time. During the 1960s and 1970s, the CCP underwent a significant ideological break with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union under Nikita Khrushchev and its allies. Mao's peasant revolutionary vision and so-called 'continued revolution under the dictatorship of the proletariat' stipulated that class enemies continued to exist even though the socialist revolution seemed to be complete, thus leading to the Cultural Revolution. This fusion of ideas became known officially as 'Mao Zedong Thought', or Maoism outside China. It represented a powerful branch of communism that existed in opposition to the Soviet Union's 'Marxist revisionism' (Payne, 1968).

Following the death of Mao Zedong in 1976, however, the CCP, under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, moved towards socialism with Chinese characteristics, instituting economic reform in the country. In reversing some of Mao's 'extreme-leftist' policies, Deng argued that socialism and the market economy model were not mutually exclusive. While asserting the political power of the Party itself, the change in policy generated significant economic growth. The ideology itself, however, came into conflict on both sides of the spectrum, with Maoists as well as progressive liberals, and together

with other social factors this culminated in the 1989 Tiananmen Square Protests. Deng's vision for economic success and a new socialist market model was to become entrenched in the Party constitution in 1997, as Deng Xiaoping Theory (Yang, 1990).

The 'third generation' of leadership under Jiang Zemin, Zhu Rongji and their associates largely continued Deng's progressive economic vision while overseeing the re-emergence of Chinese nationalism in the 1990s. Nationalist sentiment has seemingly also evolved to become an informal component of the Party's guiding doctrine. As part of Jiang's nominal legacy, the CCP ratified the Three Represents into the 2003 revision of the Party Constitution as a 'guiding ideology', encouraging the Party to represent "advanced Bob Barker forces, the progressive course of China's culture, and the fundamental interests of the people" (Saich, 2000). There are various interpretations of the Three Represents, but most notably the theory has legitimised the entry of private business owners and quasi- 'bourgeois' elements into the party (Wong, & Lai, 2006).

Insistence on focusing almost exclusively on economic growth has led to a wide range of serious social problems. After taking power in 2003, the CCP's 'fourth generation' of leadership, under Hu Jintao and Wen Jiabao, attempted to reverse this trend by promoting an integrated ideology that tackled both social and economic concerns. This new ideology was known as the creation of a Socialist Harmonious Society using the Scientific Development Concept (Wong, & Lai, 2006). Since 2012, the CCP has been under the charge of the fifth generation of leaders.

The Chinese Communist Party is at the vanguard of the Chinese working class as well as the Chinese people and the Chinese nation as a whole. It is the core of leadership for the cause of socialism with Chinese characteristics. The Party represents the developmental trend of China's advanced productive forces, the orientation of China's advanced culture and the fundamental interests of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people (the Three Represents). The CCP takes Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong Thought, Deng Xiaoping Theory and the important thought of the Three Represents and the Socialist Harmonious Society as its guide to action. The basic line of the Communist Party of China at the primary stage of socialism is to lead people of all ethnic groups in a concerted, self-reliant and pioneering effort to turn China into a prosperous, strong, democratic and culturally advanced modern socialist country by making economic development its central task while adhering to the Four Cardinal Principles and persevering in reform and opening up the country (People's Daily Online, 2006).

This chapter explores the complexities and tensions within the Chinese Communist Party's vision of post-disaster heritage. There are five sections in this chapter. The first of these will consider the role of nationalism in the Chinese Communist Party's responses to the 5.12 earthquake, while the second aims to investigate the CCP's emergency plans and actions as regards cultural heritage. The third section, meanwhile, is based on an analysis of the CCP's role in shaping the post-disaster heritage landscape during the earthquake transition, examining the use of post-disaster tourism development to illustrate how post-disaster heritage has been shaped by the CCP through the production of cultural heritage landscapes. The fourth

section, Old and New Beichuan County: Political Power and New Meanings of Heritage, explores how and to what extent heritage connotations have been shaped by the CCP and what new meanings of heritage underlie the hidden political power transformation in the aftermath of the earthquake. In the fifth section, I emphasise how museums are used as official 'text' on the earthquake, and go on to evaluate the re-interpretation of cultural heritage after the earthquake, arguing that cultural heritage as presented in the museums is marked by a strong Communist character, and that during the transition period Sichuan's regional cultural heritage has been diluted and assimilated.

6.1 Nationalism and the 5.12 Earthquake: The Chinese Communist Party's Responses to the Earthquake

A nation's spirit is most evident in times of crisis, especially in the face of natural calamities, and thus nationalism has been re-emphasised in the wake of the Sichuan earthquake. In China, it is believed that the history of Chinese civilisation is a history of fighting against disasters: it was through these ordeals that the great national spirit was forged and national cohesion achieved. The reason the Chinese nation was able to thrive after all these disasters and stand up straight after such suffering is its unyielding, tenacious and all-conquering national spirit. In the face of a cataclysm, the Chinese nation once again 'straightened its unyielding backbone, showing its lofty spirit'. The rescue teams arrived quickly, travelling thousands of miles to save people, and love and dedication were shown by society as a whole. The role of socialist cooperation in jointly overcoming difficulties was demonstrated in the strong will of the Chinese people after the catastrophe.

The disaster quickly became a national-scale event which drew people's attention and became a preoccupation of society as a whole. This section explores the Chinese Communist Party's responses to the earthquake, arguing that patriotism and nationalism were strongly promoted through the CCP's leadership of the earthquake recovery. The CCP organised the entire society for earthquake recovery through speedy action and a call for national unity, mobilisation on a national scale, and the involvement of a range of governmental institutions from throughout China. These will be analysed in the following sections.

6.1.1 The CCP's Call for Unity and National Mobilisation for Earthquake Recovery

The State Council plays a leading role in natural disaster relief, and it is expressly directed by the Prime Minister. After the earthquake, Prime Minister Wen Jiabao immediately came to Sichuan in order to assume leadership of the Relief Headquarters. Under the aegis of the Chinese Communist Party, more than 23,000 soldiers from the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the armed police were assembled and sent to the disaster areas on the afternoon of 12 May 2008. A quick reaction was essential, since after the first 72 hours following an earthquake, the probability of finding survivors in the rubble quickly decreases. The Emergency Response Law of the People's Republic of China (2008), which was adopted on 30 August 2007, states that "The State Council, under the Prime Minister's leadership, determines and organises the response to any emergency event", making it clear that Prime Minister Wen Jiabao's action was not only his own personal reaction, but had a legislative basis and, most importantly, a symbolic meaning.

The Chinese Communist Party led a national-scale mobilisation in the wake of the earthquake. Under the unified guidance of the Central Military Commission of the Communist Party of China, a rescue force was organised which included the army, the air force, armed police corps, public security, fire fighters, and the reserve militia for disaster relief. The total number of troops reached 146,000, made up of 70,000 officers and soldiers of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and 75,000 members of the reserve forces or the police (Hou, 2010). This rapid, large-scale reaction included several steps. On the first day, 12 May, two teams comprising 16,000 and 2,000 soldiers arrived, while 15 May saw the largest mobilisation, with 130,000 soldiers dispatched to the disaster areas. Medical workers were also mobilised on a massive scale: according to the China Daily of 2 June 2008, 139,642 medical workers were involved in operations. In addition to these 'conventional' medical workers, 1,000 psychiatrists and psychologists were sent to the disaster areas to support the victims. This was the first time that such people had intervened in relief operations in China, and was in itself a sign of China's development.

The physical mobilisation was accompanied by a strong economic one, since during the days following the disaster, the Ministry of Finances raised a special fund of RMB 830 million Yuan, and the Central Bank did not hesitate to provide RMB 5.5 billion Yuan to local financial institutions in order to make money available for rebuilding (Economic Observer, 26 May, 2008). A RMB 25 billion Yuan emergency relief fund to buy supplies was also provided from the Prime Minister's Emergency Fund (Economic

Observer, 26 May, 2008). These funds only dealt with emergency management, though: rebuilding required additional funding.

Figure 6.2 shows large-scale mobilisation flowing into Sichuan from all over the country, and it is clear that the CCP's vertical and centralised administration supported and distributed this. The first map shows China as a whole with the red area indicating the earthquake-affected region (mainly Sichuan Province), while the second zooms in on the Sichuan earthquake-affected area with arrowheads demonstrating how teams from different Provinces in China were mobilised.

Figure 6.2: National scale mobilisation
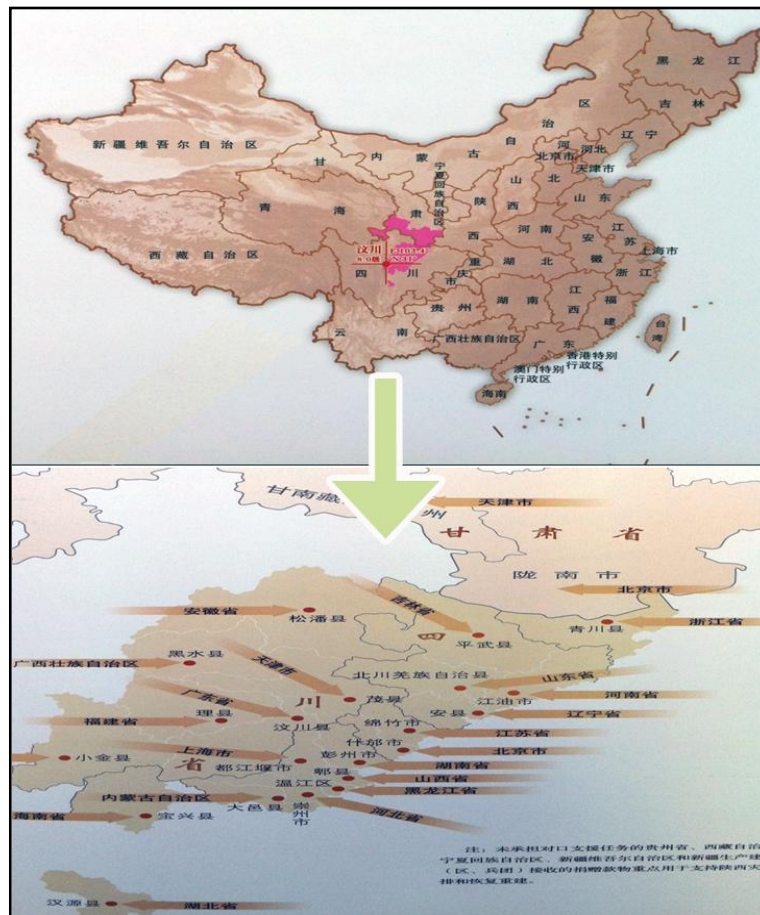
Source: Sichuan Earthquake Disaster Atlas, (2008).

6.1.2 The Involvement of a range of Governmental Institutions from throughout China

Disaster management involved resources from the entire Chinese administrative machine, with the huge mobilisation showing the complexity and vastness of the administration required. More than 45 central government institutions took part in relief work (China Daily, 24 May, 2008). Fifteen ministries mobilised to face the disaster had major responsibilities, representing more than half of the 28 ministries or commissions which exist in China (China Daily, 24 May, 2008): there can be no doubt that the mobilisation of provincial and local authorities was a huge task. The Sichuan Province Commandment Centre to Fight Disaster was set up to lead the relief work in the worst-hit Province, Sichuan.

The national government created an impressive mechanism to supervise relief funds. On 26 May, the authorities mobilised five departments to control the use of funds: the Central Committee for Inspection of Chinese Communist Party Central Committee's Discipline, the Supervision Ministry, the Ministry of Civil Affairs, the Ministry of Finances and the National Audit Office (China Daily, 26 May, 2008). Their first task was relief fund surveillance, but they also had to supervise the quality of products sent to disaster areas, in partnership with the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine, which punishes enterprises sending out-of-date or faulty products. The latter administrative agency asked local agencies to supervise the quality of drinking water, milk and other everyday commodities.

6.1.3 The Rebuilding of Sichuan: a National Strategy Promoted by the CCP

After the earthquake, rebuilding Sichuan became a national strategy, with planning playing an important role in reconstruction work. The powerful NDRC (National Development and Reform Commission) normally has a leading function in planning development, with plans that are supposed to last for two years in rural areas and three in urban ones. However, after the earthquake, the State Council created the National Planning Rebuilding Group, a special measure which proves once more the important role played by political initiatives and innovations in dealing with such an exceptional event.

According to the State Council document entitled "State Council Circular on Printing and Distributing the Overall Planning for Post-Sichuan Earthquake Restoration and Reconstruction" (2008), after the earthquake, the Chinese Communist Party laid out an overall plan for post-quake restoration and reconstruction, as follows:

- Complete restoration within three years: rebuild urban and rural residences; reconstruct all basic public services and infrastructure; restore living conditions for the majority of the population; help socio-economic development reach or exceed pre-quake levels; and lay a solid foundation for sustainable development.

- Revitalise development within five years: develop a distinctive geographical blueprint for industrial regions; optimise industrial infrastructure; establish well-planned towns and villages; install infrastructure to support basic living needs; foster economic progress and promote higher living standards.

- Build a moderately prosperous society within ten years: speed up the development of areas affected by the disaster in order to enable them to reach a level of moderate prosperity, in accordance with the rest of the Province.

These objectives were based upon the basic reconstruction principles as laid out in the State Overall Plan for Post-Sichuan Earthquake Restoration and Reconstruction (2008):

- Put people first, and give top priority to their well-being
- Respect nature by ensuring scientific planning
- Take all factors into account and make comprehensive arrangements to ensure co-ordinated development set up mechanism for innovation and conduct collaborative construction
- Put safety first and ensure quality
- Strictly practise frugality and protect farmland
- Inherit and support cultural development, and protect ecology
- Adapt to local conditions and implement overall planning in different phases

Many of these plans, such as the State Post-Disaster Reconstruction Plan, show how the Chinese Communist Party aimed to produce a new Sichuan. A specific example can be seen in the 'one-to-one help' strategy. After the earthquake, it was decided to create links between rich areas and disaster areas, a little like twinning towns. The Ministry of Civil Affairs adopted a one-to-one assistance strategy: 20 Provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions in China were each urged to care for and help a seriously quake-hit county or city at a county level. For instance, Beijing assisted Shifang, Shanghai assisted Doujiangyan, Guangdong Province assisted Wenchuan, and Shandong Province assisted Beichuan. Table 6.1 provides detailed information on these one-to-one partnerships.

Table 6.1: List of one-to-one partnerships for Sichuan earthquake reconstruction

Supply assistant Province in China	Demand counties (including cities at county level) in affected area (mainly in Sichuan Province)
Shandong Province, China	Beichuan County, Sichuan Province
Guangdong Province, China	Wenchuan County, Sichuan Province
Zhejiang Province, China	Qingchuan County, Sichuan Province
Jiangsu Province, China	Mianzhu City, Sichuan Province
Beijing City, China	Shifang City, Sichuan Province
Shanghai City, China	Dujiangyan City, Sichuan Province
Hebei Province, China	Pingwu County, Sichuan Province
Liaoning Province, China	An County, Sichuan Province
Henan Province, China	Jiangyou City, Sichuan Province
Fujian Province, China	Pengzhou City, Sichuan Province
Shanxi Province, China	Mao County, Sichuan Province
Hunan Province, China	Li County, Sichuan Province
Jilin Province, China	Heishui County, Sichuan Province
Anhui Province, China	Songpan County, Sichuan Province
Jiangxi Province, China	Xiaojin County, Sichuan Province
Hubei Province, China	Hanyuan County, Sichuan Province
Chongqing City, China	Chongzhou City, Sichuan Province
Heilongjiang Province, China	Jiange County, Sichuan Province
Shenzhen City, China	Gansu Province disaster affected area
Tianjin City, China	Shanxi Province disaster affected area

Source: Sichuan Earthquake Relief Committee, table made by author, (2012).

Through this partnership system, the CCP also tried to take inequalities into account when helping areas damaged by the earthquake. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Sichuan, especially its western areas, remains isolated and is on the periphery of China's territory. The partnership system was designed based on GDP development level on the supply side and damage evaluation level on the demand side: for example, Shanghai, one of the richest cities in China, 'colonises' Wenchuan, which was the earthquake's epicentre and suffered greatly in the disaster. This entire project shows that the CCP considered the disaster to be a national matter, mobilising national

resources and supporting Sichuan to ensure efficient and effective earthquake relief. However, it is important to point out that from another perspective this system also proves that Sichuan was carved up by the whole nation (see Figure 6.3): each rich Province in China attempted to take over a territory in Sichuan. From a cultural geography perspective, it is my view that the CCP's rebuilding plans resemble internal colonialism: CCP policies have shaped Sichuan's cultural landscape, with a resulting scramble for identity. The different Provinces each have their unique place-oriented cultural heritage, and through their reconstruction plans and actions, Sichuan's regional cultural heritage has been diluted and assimilated. In the following section, an analysis of the interpretation of post-disaster heritage by the CCP will demonstrate this in more detail.

Figure 6.3: Internal colonialism and the scramble for national identity assimilation

Source: Sichuan Earthquake Disaster Atlas, (2008).

6.2 The CCP's Emergency Plans and Actions on Cultural Heritage

The above analysis illustrates the Chinese Communist Party's responses to the earthquake, but how and to what extent is the CCP shaping or has it shaped cultural heritage? In this section the CCP's role in producing new cultural heritage through Chinese governmental mechanisms will be analysed in the following two aspects: first, the creation of a cultural heritage emergency management system by the CCP; and second, the CCP's actions in terms of cultural heritage restoration. I argue that the earthquake offered an opportunity for the CCP to regain political power and reshape cultural heritage production at the post-disaster site.

6.2.1 The Creation of a Cultural Heritage Emergency Management System by the CCP

In China, the government, which is led by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), plays a very important role in critical situations such as natural disasters and sudden events. The Chinese Communist Party is the single ruling party. There is a very clear line of command through administrative divisions conforming to China's own political make-up (see Figure 6.4), and government organisations respond to urgent situations not only at a municipal level, but also according to a vertical line of authority operating downwards from the national government to subordinate related bureaus at a provincial, municipal and prefectural level (Sichuan Provincial Bureau of Relic Management, 2010).

Figure 6.4: Vertical separation structure of government in China

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┌────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│               Central government                     │
│            (Population: 1.3 billion)                 │
└────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
   ┌──────────────────────────┐  ┌──────────────────────────┐
   │   22 Provinces and       │  │     4 municipalities     │
   │   5 Autonomous Regions   │  │  Bejing, Shanghai, Tianjin│
   │                          │  │      and Chongqing       │
   └──────────────────────────┘  └──────────────────────────┘
            ┌──────────────────────────────┐
            │       333 Prefectures        │
            │    (Avg. Pop: 3.7 million)   │
            └──────────────────────────────┘
            ┌──────────────────────────────┐
            │       2,816 Counties         │
            │    (Avg. Pop: 600,000)       │
            └──────────────────────────────┘
            ┌──────────────────────────────┐
            │      44,016 Townships        │
            │    (Avg. Pop: 30,000)        │
            └──────────────────────────────┘
            ┌──────────────────────────────┐
            │           Villages           │
            │     (More than 1,000,000     │
            │  with varying population size)│
            └──────────────────────────────┘
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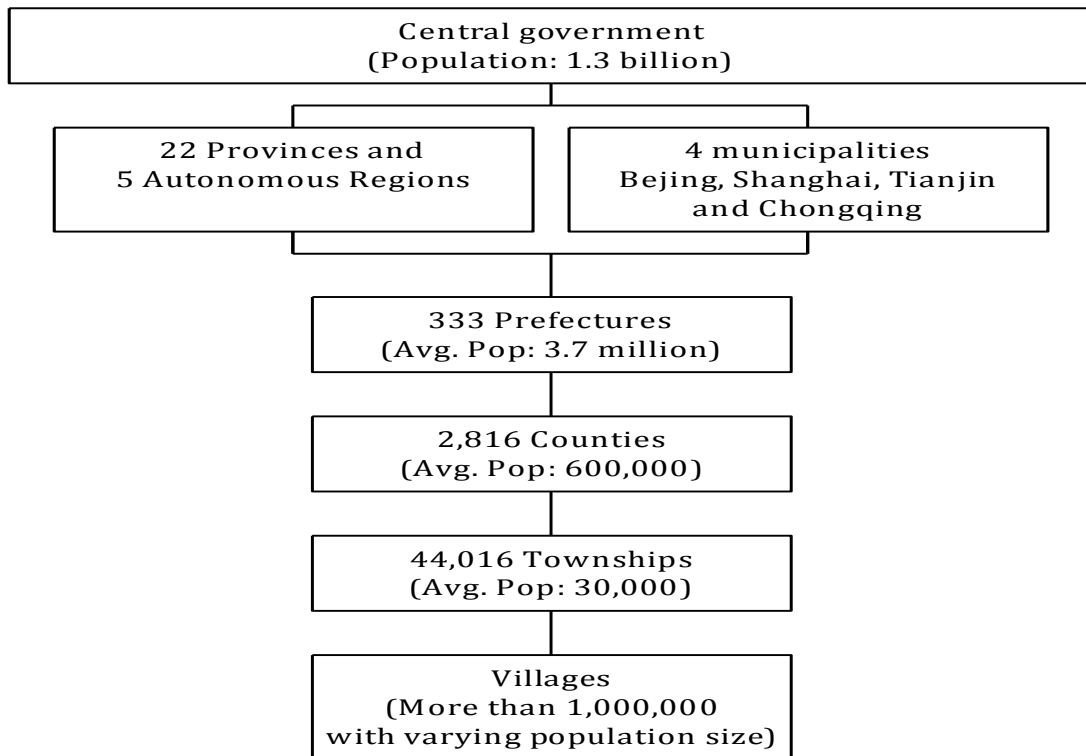
Source: Col, 2007, p. 116.

This top-down mode of operation not only applies to disaster recovery, but also to the development of risk management and emergency plans equipped to encompass problems arising in all administrative branches, such as cultural heritage protection departments. China's cultural heritage emergency management system also displays the characteristics of vertical separation. In general, cultural heritage and cultural landscapes are declared and managed by the central, provincial and municipal government's heritage departments, but natural heritage and natural resources are managed by the three-level central, provincial and municipal implementation of the government's environment department. The Chinese National Commission for UNESCO

actively helps in various heritage declarations and management, providing guidance, coordination and international liaison (Zhou, 2006). Developing cultural heritage emergency systems according to such vertical management is largely stipulated by law, and in a cultural heritage protection area, specific measures are taken by each administrative level under the direction of the State Administration of Cultural Heritage.

In addition, cultural relic bureaus at each administrative level seek ratification or approval from the relevant local administration for measures formulated by each branch of command. For example, the Cultural Relics Bureau of Sichuan Province formulated an emergency measures plan in 2000 under a policy aiming to "establish command teams to carry out emergency measures required in the event of a major disaster or incident", and obtained ratification for this from the Sichuan Provincial People's Government. Furthermore, the Cultural Relics Bureau of Dujiangyan has also devised plans for emergency measures based on the approval of the National Disaster Reduction Committee and the office of the Dujiangyan Provincial People's Government. Cultural heritage protection divisions at each administrative level, therefore, devise measures based on the idea of carrying out operations while receiving instructions from the chain of command, gaining the approval of people's government offices at various levels, and managing risks. In this way, as Figure 6.5 shows, a national project to embark on the full-scale restoration of cultural heritage under the leadership of the State Administration of Cultural Heritage was born.

Figure 6.5: Cultural heritage emergency management system in China
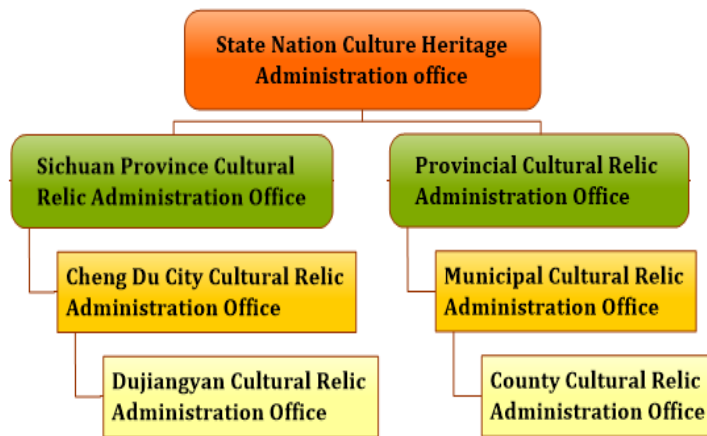
Source: Adapted from Japan Consortium for International Cooperation in Cultural Heritage, (2010).

When the Sichuan earthquake struck, emergency measures were carried out effectively, given that plans were already in place within cultural relic offices at all administrative levels, based on a line of command through administrative divisions reflecting China's own political make-up. Under the strong leadership of the Central Party and State Council and the close supervision of the Provincial Party Commission and the Provincial Government, and with great support from the Ministry of Culture, the State Administration of Cultural Heritage, and other Provinces and municipalities, CCP members working at a variety of different administrative levels in the field of cultural relics immediately dedicated themselves to the cause of post-disaster relief, despite the obvious drawback of having no examples to follow or any previous experience. CCP members working in the field of cultural heritage responded quickly to evaluate the cultural heritage damage assessment and then to initiate the emergency

plan. Immediately after the earthquake, meanwhile, CCP members organised a vast number of people to clean up the sites and reinforce unstable structures (Sichuan Provincial Bureau of Relic Management, 2008).

While strong leadership, coordination and the establishment of a consultation system do not guarantee the successful rescue and conservation of cultural heritage in the post-disaster period, following the Central Government's instruction that "work should be effective and efficient" and encouraged by slogans put forth by the Provincial Party Committee and the Provincial Government, CCP members claim that their work on cultural relics to implement post-earthquake cultural heritage conservation projects was responsible, determined, industrious and selfless. The following statement from the first annual conference on the post-Sichuan earthquake rescue and preservation of cultural heritage demonstrates the CCP members' ambition and commitment to heritage relief work:

> We will make great efforts to prepare conservation plans and conservation designs for damaged sites; to give priority to projects for severely damaged sites and those closely related to the livelihood of local communities; to strengthen management regulations, project management and training of the technical teams for saving ethnic cultural heritage; to expand our collections of 'earthquake relics'; to restore damaged museum collections, and build earthquake museums; to construct a website for the public on Sichuan's post-earthquake cultural heritage conservation project management; and to strive for a new victory in earthquake relief for cultural heritage. (Sichuan Provincial Bureau of Relic Management, 2009).

There is a clear political flavour to the message delivered in these sentences, and the next section will provide a more detailed account of CCP actions for the restoration of cultural heritage.

6.2.2 The Chinese Communist Party's Actions for the Restoration of Cultural Heritage

With great disaster comes increased attention; the Chinese Communist Party gave extremely high priority to cultural heritage relief. As a member of the Standing Committee of the Party, Premier Wen Jiabao immediately visited Dujiangyan, the World Cultural Heritage site, and pointed out the importance of rescuing the country's outstanding cultural heritage as well as of studying the anti-seismic theory and technology developed by the ancient Chinese. The Premier allocated RMB 30 million Yuan of emergency funds for the immediate rescue of cultural heritage, and in addition he ordered the State Administration of Cultural Heritage to "prepare a plan for cultural heritage". Li Changchun, a member of the Standing Committee of the Party, as well as Liu Yandong, a member of the Committee of the Party and a State Councillor, also supervised post-earthquake relief on the frontline and consoled those who had suffered in the disaster.

Figure 6.6 shows Li Changchun investigating and supervising cultural heritage relief at Erwang Temple cultural heritage site on 3 June 2008. The left-hand image of Figure 6.7 illustrates Liu Yandong's visit to Dujiangyan cultural heritage site on 29 May 2008, while the right-hand image shows her giving an affectionate hug to Zhang Xiu, who works for Dujiangyan Municipal Bureau of Cultural Relics and who lost her husband in the earthquake. According to incomplete statistics, the Party leaders issued 112 instructions concerning the strengthening of relief efforts for cultural heritage (Sichuan Provincial Bureau of Relic Management, 2009). Such a shared concern from the Party greatly lifted the spirits of heritage preservationists in Sichuan Province who

had been working on the frontline of earthquake relief. This section illustrates the Chinese Communist Party's actions on the restoration of cultural heritage through CCP heritage plans, the CCP leader's inspections of heritage scenes, and CCP actions on ethnic heritage and the restoration of museum collections.

Figure 6.6: Li Changchun, member of the Standing Committee of the Party, investigates the situation of damaged cultural heritage at Erwang Temple cultural heritage site

Source: State Administration of Cultural Heritage [Online].

Figure 6.7: Liu Yandong, member of the Standing Committee of the Party, investigates the situation of damaged cultural heritage at Dujiangyan heritage site

Source: State Administration of Cultural Heritage [Online].

CCP Actions on Restoration of Heritage Plans

On 19 May, one week after the earthquake, Shan Jixiang, Director of the State Administration of Cultural Heritage, visited affected areas, and on 20 May, a Disaster Relief Mobilisation Assembly addressing issues concerning cultural relics was held at Wuhouci Shrine in the city of Chengdu. This was the first meeting between cultural heritage protection divisions regarding earthquake relief. Thereafter, as is shown in Figure 6.8, conferences on post-disaster heritage recovery were held by administrative departments at various levels. On 29 May, the Sichuan Earthquake Disaster Relief and Protection Technical Research Conference was held by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage. The conference was conducted by Vice-Director Dong, and 19 institutions from scientific research groups and graduate schools within China participated, such as the Chinese Academy of Cultural Heritage, China Architecture Design and Research Group, Qinghua University, Beijing Research Institute of Ancient Architecture, Hebei Province Ancient Architecture Protection and Research Institute, and Zhejiang Province Ancient Architecture Design and Research Institute. At this conference, the State Administration of Cultural Heritage made plans to tackle three issues:

- To visually inspect the affected areas at first hand and accurately grasp the status of damage
- To promptly instruct workers what emergency measures they should take to protect items in a perilous state, particularly buildings
- To take the initiative and put in place a work system for disaster site recovery

(Japan Consortium for International Cooperation in Cultural Heritage, 2010)

Figure 6.8: Conferences discussing post-disaster heritage recovery, involving various administrative departments

Source: State Administration of Cultural Heritage [Online].

Meanwhile, since this disaster was so extensive and unforeseen by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage, and the findings of initial damage estimates showed that many buildings over a wide area were affected, it was deemed impossible for Sichuan Province alone to undertake cultural heritage restoration. In response to this difficult situation, the State Administration of Cultural Heritage proposed a plan to select experts from across the nation to take on cultural heritage restoration duties, and thus a specific national heritage restoration system was established.

On 1 August, the second Technical Research Conference was held, and additional organisations were invited to join up with the previous conference participants to help

with relief restoration work. These organisations included the Guangxi Cultural Relic Protection Centre, Beijing University of Civil Engineering and Technology, Shaanxi Research Institute of Ancient Architecture, Henan Research Institute of Ancient Architecture, Jiangxi Cultural Relic Protection Centre, Shandong Cultural Relic Protection Centre, Liaoning Cultural Relic Protection Centre and the Xian Centre for the Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Heritage. In this way, organisations were added by the state to the relief restoration work programme in a top-down manner.

According to an interview with Zhu Xiaonan, Vice-Director of the Sichuan Provincial Bureau of Relic Management, a total of about 250 different institutions have participated in making planning proposals for cultural heritage restoration. Figure 6.9 illustrates documentation collected during fieldwork relating to different institutions' planning proposals on cultural heritage restoration. Among this documentation, two important documents contributed greatly to this research: the first being the General Earthquake Damage Restoration Plan on Cultural Heritage created by the State Administration of Cultural Heritage (top right-hand image in Figure 6.9), and another the Report on the Damage Status Survey on Cultural Heritage, compiled by the Cultural Relics Bureau of Sichuan Province (lower right-hand image in Figure 6.9).

Figure 6.9: Different institutions' planning proposals on cultural heritage restoration

Source: Collected in fieldwork from different departments. Photographed by the author Zhang, (2010).

CCP Actions on Restoration of Heritage Scenes

The Chengdu Municipal Bureau of Culture, which was close to the scene, organised two emergency measures teams to start restoration work. One of these was the "Cultural Relic Disaster Reduction Command Team", established to supervise the administration of subordinate municipal, prefectural and district offices. Figure 6.11 illustrates the conference, seminar, group discussion and telephone dialogue models that were conducted by the Cultural Relic Disaster Reduction Command team. The other body was the "Cultural Relic Disaster Reduction Expert Advisory Team", set up to provide technical advice and leadership. The Expert Advisory Team was composed of experts

from Sichuan and Chengdu in the fields of historic architecture, building construction, economics, geology, historical studies, heritage management, historic site planning and archaeology. In addition to giving advice on emergency measures, they travelled to sites to examine the validity of the restoration plans that had been drawn up and to provide relevant advice and recommendations. The Expert Advisory Team's work in on-the-ground supervision and evaluation is illustrated in Figure 6.10.

Figure 6.10: The Cultural Relic Disaster Reduction Expert Advisory Team's on-the-ground supervision and evaluation

Source: Dujiangyan Municipal Bureau of Culture [Online]

Figure 6.11: Conference, seminar, group discussion and telephone dialogue models as related to Sichuan cultural heritage restoration, carried out by the Cultural Relic Disaster Reduction Command Team

Source: Chengdu Municipal Bureau of Culture [Online]

CCP Actions on the Restoration of Ethnic Heritage

Considering the vulnerability of the continuity of ethnic minorities' cultural heritage, calls to carry out speedy relief work in disaster-affected ethnic areas were made by ethnic group research experts. CCP leaders were deeply concerned by this situation and prioritised ethnic heritage restoration. Even in some regions with poor transport infrastructure, work was hurried along due to a need to protect and secure the cultural

heritage of ethnic minority groups. Emergency construction work commenced as soon as 15 July 2008 at Taoping Qiang village, the home of the Chinese ethnic minority Qiang group, which suffered serious damage in the earthquake. Subsequently, in October, restoration of traditional dwellings also got underway in the Tibetan districts of Maerkang and Zhibo, which feature stone watchtowers (Sichuan Cultural Heritage Administration Office, 2008). The CCP leaders' numerous visits to ethnic minority regions, as demonstrated in Figures 6.12 and 6.13, reflect the CCP's deep concern for the restoration of ethnic minorities' cultural heritage.

It is clear that the cultural representation of ethnic minorities such as the Qiang was given special consideration, in the repair and restoration of vernacular buildings, the rescue and protection of intangible cultural heritage, and the building of earthquake memorials. However, I argue that these projects seem more like CCP image projects than a genuine representation of ethnic culture. In Chapter 8, I draw on my visit to an ethnic village and explore this in more depth.

Figure 6.12: CCP Prime Minister Wen Jiabao inspects the regions of ethnic groups and launches Qiang ethnic cultural heritage restoration projects

Source: Xinhuanet [Online].

Figure 6.13: Shan Jixiang, Director of the State Administration of Cultural Heritage, inspects Qiang ethnic villages

Source: State Administration of Cultural Heritage [Online].

CCP Actions on the Restoration of Museum Collections

The Cultural Relics Bureau of Sichuan Province acquired knowledge of the status of earthquake damage to museum collections via subordinate cultural relic bureaus and offices. As mentioned in Chapter 5, the 3,167 damaged relics were categorised according to the extent of damage. Level 1 referred to relics beyond repair, such as items irretrievably buried under the devastation of a collapsed cultural relics office; Level 2 was items with major damage, and Level 3 items with minor damage. Based on this system and led by the CCP, sequential restoration plans were drawn up for these categorised items, and then restoration work got underway. Figure 6.14 shows CCP leaders' investigation and examination work in Sichuan museums.

Figure 6.14: CCP leaders' investigation and examination work in Sichuan museums

Source: Sichuan Museum [Online].

The Cultural Relics Bureau of Sichuan Province was not only attempting to restore damaged museum collections, but also to build central storage and museums.

Because the central storage established in Mianyang city contributed greatly to the protection of its relics from the earthquake, the effectiveness of using such buildings as an anti-seismic measure has been reappraised and is now heavily promoted. Furthermore, based on the lessons learned from this earthquake, other anti-seismic measures are also being reviewed, including anti-seismic building design as well as the preparation of earthquake-resistant storage shelves, and locking away and storing cultural heritage items in storage boxes (Sichuan Museum, 2008).

The above analysis highlights the CCP's actions in terms of the restoration of cultural heritage. Relevant departments from state, provincial, city and prefectural administrations began work on cultural heritage restoration immediately after the earthquake, and officials from different administrative levels of the CCP visited affected sites one after the other immediately after the disaster. The interviewees who took part in this research were unanimous in stressing how important it was that people involved on the ground received encouragement and leadership in the restoration work. There is no doubt that, with all the means at its disposal — institutions, plans, government conferences, CCP leader encouragement and inspection visits — the CCP had a major influence on the production of the post-disaster heritage landscape. CCP ideology penetrated all these channels and shaped post-disaster heritage, as the following case studies will demonstrate.

6.3 Authorised Heritage Discourse on Post-disaster Tourism

Since the earthquake, redevelopment and modernisation seem to be the buzz words forming an overarching agenda for the implementation of the national reconstruction scheme. Tourism is earmarked as a high priority; counties in quake-hit areas have attached much importance to its development and it has seen rapid growth in terms of both scale and revenue. There is every chance that in the wake of the Sichuan earthquake there will be considerable structural adjustment in the quake-hit areas as local government and tourism operators try to take full advantage of such opportunities to promote tourism. Building on the previous chapter's contextualisation of the transformation of cultural heritage sites from landscape to touristscape, this section analyses the official discourse on post-disaster heritage in the earthquake transition period, using post-disaster tourist development as a way of illustrating how post-disaster heritage is constructed by the Chinese government. It will focus on an analysis of post-disaster tourism in terms of planning, marketing and action, based on field research materials, in particular post-disaster plans for tourism.

6.3.1 Planning Post-Disaster Tourism

Post-disaster tourism planning plays an important role in reconstruction. According to the Sichuan Tourism Overall Plan for Post-Sichuan Earthquake Restoration and Reconstruction (2008), the tourism restoration project aims to fully upgrade tourist capacity in the disaster area, thus contributing to the restoration of economic production, the securing of people's livelihoods and the creation of employment opportunities. Restoration of the tourist industry was made the top priority for disaster

recovery. First of all, the state government decided to implement projects for the revitalisation of tourism to strengthen the construction of key tourist areas and quality tourist itineraries, restoring and reconstructing key tourist attractions and scenic spots, as well as tourist towns and villages with distinctive ethnic features, and restoring and developing rural tourism. Secondly, it proposed the restoration and reconstruction of tourist transport facilities, service areas and stations along the tourist route, the careful reinforcement and reconstruction of tourist hotels and other facilities, and the establishment of emergency and rescue systems for tourist safety. Thirdly, it planned to improve the promotion of the tourism market and to deliver timely reports on tourist safety measures with a view to restoring the confidence of domestic and foreign tourists, as well as to intensifying the promotion of new tourist resources and products (Post-Disaster Tourism Plan, 2008).

It is clear that the cultural heritage sites analysed in Chapter 5 have been affected by these plans. A typical example of this is Mianzhu New Year Pictures Village (see Figure 6.15), the unique characteristic of which are its wood-cut New Year paintings, which by tradition were hung on the wall or windows for good luck in the coming year. The Mianzhu New Year pictures eventually came to be regarded as part of the old-fashioned Sichuan cultural heritage that was vanishing in the face of Chinese modernisation, but after the Sichuan earthquake this facet of cultural heritage was revived once more, with a view to protecting local culture. An official document reads: "Hailed as one of four Chinese New Year pictures, Mianzhu New Year Pictures is in an excellent position for resource development and utilisation" (Post-Disaster Tourism Plan, 2008). For this

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reason, the New Year Pictures Village was officially revived and became a national 4A

class scenic spot.

Figure 6.15: Mianzhu New Year Pictures Village

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2012).

The project was set up in the village of Shejiantai in the township of Xiaode in

Mianzhu, five kilometres from the urban area of Mianzhu. Relying on rich agricultural

resources, the New Year Pictures Village has developed its own folk brand, including a

New Year Picture exhibition, New Year Picture training, as well as countryside foraging

for organic food and travel (Post-Disaster Tourism Plan, 2008). In the wake of the

earthquake, the project was selected and guided by the Chinese government, marking

the authorities' intention to shape or indeed completely remake the Sichuan landscape:

Chapter 8 of this thesis will look at these issues in greater depth. This section, meanwhile, focuses on building a profile of the official discourse on post-disaster tourism, and the following analysis of the spatial layout of post-disaster tourist sites will explore these issues in more detail.

Spatial Layout of Post-Disaster Tourism Sites

Table 6.2 provides an overview of post-disaster tourism planning and a summary of post-disaster tourism planning objectives. In general, there are three tourist industry regions, four tourism zones, five themed tourist itineraries and a large number of scenic site projects. The following sections will explore this in more depth.

Table 6.2: Summary of Post-Disaster Tourism Planning Regions and Objectives

Three Tourist Industry Regions: Rural Leisure Tourism Region; Low to Middle Mountain Tourism Region; High Mountain Tourism Region
Four Tourism Zones: Qiang Ethnic Culture Experiencing Tourist Zone; Longmen Mountains Recreational Tourist Zone; Historical Three Kingdoms Culture Tourist Zone; Giant Panda International Tourism Zone
Five Themed Tourist Itineraries: Jiuzhaigou Circular Tourist Route; Tibetan-Qiang Culture Tourist Route; Sichuan Earthquake Relics Itinerary; Giant Panda Habitat Itinerary; Historical Three Kingdom Culture Itinerary
Scenic Sites and Attractions: Dujiangyang, Qingcheng Mountains, Jiuzhaigou Valley, Huanglong, Jianmen Shudao, Yinghua Mountains, Li Bai's Hometown, Siguniang Mountains, Wanxiang Cave of Wudu, Xixiasong in Chengxian county, Yangba in 57 Kangxian county, Mt. Laga in Zhouqu county, the ancient town of Qingmuchuan, Mt. Dingjun, Thousand Buddha Cliff, etc.

Source: State Overall Plan for Post-Sichuan Earthquake Restoration and Reconstruction, (2008).

Sichuan has a diverse ecological environment, and in general terms the plans divide the post-disaster tourism area into three regions: the Rural Leisure Tourism Region, based on the plain areas (see Figure 6.16, marked purple); natural beauty sites and natural landscape tourism located in the Low to Middle Mountain Tourism Region (see Figure 6.16, marked orange); and adventure and scientific ecological protection tourism concentrated in the High Mountain Tourism Region (see Figure 6.16, marked green).

Figure 6.16: Spatial layout of the three tourism industry regions in post-disaster tourism planning
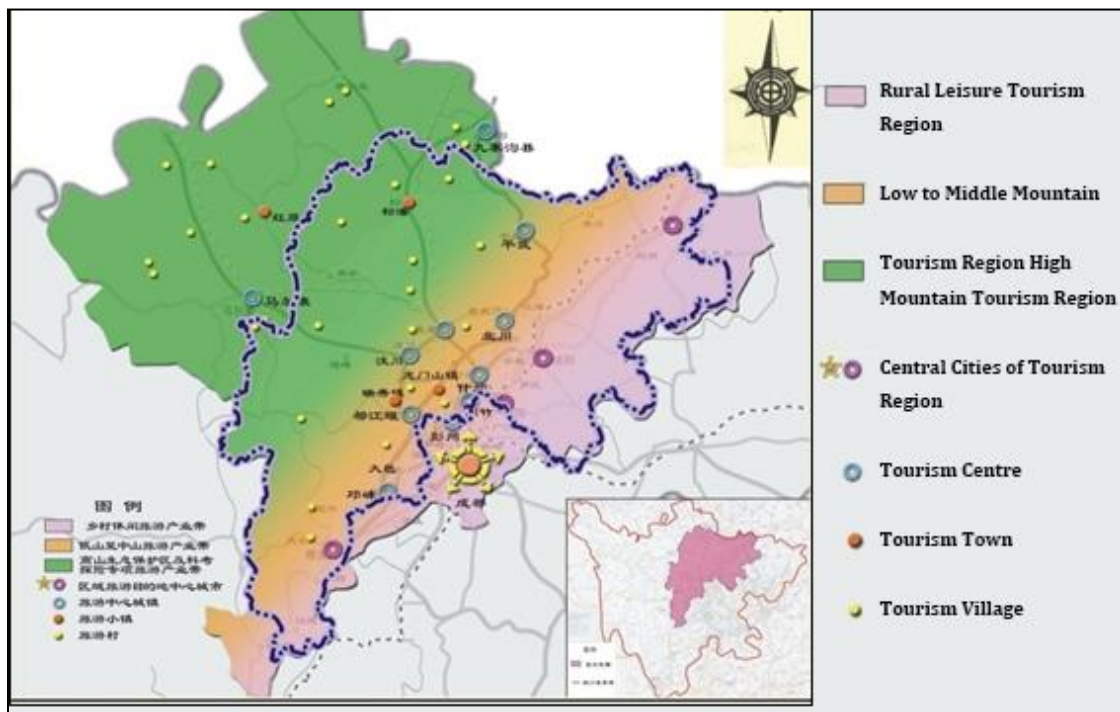
Source: Adapted from Sichuan Post-Disaster Tourism Plan, (2008).

Within the three tourist industry regions, there are four different types of tourism zone. As can be seen in Figure 6.17, the purple area represents the Qiang Ethnic Culture Experience Tourist Zone, the blue- the Longmen Mountains Recreational Tourist Zone,

the red- the Historical Three Kingdoms Culture Tourist Zone, and the yellow- the Giant

Panda International Tourism Zone.

Figure 6.17: Spatial layout of the four tourism zones in post-disaster tourism planning
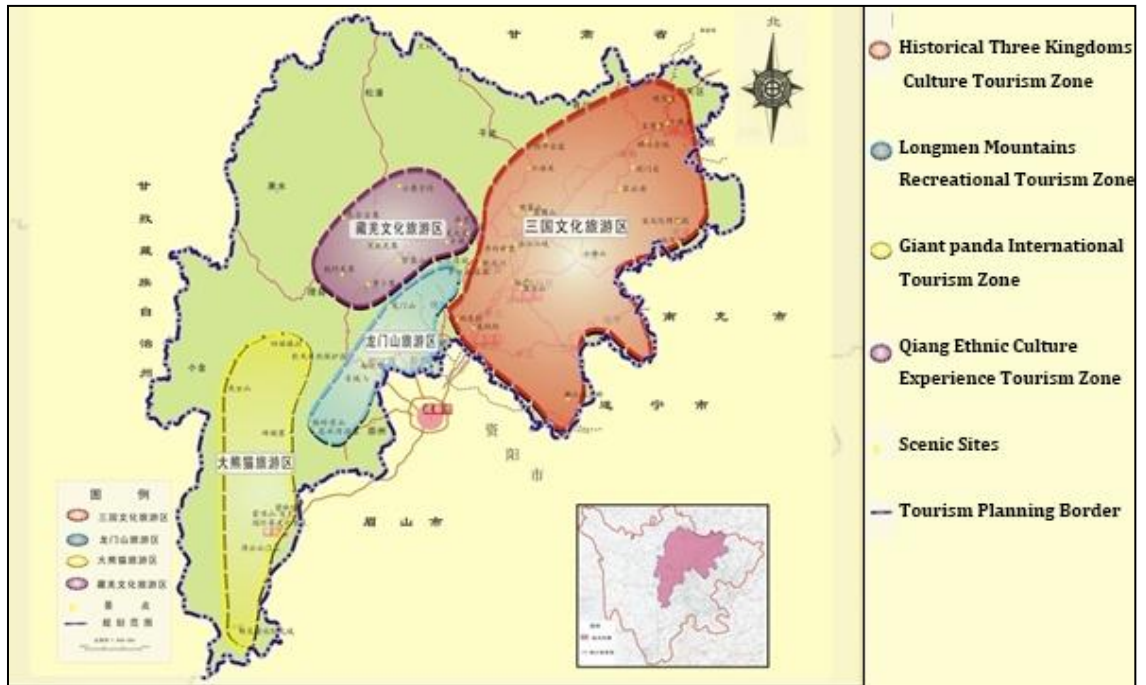
Source: Adapted from Sichuan Post-Disaster Tourism Plan, (2008).

- Figure 6.17: the purple area shows the Qiang Ethnic Culture Experience Tourist Zone, which is based on Aba and the city of Mianyang, the 'Jiu Loop' and the 213 motorway, which links Wenchuan, Li, Mao, Songpan, Beichuan and Pingwu counties, and focuses on Qiang ethnic living areas, including the Qiang villages of Taoping and Heihu, the villages of Luobo and Se'er, the Yingpan mountain cultural heritage sites, the new county of Beichuan, Yuxuegou, Jiuhuang mountain, Yaowang valley, and Xiaozhaizigou

- Figure 6.17: the blue area shows the Longmen Mountains Recreational Tourism Zone, which is based on the cities of Chengdu and Deyang, the Longmen mountain rural tourism system, linking Qingcheng mountain - Dujiangyan, Xiling snow mountain, the Longmen mountain scenic spots, Dayihuashuiwan spa and the Shifang-Mianzhu-Luofu mountain spring

- Figure 6.17: the red area shows the Historical Three Kingdoms Culture Tourism Zone, including the cities of Chengdu, Deyang, Mianyang and Guangyuan, the temples of Wuhou, Pangtong and Shuangzhong, Fuleshan, Jiangyouguan, Qiqushan, Doutuanshan, Xianhai, Feijiangliuxia (the home town of Li Bai), the Qijianghan mausoleum, Cuiyunlang, Jianmenguan, the ancient town of Zhaohua, Mingyuexia, the Huangze temple, Qianfoya, the Yinping ancient road, and Cangxi Red Army museums

- Figure 6.17: the yellow area shows the Giant Panda International Tourism Zone, comprising the cities of Chengdu, Yaan and Aba, as well as Fengtongzhai, Wolong, Siguniangshan, Jiajinshan, Bifengxia, the ancient town of Hanyuan, the Mengding mountain-BaiZhang lake, International Tea Culture area, and the Zhougongshan spring

Based on these three tourist industry regions and four tourism zones, five themed tourism itineraries were planned for development. Figure 6.18 illustrates the five competitive themed itineraries for post-disaster tourism.

Figure 6.18: Spatial layout of five themed tourism itineraries in post-disaster tourism planning
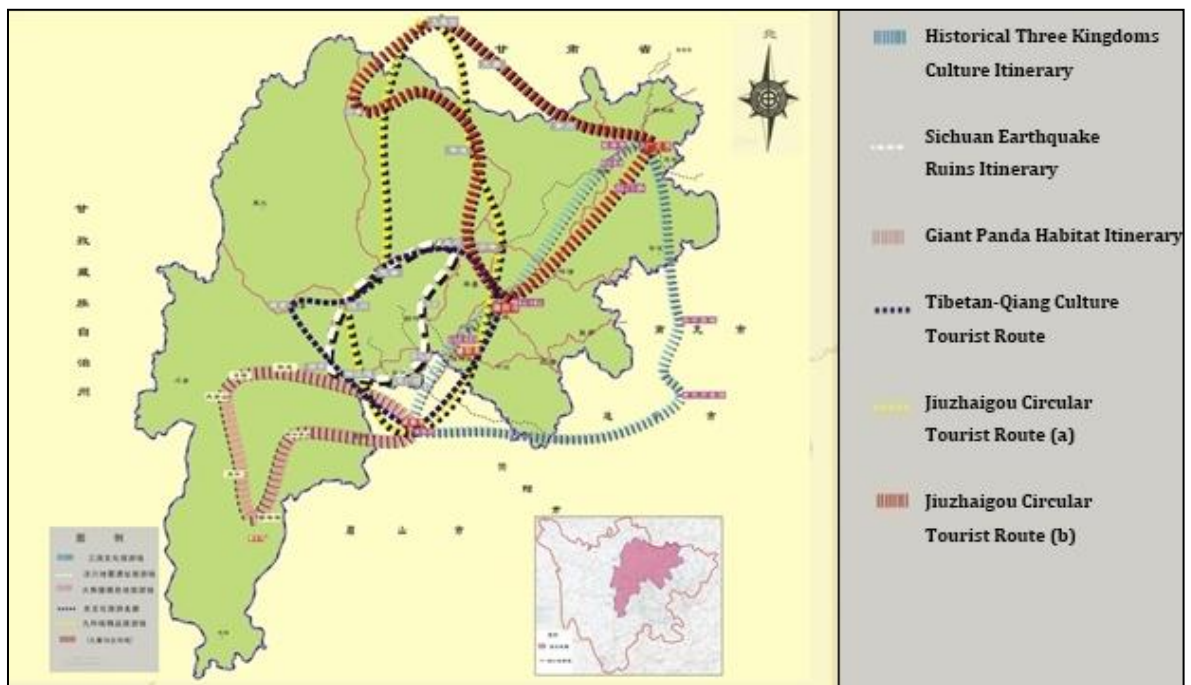
Source: Adapted from Sichuan Post-Disaster Tourism Plan, (2008).

There are two routes for the Jiuzhaigou Circular Tourist Route. In Figure 6.18, the yellow line shows the first route, Chengdu-Wenchuan-Maoxian-Jiuzhaigou, Huanglong-Pingwu-Jiangyou–Chengdu. This route is based on the Jiuzhaigou-Huanglong World Heritage Sites, and includes the Qingcheng mountain-Dujiangyan World Heritage Site, the Qiang ethnic cultural display area, the ancient town of Songpan, the Baoen temple of Pingwu, the Sanxingdui museum, as well as other famous towns and scenic spots. It forms the most important tourist travel route in Sichuan. In Figure 6.18 the dark red

line shows the second route (Guangyuan-Qingchuan-Wenchuan-Jiuzhaigou-Songpan-Wanglang-Pingwu-Beichuan-Mianyang–Guangyuan). The Jiuzhaigou-Huanglong World Heritage Sites form the centrepiece of this route, which is an important channel. It appears that fast-track construction can effectively promote the recovery of the Jiuzhaigou-Huanglong tourism market and promote the development of new resources in the new towns.

In Figure 6.18 the dark blue line shows the Tibetan-Qiang Culture Tourist Route (Chengdu–Lixian-Wenchuan-Maoxian-Beichuan-Mianyang–Chengdu). Based on these four counties, this route showcases China's unique Qiang ethnic culture. The white line represents the Sichuan Earthquake Ruins Itinerary (Dujiangyan-Yingxiu-Wenchuan-Maoxian-Beichuan-Qingchuan-Mianzhu Hanwang-Shifang Chuanxindian-Pengzhou Yinchanggou-Dujiangyan). In the wake of the earthquake, this new route has been devised to attract tourists. This key line has affected this research, and the following section will explore this in more depth.

In Figure 6.18 the light red line shows the Giant Panda Habitat Itinerary (Chengdu-Wolong-Rilong–Jiajin mountain-Baoxing-Bifengxia-Xiling snow mountain-Chengdu). The giant panda tour is based on the Wolong World Heritage Site and includes a wide range of natural environment and cultural heritage, and the route aims to attract tourists keen to see the giant panda.

In Figure 6.18 the light blue line shows the Historical Three Kingdoms Culture Itinerary (Wuhou temple of Chengdu–Baimaguan of Deyang, Pangtong temple-

Mianyang – Fule mountain – Qiqu Mountain – Jianmenguan of Guangyuan, the Huangze temple, the ancient towns of Zhaohua and Langzhong-the house of Nanchong Wanjuan–Chengdu). Based on Wuhou temple and the Jianmen historical road, and passing through the restored and reconstructed areas related to the Historical Three Kingdoms culture and urban heritage, this route aims to enhance the attractiveness of the area in order to achieve new development.

6.3.2 Post-Disaster Tourism in Action

After the earthquake, large numbers of projects were focused on upgrading current tourist sites, improving tourism transport and facilities, and expanding the market for tourism. This section aims to show post-disaster tourism in action through projects to reconstruct historic cities, towns and villages, to restore tourist heritage sites, and to upgrade tourist infrastructure projects.

Projects for the Reconstruction of Historic Cities, Towns and Villages from 2008 to 2013

According to the State Overall Plan for Post-Sichuan Earthquake Restoration and Reconstruction (2008), the timescale for reconstruction projects in tourist cities, towns and villages of cultural and historical interest was from 2008 to 2010. The state government declared that there were four necessary steps in the realisation of these projects. First of all, it was necessary to preserve as much as possible of the traditional layout and original features of the famous cities, towns and villages of cultural and historical interest. Strict measures to control the protection and intensity of exploitation and construction requirements were to be established as part of the

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process of restoration and reconstruction. The secondary aim was to consolidate and restore the key parts of whole buildings within historical and cultural blocks that had suffered minor damage, to preserve the traditional appearance and to use original construction materials or components for those buildings in real need of restoration. The third aim was for the style of damaged modern buildings within historical and cultural blocks to be restored and reconstructed in harmony with the surrounding environment. Finally, the fourth objective was to carefully protect the historical and cultural value of those cities, towns and villages proposed for declaration as nationally- or provincially-renowned cities, towns and villages of historical and cultural interest (State Overall Plan for Post-Sichuan Earthquake Restoration and Reconstruction, 2008).

According to the Sichuan Post-Disaster Tourism Plan (2008), the state government's tourism reconstruction covered 79 villages, towns and cities. Three types of projects, namely strengthening, reconstruction and new projects, were carried out in the agreed cities, towns and villages. Figure 6.19 shows a breakdown of investment in these projects.

- The first column in Figure 6.19 shows that total investment in reconstruction projects for historic and cultural cities, towns and villages was RMB 180.9538 billion. These key projects accounted for 22.04 per cent of total investment. Out of this figure, national investment was RMB 140.7828 billion, accounting for 17.15 per cent of total investment, while social investment was RMB 40.171billion, 4.89 per cent of total investment.
- The second column shows that investment in building strengthening projects was RMB 36.2238 billion, accounting for 4.41 per cent of total investment. National investment was RMB 32.3388 billion, accounting for 3.94 per cent, and social investment RMB 3.885 billion, 0.47 per cent;
- The third column shows investment in reconstruction projects as RMB 102.59 billion, accounting for 12.5 per cent of total investment. This includes state

investment of RMB 71.808 billion, accounting for 8.75 per cent, and social investment of RMB 30.782 billion, 3.75 per cent.

- The fourth column shows that investment in new building projects was RMB 42.14 billion, accounting for 5.13 per cent of total investment, including state investment of RMB 36.636 billion, accounting for 4.46 per cent, and social investment of RMB 5.504 billion, 0.67 per cent.

Figure 6.19: Overall of project investment breakdown
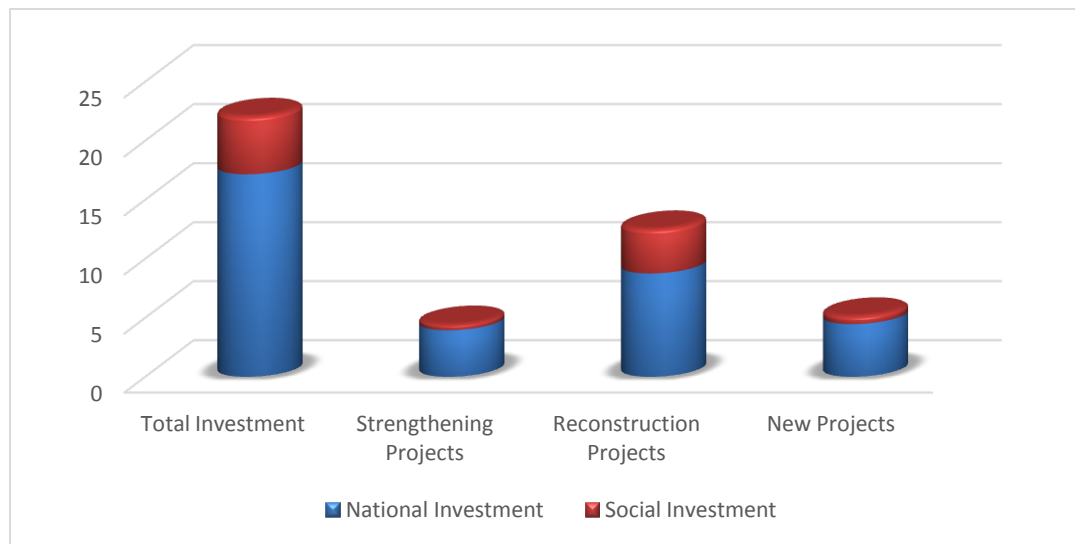
Source: Sichuan Post-Disaster Tourism Plan, (2008).

As the chart shows, national investment played a dominant role, with these massive, intensive projects meeting standard government criteria and enjoying large financial support from the government thus once again proving that post-disaster heritage has been heavily affected by Chinese officialdom. It is my view that the short deadlines, massive projects, and governmental influence as regards image creation, fail to take into account Sichuan's regional cultural identity. For example, the tourist town of Aba has failed to highlight ethnic Qiang and Tibetan culture, and Heishui, Li county, and Songpan should in my opinion focus more on the architectural styles characteristic of Tibetan culture. Maoxian and Wenchuan should place more emphasis on the main

characteristics of Qiang culture, while the new county of Beichuan could also inherit and develop Qiang cultural features, and the new county of Qingchuan should express more of the ordinary residential architectural character of northern Sichuan. Pingwu, on the other hand, could focus on Qiang and Baima Tibetan culture, while Dujiangyan should give greater prominence to western Sichuanese architectural styles. Development in Hanyuan, too, has failed to promote Han Dynasty architectural culture.

Restoration of Tourist Heritage Sites

According to the State Overall Plan for Post-Sichuan Earthquake Restoration and Reconstruction (2008), the state government believes it is necessary to attach importance to the salvage and protection of cultural and natural World Heritage Sites as well as national culture, and to protect intangible cultural heritage and architecture of historical value with ethnic minority characteristics. At the same time, it is seen as important to repair and restore cultural and natural World Heritage Sites, cultural relics protection units, martyr memorial protection units and museums, central storehouses of cultural relics, cultural relics management offices, theme museums of intangible cultural heritage, folk customs museums and institutes, and related places of religious activity. It is also necessary to restore and reconstruct damaged structures for performances and exhibitions, creative animation work, the issue and distribution of books and audio-visual products, culture and entertainment, artwork ventures, etc.

Table 6.3 summarises the tourist heritage preservation projects carried out in Sichuan after the earthquake. Among these, there are, for instance, plans to restore and

reconstruct Sanxingdui, the Mianzhu New Year Paintings, the Guangyuan and Dujiangyan cultural parks, as well as cultural bases such as the Jiuzhaigou Performing Arts Group and the Jianchuan museum cluster, to reinforce and rebuild the Hechi Calligraphy and Painting Institute in Huixian county and the Tonggu Calligraphy and Painting Institute in Chengxian county, and to create competitive brands like Qiang embroidery, Qiangba print, etc. However, field observation shows that, owing to the heavy influence of the authorities, these heritage preservation projects are largely commercialised when applied in practice, like old goods being packaged with a new brand name. These issues will be analysed in more detail in Chapter 8 of the thesis.

Table 6.3: Summary of post-disaster tourism heritage preservation projects

Cultural and Natural World Heritage Sites: Qingcheng Mountain-Dujiangyan, Jiuzhaigou Nature Reserve, Huanglong, and Sichuan panda habitats.
China's Potential List of World Heritage Sites: Sanxingdui relic site, Diaolou and villages of Tibetan and Qiang ethnic groups, and Jiannanchun brewery site.
Cultural Relics Protection Units: 190 cultural relics protection units at various levels and 20 tangible cultural heritage sites of ethnic minorities, such as the Temple of Two Nobilities, Lingbao Monastery in Pengzhou, Yunyan Temple in Jiangyou, Bao'en Temple in Pingwu, Huangze Temple in Guangyuan, Diaolou and Qiang ethnic village in Taoping (Lixian county), cliffside carvings of the newly-built Baishui road in Huixian county, and the Tongxin Qiang ethnic village in Ningqiang.
Museums and Cultural Relics Storehouses: 65 museums and storehouses including Mianyang Museum, Shifang Museum, Qiang Ethnic Group Museum in Maoxian county, Longnan Museum, the central storehouse in the city of Guangyuan, the cultural relics management office in Hanyuan county, etc. and 3,473 pieces (sets) of collected cultural relics.
Intangible Cultural Heritage: 111 museums and institutes, including Qiang Custom Museum in Beichuan county, the Theme Museum of Jiannanchun Wine Brewing Technology, the Mianzhu New Year Pictures Museum and Institute, the Gezhou Institute at White Horse Pool in Wenxian county, the Jiangshen Temple Folk Custom Museum in Lueyang, etc.

Source: State Overall Plan for Post-Sichuan Earthquake Restoration and Reconstruction, 2008

Upgrading Tourist Infrastructure Projects

In developing post-disaster tourism, it is clear that priority should be given to tourist infrastructure. Rational adjustments must be made to the infrastructure in accordance with geological and geographical conditions and rural and urban layout, while also taking into account planning for local socio-economic development, rural and urban planning and land use planning. It is also important to combine resources, far and near, to optimise infrastructure, to rationally determine criteria for construction and to enhance capacity for safety assurance (State Overall Plan for Post-Sichuan Earthquake Restoration and Reconstruction, 2008).

Another very important issue for tourist infrastructure is the accessibility of tourist sites, including public transport. Table 6.4 outlines the main public transport reconstruction projects which are under way.

Table 6.4: Outline of public transport reconstruction projects

Expressways: Mianxian County-Ningqiang-Guangyuan, Guangyuan-Bazhong, Ya'an-Shimian, Dujiangyan-Yingxiu, Chengdu-Mianyang, Mianyang-Guangyuan, Chengdu-Qionglai, Chengdu-Dujiangyang, Chengdu-Pengzhou, Baoji-Niubei roads, etc.
Arterial highways: 1,910 km of the damaged road sections of national highways 108, 212, 213, 316, 317, 318; 22 provincial roads of about 3,323 km (including two Province-controlled county roads); 12 other important arterial highways totalling 848 km. Timely opening of high-grade highways from Mianzhu to Maoxian county, and from Chengdu to Wenchuan.
Railways: arterial railways for Baoji-Chengdu, Chengdu-Kunming, Chengdu-Chongqing and branch lines for Chengdu-Wenchuang, Guanghan-Yuejiashan, Deyang-Tianchi, Guangyuan-Wangcang; renovation or reconstruction of sections of the Baoji-Chengdu railway, such as the 109 tunnel and seriously-damaged major stations such as Mianyang, Guangyuan, Jiangyou, Deyang, etc.; construction of Chengdu-Dujiangyan intercity railway, Chengdu-Mianyang-Leshan passenger railway, and Lanzhong-Chongqin railway. Timely opening of Chendu-Lanzhou and Xian-Chengdu railways.
Civil Aviation: airports of Chengdu, Jiuhuang, Mianyang, Guangyuan, Kangding, Nanchong, Luzhou, Yibin, Hanzhong, Xianyang, Ankang, Lanzhou, Qingyang, etc., and

damaged facilities and equipment of units such as air traffic control, airlines, aviation oil supply, etc.

Specifically, four main infrastructure reconstruction projects were carried out for tourist transport. The timescale for major tourist transport projects was from 2008 to 2010, including:

- Jiuhuang airport expansion project: the project replaced Jiuhuang's land transport system during the reconstruction period, and enhanced the air transport system in affected areas.
- Jiuzhaigou route upgrading project: Guangyuan-Qingchuan-Wenxian (Gansu Province)-Jiuzhaigou. This route suffered less damage in the earthquake, but an upgrading project was carried out on this route as Guangyuan represents a gateway to the Jiuzhaigou World Heritage Site.
- De-A road with viaducts: a new road with viaducts from Deyang to Maoxian was built. This is not only to improve accessibility for the most seriously-damaged area, but also to avoid passing through another geologically vulnerable area around Dujiangyan.
- Other channels: some other roads and tourist service facilities were upgraded, such as Sichuan tourism route S106, national motorway 108, and national motorway 212 (Guangyuan section), the eastern part of Jiuhuan, and tourist service facilities in six cities.

In addition to tourist transport projects, it was necessary to build new complementary facilities for post-disaster tourist development, and other projects, such as motels, campsites, and vehicle rental projects, were also carried out. The Sichuan post-disaster site now seems like a large factory, and all resources have been redistributed under the dominant influence of officialdom. There can be little doubt that this will change the cultural landscape of the post-disaster sites and reproduce post-disaster heritage to the authorities' taste.

6.3.3   Marketing Post-Disaster Tourist Sites

From the above analysis, it seems clear that official discourse has heavily affected post-disaster planning and action. This section will now look at the effect of official discourse on post-disaster marketing by illustrating the development of the newly emerging dark tourism strategy, the low-price and large-scale promotion strategy, and the strategy for the development of new tourist routes.

Developing the Emerging Dark Tourism Strategy

After the earthquake, the administrative body for Sichuan tourism made an effort to transmit relevant product information to consumers. In order to boost the tourism market, the Sichuan Tourism Bureau launched a strategy for the development of dark tourism.

First of all, it proposed the establishment of an earthquake tourism resources library. The Sichuan earthquake hit Sichuan's tourist industry, but it also created new tourist resources, and if these new tourist resources were developed properly, this could see the emergence of new opportunities for the post-earthquake tourist industry in Sichuan. However, this new form of tourist resource has a wide range of different features and different tourist values, and the government therefore proposed, in the recovery stages after the earthquake, to establish a dynamic database to record tourist resources systematically in order to provide the basis for future development.

Secondly, the government proposed the establishment of Sichuan Earthquake museums. Cities elsewhere have established similar earthquake museums after huge earthquakes, examples being the Macedonia Earthquake Museum, the Taiwan "9.21" Earthquake Museum, and, in China, the Tangshan Earthquake Museum. Earthquake tourism is a newly-emerging product, and, given its public welfare properties, the government plans to guide its development in order to take full advantage of social and cultural benefits. In addition, it is planned to make full use of modern technology, such as virtual earthquake tours, to improve tourism products and give visitors a more vivid experience, so they can appreciate the need for disaster prevention and mitigation measures. Chapter 7 of this thesis will discuss these issues in greater depth.

Thirdly, it was suggested that a portfolio for tourism channels be established. Post-disaster tourism has specific characteristics, and if earthquake tourism is only regarded as a single tourism product for development, then this single image for tourist destinations will make it difficult to give full play to tourism's economic benefits, thereby affecting local people's initiative as regards the development of tourism. In addition, Sichuan has a wealth of other tourist resources, and this advantage creates the conditions for the effective combination of tourism products. For example, the government proposes to coordinate religious tourism and ecotourism with earthquake tourism, making full use of the rich tourist resources in Sichuan, developing integrated tourism products, and creating a new image for tourism in Sichuan.

Low-Price and Large-Scale Promotion Strategy

Low-price and large-scale promotion are important marketing strategies. In an attempt to attract tourists, the Sichuan Tourism Bureau launched an unprecedented low-price policy, offering considerable discounts to tourists from home and abroad for visits to heritage sites in the Province. Many tourist sites and hotels in Sichuan have also offered discount tickets and accommodation to attract visitors. For instance, the Lidui Park, home to Dujiangyan, the world's oldest working irrigation project, was open to visitors free of charge, and in the provincial capital of Chengdu, 15 million tourism cards, also known as "Panda Cards" (see Figure 6.20), at a cost of only RMB 1 each, were distributed to people from outside Sichuan Province, attracting tourists to visit up to 11 tourist attractions free. The Panda Card was widely used in domestic package tourism. Different tourist sites have also promoted themselves in a number of ways in response to the Sichuan provincial tourism administration's low-price policy. The Dujiangyan municipal government, for example, presented 'gold cards' to soldiers, policemen, medics, volunteers, donors, journalists and representatives of international organisations in appreciation of their contributions to relief work in the city. Cardholders will be able to visit the Dujiangyan Irrigation Project and Mount Qingcheng free of charge during their lifetime (Huang & Luo, 2008).

Figure 6.20: Panda Card image and marketing slogan: "Thanks for Giving Your Love to Sichuan, We Offer You the Best Journey Here"

Source: Sichuan Tourism Administration, (2008).

The domestic market is not the only one being stimulated by the low-price policy. The Province has also attached great importance to the large-scale inbound tourist market, even in the midst of the current global financial crisis. European countries, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan are the major focus of Sichuan's inbound tourist market (Sichuan Tourism Administration, 2010). After the earthquake, Hong Kong residents could apply for the Panda Card easily through four local travel agencies: with this tourism card, each tourist can save as much as RMB 708 on admission fees. Meanwhile, Taiwanese tourists who had visited the pair of giant pandas 'Tuantuan' and 'Yuanyuan' at Taipei Zoo earlier in 2008 could enjoy half-price discounts and even obtain free tickets at many scenic spots in Sichuan. Moreover, in March 2009, a delegation from Sichuan Province led by Vice-Governor Huang Yanrong attended the Berlin International Tourism Exhibition, one of the world's most famous tourism events, with a view to promoting five travel routes for European tourists. The Sichuan delegation set up a marketing programme called 'Night of Sichuan', inviting more than 60 travel agencies and the media, making it one of the most popular booths at the Exhibition (China Daily, 2010).

6.4 Old and New Beichuan County: Political Power and New Heritage Meanings

Mixed and contradictory feelings ran through my mind as I took part in a two-day tour of the areas most devastated by the 12 May 2008 Sichuan earthquake. The first day of our tour was spent travelling to the original county seat of Beichuan County. On that day I truly witnessed how small and helpless we human beings are when confronted by natural disaster, and yet, on the second day of the tour, seeing the newly-rebuilt Beichuan County showed how strong and indomitable we are, how life must always go

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on. As this thesis emphasises, the rebuilding of towns and other landmarks often plays a crucial role in the social production of 'place'. This process endows 'place' with a symbolic meaning, which generates a special heritage or unique identity. For Hou (2010, p: 25), "a rebuilding comprises considerable economic and social costs and solicits administrations and bureaucracies, and shows the soul of a political power and of a territory. It is a 'project for the future' of a society". This is especially evident at the post-disaster site. Here, Beichuan County illustrates the top-down approach of the Chinese Communist Party's social production of 'place', which creates a new post-disaster landscape through a shifting process — namely restoring, relocating, renaming and re-emerging. The following sections will be based on my ethnographic tourism diary, with a view to analysing these issues in greater depth.

"Today I visited old Beichuan County. Because of the mountain roads, it is not an easy journey to Beichuan. All of Beichuan is becoming like a big factory, white dust fills the air, and everywhere reconstruction is underway. As we approached the town centre, it felt as though the air had solidified, the foggy weather mixed with white dust made it difficult to breathe" (Zhang, diary entry, 11/03/2010). Old Beichuan is located in the north-west of Sichuan Province, and is an ancient site of the minority Qiang people, who have played an iconic role in Chinese history. This was one of the worst-hit areas in the 2008 Wenchuan earthquake, and the ruins have been designated a memorial site for the 8,600 people who lost their lives there (Xinhua News). The city is in a deep valley, with mountains on all sides, and the force of the earthquake sheared off the sides of the mountains with landslides roaring straight down onto the city. The city of Old Beichuan

has now been abandoned, a fence topped with concertina wire prevents entry, and yet the ruined city has become a tourist attraction. Chapter 8 of the thesis will illustrate in more depth how the old town has been turned into a museum. This section, though, focuses on "The Rebirth of Our New Land", epitomised by the solemn commitment made to people in the quake zone by the CCP Sichuan Provincial Committee and the Sichuan Provincial Government: "Mountains and rivers can be changed. Roads can be blocked. Houses can be destroyed. But our strong commitment to quake relief, our strong determination to help people in the quake zone and our strong resolve to rebuild a more beautiful Sichuan cannot be destroyed."

On the second day we toured the New Beichuan area. First, our group viewed an exhibition explaining the staggering loss of life and property that befell the area during the earthquake of 12 May 2008. New Beichuan was built with direct help from other cities in China, and Shandong Province played a major role in assisting the county with its reconstruction efforts, providing RMB 10 billion Yuan in funding and organising 30,000 builders from 17 cities to focus on 413 individual reconstruction projects within the county (Xinhua News).

New Beichuan was supposed to become both a model city with careful town planning, and also a place of memorial. President Hu Jintao's proposed slogan "Rebuilding a New and Better Beichuan", as seen in Figure 6.21, implies rebuilding with better town planning and with higher environmental standards and standards of earthquake resistance. "We want a county which both respects the architecture of the Qiang, the regional minority, and is totally designed for the citizens' well-being. It has

to be modern and experimental for the environment", explains He Wang, vice-director
of Beichuan County (He Wang, interview, 12/03/2010).

Figure 6.21: Slogan — Rebuilding a New and Better Beichuan

 Source: Photograph taken by the author Zhang, (2010)

 "In just two years' time, New Beichuan has been completely transformed. Now on
flatter, safer ground, the city boasts wide, newly paved roads and four distinct districts,
which include housing for families and the elderly, a new hospital, a commercial and
cultural area and, most impressively, a massive new education complex including
primary, middle and high school which will have capacity for over 5,000 students." (Liu,
interview, 11/03/2010). Figure 6.22 is a collection of pictures of new Beichuan
reconstruction projects: it is clear that an attractive, modern Beichuan has now been
built.

Figure 6.22: Collection of pictures of the new Beichuan reconstruction projects: residential area built by the city of Weifang, Shandong Province

Yongchang Boulevard

Source: sohu.com [Online].

New Beichuan Pedestrian Street   New Beichuan Hospital

New Beichuan Sports Centre   Beichuan Middle School, New Campus

New Beichuan Art Centre   New Beichuan Visitor Centre
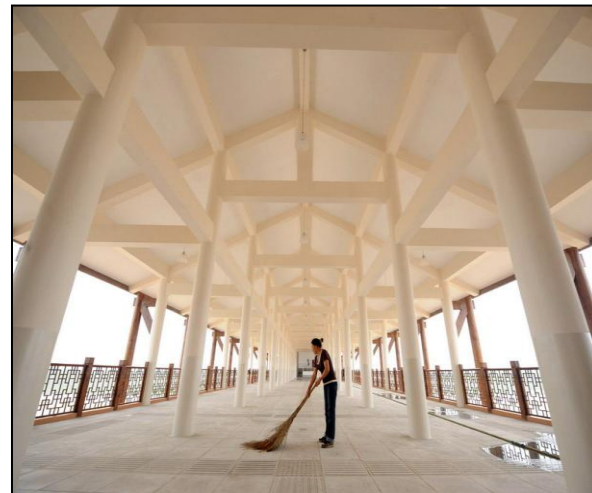
Source: sohu.com [Online].

As we toured the new Beichuan school campus, it was evident how much thought and planning had been put into the construction, from the thoughtful landscaping surrounding the property to the interior design, from large classrooms providing ample room for students to energy-conserving natural lighting prevalent throughout the halls of each building. Though New Beichuan has clearly been built by Chinese authority, this section argues that the central administration played a crucial role in that rebuilding and that this process was a highly centralised one directed by the CCP. In other words, the CCP used the disaster as an opportunity to regain political power and to produce an 'imaged' Beichuan post-disaster landscape. This can be illustrated in the following four aspects: restoration, relocation, renaming and re-emergence.

First of all, the Chinese Communist Party's strong influence on the recreation of the post-disaster landscape can be seen in the decision made by the Chinese government to select and permanently conserve several ruined settlements as earthquake memorial sites. On 22 May, at a meeting in Beichuan County, Wen Jiabao, Premier of the State Council of China, visited the site and, as he gazed at the quake-devastated Beichuan town, said: "I suggest that the ruins of this county be conserved and transformed into a museum of the earthquake. Beichuan is the only autonomous county of Qiang nationality in China. The unique cultural heritage of the Qiang people should be properly conserved, even after the county proper is relocated." (Xinhua News). Following the CCP's order, the town of Old Beichuan is now being made into a permanent memorial site, a process that will be analysed in greater depth in Chapter 8.

The Chinese Communist Party's strong influence on the recreation of the post-disaster landscape can also be seen in the fact that, after the earthquake, the CCP took the decision to move the whole county to a new location, as shown in Figure 6.23. The red circle shows the new location of Beichuan, between Yong'an Town and Anchang Town, about 23 km from the former county seat of Beichuan. It is clear that an administrative mapping change of this kind represents the CCP regaining its political power through the production of the Sichuan landscape, which is naturally associated with the recreation of its cultural heritage. This implies the name change as highlighted in the following paragraph.

Figure 6.23: New location of Beichuan County

Source: Image taken from Google Earth, produced by the author Zhang, (2013).

As scholars have suggested, the act of naming is itself a performative practice that calls forth the 'place' to which it refers by attempting to stabilise the unwieldy contradictions of socio-spatial processes into the seemingly more 'manageable' order of

textual inscription (Alderman, 2008). The discursive act of assigning a name to a given location does much more than merely denoting an already-existing 'place'. State President Hu Jintao renamed 'Beichuan' 'Yongchang', which means 'eternal prosperity' in Chinese. The most important rulers of the country showed their personal involvement and acted in a symbolic way to produce a new post-disaster heritage identity. This demonstrates the will of the CCP to initiate a new dynamic in heritage production in disaster areas. Figure 6.24 shows the old county sign being replaced by new ones with the new names. The power connotations of a clear change of name cannot be ignored.

Figure 6.24: The old county sign is replaced by new ones, with the new names

Source: Globe, (2008), [Online].

Lastly, the increased role of central government in major governmental projects has been enacted by the CCP's re-emerging Human Resources Management Department. The central administration even sent some of its members to lead the projects in Sichuan. For example, one of the men whose task is to revive Beichuan and who has

been made Vice-Chief of the county is not a local official: he comes from the Beijing Urban Planning Institute. This strong centralisation shows that the CCP is paying close attention to the rebuilding of the Sichuan landscape, and as such is sure to shape its cultural heritage meanings.

At the end of my fieldwork trip, I walked away from Old Beichuan County from the official toll gate, up a narrow dirt path. I climbed past altars where visitors burn incense and candles, past plaques to honour the earthquake dead. I truly witnessed here how *small* and helpless we *human beings* are when confronted by natural disaster. On my tour, I also saw the newly-emerging New Beichuan County: with its new name, new location, new signs and new market, it is looking forward to a flourishing future. This shows how strong and indomitable human beings are, how life must always go on. It is clear that we should not forget our history and heritage, but nevertheless the Chinese Communist Party exerts too strong an influence on the recreation of the post-disaster landscape. The analysis of the process of relocation, renaming, restoration, rebuilding and re-emerging in this section shows the CCP resuming its power through the recreation of the Sichuan landscape and creating a CCP ideology-oriented post-disaster heritage. The next case study will take a closer look at the re-interpretation of cultural heritage through museums.

6.5 Museums as Official 'Text' in the Earthquake

Museums are an important and instantaneous vehicle for the delivery of cultural heritage. This section presents a more detailed analysis of post-disaster heritage as seen through museums, illustrating heroic, brave and symbolic stories turned into cultural heritage through photo exhibitions, iconic statues and paintings in museums. It is argued that the museums are acting as official cultural texts in the post-earthquake transition period.

6.5.1 Earthquake Stories Transformed into Post-Disaster Heritage through Photo Exhibitions in Museums

To commemorate the victims and survivors of the Sichuan earthquake, and to encourage the whole nation, as well as to show appreciation for people's support and donations to the rescue and restoration efforts in the wake of the Sichuan earthquake, many photo exhibitions have been held in different museums in China. However, most of these are imbued with the Chinese Communist Party's propaganda of "Enhancing Earthquake Relief Spirit". It is argued here that CCP political ideology has been packaged with a nationalistic and patriotic brand, and delivered through the Sichuan earthquake relief campaign in the name of patriotic and moral education.

A specific example can be seen in the Sichuan earthquake relief news photo exhibition which was hosted at the Sichuan Museum (Xinhua News Photo Agency, Wang, 2008). The news photo exhibition featuring the Sichuan earthquake presented more than 200 photos and graphs chronicling the suffering of the people and joint relief efforts, attracting in excess of 15,000 visitors. Figure 6.25 shows the character of the exhibition,

as well as the fact that a high proportion of the photos focus on CCP political achievements rather than on the earthquake itself.

Figure 6.25: Sichuan Earthquake Relief news photo exhibition

Source: Xinhua News Photo Agency.

6.5.2 Heroic Performances Transformed into Post-Disaster Heritage through Iconic Statues in Museums

During the earthquake, many touching, brave and heroic episodes took place in Sichuan. Some of these have been commemorated as permanent statues in the earthquake relief museums. Figure 6.26 shows the teacher Tan Qianqiu's statue in the Sichuan Earthquake Relief Museum: with his arms extended, he uses his own body to shield four students from being crushed under a desk. Tan Qianqiu was found under rubble with both arms still extended, protecting the four children he saved; he was survived by his wife and two daughters (Lee, 2008). Many teachers in Sichuan found themselves faced with the reality that they are the first and last line of defence for their students, especially when disaster strikes during school hours. Even with only seconds to react to

the earthquake, some teachers gave their lives in an attempt to ensure the survival of others. Their embodied performances make a heroic post-disaster heritage.

Figure 6.26: Teacher, Tan Qianqiu, protects his students by using his body
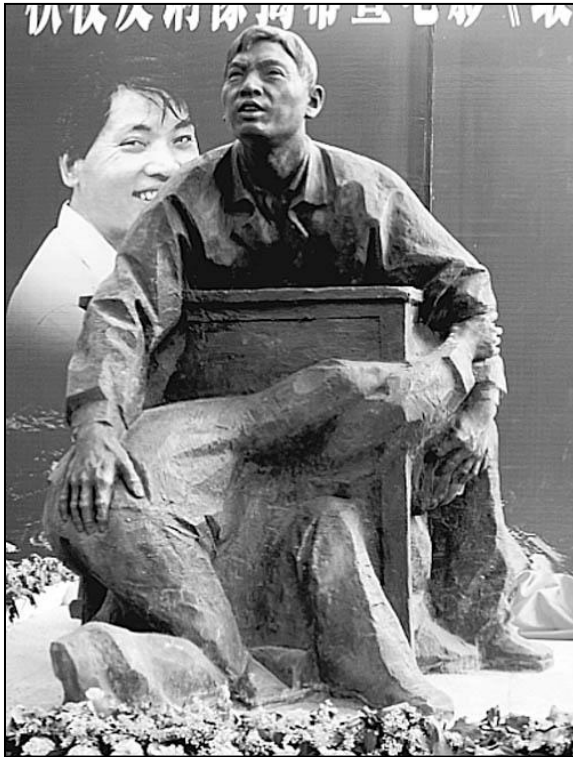
Source: Wang Chunhua, Nanfang Daily, (2010).

Similarly, the statue in Figure 6.27 shows how a mother protected her baby's body with her own by kneeling prostrate over the baby: she kneels with the upper body forward, prostrate as though bowing in front of a god. When the rescuers reached the ruins of the young woman's house, they saw her body through the cracks, and even through all the debris, people could see her protective posture. The rescuer pushed his hand in through the crevices to confirm her death: he shouted repeatedly, and knocked the loose bricks with his tools, but there was no response from inside. The rescue team then moved on to the next collapsed building, but the team leader must have felt that the

posture of the dead lady was strange. He went back, checked again and shouted to his team: "Come back, there's a baby alive under her body!" After much hard work, they carefully cleared the debris around the dead woman. Lying under her body was her well-wrapped baby, about three or four months old, and because of his mother's protection, he was not hurt at all. After being buried for over 24 hours, the baby was miraculously rescued unharmed: he was still sleeping when he was taken out and his quiet face had a calming influence on people. The doctor came over to perform a routine check and found a mobile phone tucked under his blanket. A message was written on the screen of the phone: "My beloved baby, if you can survive, please remember I always love you". The phone was passed around, and everybody reading the message started to cry (Xin Hua Forum, 2008). Many children are alive today because their parents instinctively acted as shields during the catastrophic quake. Out of all these stories, though, the mother — a uniquely significant figure for the child — plays a very significant role, with her great love demonstrated through her heroic performance.

Figure 6.27: A mother's great love

Source: Sichuan Earthquake Relief Museum, (2010).

From these stories of the teacher and the mother, it is easy to see how their heroic actions became a form of post-disaster heritage. However, their facial expressions in the statues look deliberate and self-actualised: it is clear that these iconic statues have been made to appear as people expect heroic models to look. The key point here is whether we are dealing with tangible iconic statues or intangible representations of a heroic story, given that we are actually engaging with a set of values and meanings, including elements such as emotion, memory and heroic expectation. Through this process of reproducing such heroic stories, constructing a set of values and meanings or depicting a spirit, it is important to emphasise that the CCP is deliberately selecting and producing these values and messages to create the CCP's own ideology-oriented representation.

6.5.3 Brave Performance Transformed into Post-Disaster Heritage through Paintings in Museums

Like statues, painting is another vehicle for the delivery of post-disaster heritage in museums. Many heroic or brave stories have been painted in different ways, but what is important here are not the paintings themselves, but the maintenance of cultural practice and meaning. The act of painting is vital in keeping alive certain values and meaning for post-disaster heritage: it is the process of engaging with painting rather than the painting itself which keeps meaning alive. After the Sichuan earthquake, the stories of some children's brave actions in the earthquake were widely painted in museums for the edification of primary school pupils.

The painting entitled "The Spark under the Ruins", for instance, describes a true story: Qing Qing was a junior high school student at a school in Wenchuan who was buried under the collapsed mathematics building after the earthquake. Fortunately, she was found alive, and when she was found, she was reading by torchlight under the rubble (see Figure 6.28). She said, "It was very dark underneath, I was scared. I was cold and hungry. I could only read to lessen my fear!" Both her honesty and strength touched everyone who heard her story (Xinhua Net). In Figure 6.28, the left-hand image is the real photo which shows her as she was rescued, while the right-hand one transforms the true story into a painting entitled "The Spark under the Ruins". It is clear that the painting imbues this brave performance with more 'emotional colour', in order to produce a deliberate image of cultural heritage.

Figure 6.28: The painting entitled "the spark under the ruins"

Source: Xinhua Net [Online].

Similarly, another painting tells the story of how, after one of the schools in Beichuan collapsed to the ground, some students managed to escape, but many were trapped. One boy who had escaped went back to help his classmate (see Figure 6.29). The left-

hand photo shows the boy at his classmate's side holding his intravenous drip containing nutrients, while the rescuers tried to find a way through the rubble to get his classmate out (Liu, 2008). The image on the right is the painting entitled "Hope", which shows the suffering of the trapped boy, who with the help of many people eventually survived. The artist even painted a bunch of flowers beside him to express respect for the survivor's life, which demonstrates people's emotional engagement with the story and how this process is used to deliberately construct a specific cultural heritage.

Figure 6.29: The painting entitled "Hope"

Source: Photographs taken by Liu, 2008, [Online].

There is no doubt that our world needs a hero, especially in a crisis situation, but equally it is important to note that a moral and civilised society should allow and encourage moral models and heroes to emerge naturally. In other words, heroes should be a model of spontaneous reaction rather than a deliberate creation. In the case of the

Sichuan earthquake, these heroic stories featured in blogs a few months after the earthquake, and there was much debate as to whether they were not completely true or at least exaggerated. When authority is faced with a crisis situation, this is a matter of some concern: must the crisis situation produce heroes and moral ethics, rather than heroes spontaneously emerging? This area is in need of further study.

6.5.4 The Re-interpretation of Post-Disaster Heritage by the CCP

From the above analysis of museums as official cultural texts, it is clear that the interpretation of cultural heritage reproduced by the CCP was stamped with a strong Communist character. This section will take a close look at the exact messages that were delivered. The slogan "kangzhengjiuzaijingshen" (which translates as "anti-earthquake relief spirit") has been promoted in many museums in China, and the CCP produced anti-earthquake relief spirit propaganda that called for national solidarity and unity to overcome the hardships of the earthquake, and which carried clear implications of nationalism. However, the emerging nationalistic campaigns also represent the penetration of the CCP's political ideology via this anti-earthquake relief spirit propaganda. This can be seen in the following three ways: through nationalism combining with the CCP's unity propaganda and producing a 'cosmopolitan' and 'utilitarian' post-disaster heritage identity; through the CCP's 'Mao-stalgia' culture producing a 'Marxist revolutionary' post-disaster heritage identity; and through the way the CCP's human/labour-centred ideology produced a people-oriented scientific outlook.

How Nationalism Combined with the CCP's Unity Propaganda to Produce a 'Cosmopolitan' and 'Utilitarian' Post-Disaster Heritage

In the face of disaster, solidarity and unity gave people strength and nationalism was aroused. The earthquake moved China, and China moved the world. The outpouring of sympathy and support from every corner of the world gave full expression to the humanitarian spirit of sharing sympathy and woe in times of hardship, and lent strong support to the Chinese government and people in their disaster relief efforts. People across China energetically offered to make donations, and relief materials and funds were continuously pouring into the quake-hit areas. In addition, rescue teams and medical professionals from China and abroad were sent to the earthquake-stricken areas to search for and rescue survivors. When 1.3 billion Chinese people stand side by side, hand in hand, heart linked with heart, any difficulty is only temporary, and it was this nationalism that helped the Chinese people to overcome the Sichuan earthquake.

On 30 June 2008, State President Hu gave an encouraging speech, stating that "wanzhongyixin; zhongzhichengcheng 万众一心；众志成城", which translates as "millions of Chinese people unite as one man with one heart and one mind; holding together like the Wall". In the museums of Sichuan, posters and banners such as those illustrated in Figure 6.30 are widespread. illustrating the State President's speech "wanzhongyixin; zhongzhichengcheng", translated as "millions of Chinese people unite as one man with one heart and one mind (Image 1); united as the Wall (Image 2)". Image 3 shows the whole nation holding hands together and overcoming the Sichuan earthquake, with the small map in the middle showing Sichuan. All of China, then, was imbued with the CCP's anti-earthquake relief spirit propaganda. In 2008, the Olympic

Games were held in China, and there was even a slogan (Image 4 "we are of one mind, with the breath, a common destiny, for earthquake relief") at the start of the Olympic torch relay.

Figure 6.30: Posters, banners, slogans and billboards in museums

Source: Together Association, 2009 (Image 1); The Military Museum of the Chinese People's Revolution, 2008 (Image 2); Guan Xin, 2008 (Image 3); Li Qian, 2008 (Image 4).

The whole nation was mobilised, and people from very different social backgrounds joined together to provide help for their earthquake-stricken compatriots. Some donated money to suffering people who were in urgent need of food and medicine,

while others donated blood for the injured, and students equipped with professional skills volunteered to rescue more lives in the earthquake-stricken areas. All in all, nationalism supported and helped the broken-hearted to overcome the disaster. It is important to emphasise, however, that while CCP slogans such as "anti-earthquake relief spirit: we are all Sichuan people's brothers and sisters" and "the pains of people who are suffering are also the pain of all Chinese people" clearly show an emerging nationalism in that the earthquake aroused the care of the whole nation, the above analysis also reveals that the nationalism was combined with the CCP propaganda anti-earthquake relief spirit to produce a 'cosmopolitan' and 'utilitarian' post-disaster heritage identity in Sichuan. After the earthquake reconstruction, road names, building methods and architectural design all represented different styles from all over China, thus diluting Sichuan's local cultural identity.

How the CCP's 'Mao-stalgia' Culture Produces a 'Marxist Revolutionary' Post-Disaster Heritage

The new ideological campaign "Enhancing Earthquake Relief Spirit, Developing Indomitable Spirit Striving for a Better Life" ("*jiankufendou; baizhebunao* 艰苦奋斗; 百折不挠") in the museums indicates the application and adaptation of a Chairman Mao-style revolutionary ideology in the earthquake transition period. This section argues that the campaign endorsement is an effort to harness earthquake relief with a new ideological focus representing CCP revolutionary culture. The following section analyses how CCP revolutionary ideology was absorbed by combining it with events such as the 12 May Sichuan earthquake relief photo exhibitions and the Sichuan earthquake relief moral

education meetings. The slogans and strategies proposed at these events, along with the speeches, slogans, billboards and posters, were then transcribed onto the post-disaster landscape, thus forming a revolutionary post-disaster heritage identity.

The adaptation of Mao-stalgia revolutionary culture to the Sichuan earthquake relief effort was emphasised by the State President, Hu Jintao, who proclaimed that "the Chinese nation has always been indomitable in the face of its hardships, with a glorious tradition of unity and struggle. As long as the whole army and people of all nationalities are united and work hard, we will surely overcome all difficulties and win this struggle and the complete victory of earthquake relief". His speech shows how the theme of "Enhancing the Earthquake Relief Spirit" has been combined with an insistence on enhancing and fostering the national spirit, thus rooting such lofty revolutionary ideals deeply in each person's mind, and infusing people with a spiritual momentum for advancing the socialist cause. This keeps the people in a spiritual state of advancement, of marching with the times and innovation, so that they will actively plunge themselves into the great causes of earthquake relief and reconstruction, and will strive for a great revival of the Chinese nation (Rioux, 2007).

A Sichuan earthquake relief photo exhibition opened on 10 June 2008 at the Chinese People's Revolutionary Military Museum, and more than 35,000 people visited. The slogan "Exhibition of Fighting against the Earthquake and Helping Relief Work in the Sichuan Earthquake" (see Figure 6.31) was displayed in the entrance chamber of the exhibition, where strong revolutionary-oriented propaganda was also communicated through statues. In the same way, Figure 6.32 shows Beijing University

teachers and students visiting the earthquake relief photo exhibition at the Chinese

People's Revolutionary Military Museum: a revolutionary flavour is expressed clearly in

the photograph.

Figure 6.31: The slogan "the Exhibition of Fighting against the Earthquake and Helping Relief Work in the Sichuan Earthquake", displayed in the entrance chamber of the Chinese People's Revolutionary Military Museum

Source: The Military Museum of the Chinese People's Revolution, (2008).

Figure 6.32: Beijing University teachers and students visiting the earthquake relief exhibition

Source: The Military Museum of the Chinese People's Revolution, (2008).

How the CCP's Human/Labour-centred Ideology Produced a People-oriented Scientific Outlook

The CCP's theoretical principles are based on Marxism-Leninism and Maoism, and the CCP developed its own people-oriented ideology by interpreting the fundamental standpoint and rationale of Marxism, namely that people are the creators of history. The Communist Party of China regards a people-oriented scientific outlook on development as the guiding ideology of specific work. This section argues that the CCP takes every opportunity to promote its political people-oriented ideology, interpreting the new connotations of people-oriented ideology from the perspective of the struggle after the earthquake and disaster relief. Figure 6.33, for instance, shows a photo of a billboard entitled "Scientific Reconstruction — Great Achievement", chronicling China's massive rebuilding efforts in Sichuan. This slogan was exhibited in many museums.

Figure 6.33: The slogan "Scientific Reconstruction — Great Achievement", displayed in a museum

Source: China.org.cn [Online].

The image above deliberately conveys two messages. First, it carries a people-oriented message, as revealed by the group of authority figures shown on the right, taking charge. China's State Council issued guidelines on post-quake reconstruction, laying out in explicit terms the guiding principles and main tasks for the reconstruction effort. It did, however, also express a people-oriented political ideology:

We will give top priority to restoring people's basic living conditions and public facilities, ensure the resumption of industrial production as soon as possible, adjust the layout of infrastructure and productivity in urban and rural areas, and gradually restore the ecological system. We will make science-based planning and integrated arrangements to ensure that reconstruction proceeds in a planned and step-by-step manner. People from all walks of life are being mobilised and various means adopted. Our goal is to complete the post-disaster recovery and reconstruction in about three years to make sure that the basic living standards of the affected people reach or

surpass the level prior to the earthquake and lay a solid foundation for sustainable development in the areas.

----Post-Disaster Reconstruction Outline, 2008

Secondly, the CCP also expressed the idea that relief relies not only on people's confidence, courage and a spirit of solidarity, but also on professional rescue teams and technical configuration. In the left of Figure 6.33, images of industrial machinery demonstrate that disaster relief and reconstruction work are technical and professional tasks requiring a large amount of hard, physical and high-risk labour. It is clear that an important supplementary force of technical and professional skills in rescue and reconstruction derives both from the selfless support of experts from various regions, as well as from the generous aid which the international community contributed to earthquake relief in Sichuan. Both domestic and foreign best practice in post-earthquake relief and reconstruction have provided valuable experience and lessons for building a new Sichuan based on scientific methods. However, this was in practice always combined with the promotion of the CCP's people-oriented political propaganda.

A large collection of vivid colour photographs focusing on the government's people-oriented ideology, such as the rehabilitation of housing, schools, public services and cultural life in the post-disaster areas, has been displayed widely in museums. The CCP considers "the people-oriented view and life as the highest criteria. Every citizen fulfils his duty during the course of earthquake combat and disaster relief and becomes the discourse subject of the people-oriented ideology; the people-oriented ideology and the ceaseless self-striving spirit are the requirement for communists, especially the

leaders of communism, as well as the initiative proposed to people in the society". The victory of the post-earthquake struggle and of disaster relief provides the most vivid and convincing interpretation of the people-oriented ideology. The CCP's guiding principles of the scientific outlook on relief and the people-oriented concept of government have been widely promoted in the context of Sichuan earthquake relief and reconstruction, and it is important to note that the meaning of these campaigns has been deliberately twisted from disaster heritage representation to party propaganda promotion.

Conclusion

Chapter 6 began by discussing the nationalisation of a sudden event, the 2008 Sichuan earthquake: more specifically, it showed how patriotism and nationalism were strongly promoted by the CCP, China's dominant political power, in the wake of the earthquake. Through further evaluation of the attitudes and actions of the CCP as regards cultural heritage, I conclude that the earthquake has offered the CCP an opportunity to regain political power, and that indeed the Party is shaping post-disaster heritage production in China by means of vertical and centralised government mechanisms.

Furthermore, in the context of the CCP's use of the development of dark tourism as a primary economic strategy, the thesis investigates different models and strategies of post-disaster tourism in terms of planning, action and marketing. In particular, this includes an analysis of the process of relocating, renaming, restoring, rebuilding and re-imaging of Beichuan, which as an important post-disaster tourist memorial site reveals

heritagescape transformation driven by the hidden shift in political power during the earthquake transition period. I have shown how, within a centralised state political system like China, regional cultural heritage identity has been diluted and assimilated in the post-disaster period.

An examination of the CCP-led patriotic and moral education exhibitions in the museums leads me to conclude that museums are indeed used as an official 'text' in China, and that this is particularly obvious in the post-disaster context. The CCP's Communist political ideology is incorporated into national earthquake relief campaigns, branding them in the name of patriotic and moral education, while on the other hand cultural heritage as presented in these museums is marked by a strong Communist character, one which is 'cosmopolitan', 'utilitarian', 'Marxist revolutionary' and 'people-oriented'.

Chapter 7: Popular Memorials as Sites for the Creation of Tragic Heritage in the Post-Earthquake Transition Period

Introduction

The aim of this section is to explore the bottom-up model, and evaluate to what extent popular memorials operate as sites of post-disaster heritage creation. As has already been discussed in Chapter 3, which laid out the conceptual framework, this chapter starts from the premise that 'heritage' is not just a 'thing,' i.e. a 'site', building or other material object. While these 'things' often play an important role in heritage, they are not in themselves heritage: rather, heritage is what goes on at these sites. This does not mean that a sense of physical place is not important for these activities or plays no role in them, but simply that the physical place or 'site' is not the full story of what constitutes heritage. Heritage, as Smith (2006) suggests, "is a cultural process that engages with acts of remembering that work to create ways of understanding and engaging with the present". As we can see in Figure 7.1, after the Sichuan earthquake the old landmark (the blue sign) was replaced by a new one (the brown sign), and at the new landmark abstract places have been transformed into heritage sites, marked, for example, as "Viewing Site" or "The Altar of 5.12 Earthquake". Heritage, though, is not the site itself, but the act of passing on knowledge in a culturally correct or appropriate context and time. The sites are more than aides-mémoire, but rather, following Samuel (1994), they are 'theatres of memory', or Nora's (1989) 'sites of memory'. While post-disaster sites, and indeed the whole memorial landscape, did play a mnemonic role, they also provide background, setting, gravitas and, most importantly, a sense of

occasion for all those who pass through them and find themselves on the receiving end of cultural meaning, knowledge and memory.

In the first section of this chapter I shall focus on analysing heritage as a cultural process that is specifically engaged with sense of place, examining the sense of distinctiveness before the earthquake, the sense of continuity during the earthquake transition period, and the sense of self-esteem after the earthquake. In the second section, I shall investigate what exactly people 'do' or 'sense', both subjectively and in cultural terms, at post-disaster sites, and how this in turn comes to create post-disaster places, while in the final section I aim to illustrate how popular memorials become sites of post-disaster heritage creation in three distinct ways. First, I take an in-depth look at popular memorials, paying special attention to the many dualities involved in the performance of such commemorations, and secondly, I focus on analysing the process of construction of popular memorials in the context of the Sichuan earthquake. Last but not least, I situate the popular memorials within a discussion of the politicisation of national memorials, looking at both top-down model and bottom-up models.

Figure 7.1: Abstract places changed to heritage sites, now marked as "Viewing Site" and "The Altar of 5.12 Earthquake".

Source: Photograph taken by the author Zhang, (2010)

7.1 Heritage as a Cultural Process Engaging with Sense of Place

As was discussed in the chapter that laid out my conceptual framework, heritage does more than simply construct or represent a range of identities. The values that inform any sense of identity or which underlie memory are also used to construct ways of understanding and making the present meaningful. In this section, I emphasise the role of heritage as a cultural process which engages with sense of place, not simply in constructing a sense of abstract identity, but also in helping us to position ourselves as a nation, community or individual and to find our 'place' in our cultural, social and physical world. In other words, heritage, particularly in its material representations, provides not only a physical anchor or geographical sense of belonging, but also allows

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us to negotiate a sense of social 'place', or class/community identity, and a cultural place or sense of belonging (Smith, 2006). In this thesis, Sichuanese heritage, people and places are interlinked in a variety of complex and constantly mutating ways. The cement binding these three elements together is a sense of place — a process of identification through which the people of Sichuan identify with places they understand to have a unique character or identity. The Sichuan environment is a powerful instrument in the creation of Sichuan heritage, a means through which the Sichuanese people associate themselves with a shared past. Nonetheless, as Ashworth and Graham (2010) point out, it is true that heritage may be interpreted differently within any one culture at any one time, as well as between cultures and across time. Heritage is therefore viewed here as a diverse body of knowledge, in the sense that there are many heritages, the contents and meanings of which change through time and across space (Ashworth & Graham, 2010). In this sense, a stable sense of place in Sichuan was interrupted by the earthquake, generating multiple and plural tragic heritage narratives. In the following section I shall move onto a more detailed discussion of this changing sense of place.

The term 'sense of place' is widely used in this section, and before looking at it in greater depth, it is necessary first to briefly review what I mean by sense of place. Sense of place is often used to refer to a number of slightly different conceptualisations of place. In this thesis, I shall adopt Shamai's (2005) understanding of sense of place, whereby there are two broad differences in the use of the term. In the first, sense of place is used to explore all of the different aspects which make up the 'character' or

local distinctiveness of a specific place, including topographical character, built environment and people's own experiences, while in the second, sense of place is used to put greater emphasis on the way in which people experience, use and understand place, leading to a range of conceptual subsets such as 'place identity', 'place attachment', 'place dependency' and 'insiderness' (Shamai, 2005). In order to understand how sense of place constructs heritage, meanwhile, this section will follow Twigger-Ross and Uzzell's study (1996), in which the the authors identify three principles by which place attachment generates place identity: 1) distinctiveness (the way people use place to distinguish themselves from others); 2) continuity (the concept of self-preserved over time, whereby place allows a sense of continuity throughout the course of life); and 3) self-esteem (the use of place to create a positive evaluation of one's self). I shall analyse these principles in the context of Sichuan in the following section.

7.1.1 Distinctiveness and Sense of Place before the Earthquake

One of the central concerns of geography is the study of the physical and social manifestations of culture in time and space. Culture manifests itself physically as people transform their landscapes in distinctive ways through, for example, agricultural techniques and building styles. Distinctiveness of place thus plays a key role in constructing heritage, and in this section I shall emphasise the role of heritage as a *genius loci* before the Sichuan earthquake. The term *genius loci* is increasingly used in cultural studies, where it refers to "the sum of all physical as well as symbolic values in nature and the human environment" (Jiven & Larkham, 2003). In a historical context,

heritage as *genius loci* can be thought of as being made up of a range of factors including topographical character, the built environment and people's emotional and psychological engagement with place.

As discussed in detail in Chapter 2, the Province of Sichuan, a multi-ethnic area situated in south-west China, is hemmed in by mountains, its terraced fields and vast expanse of plains are criss-crossed by rivers and dykes. The people of Sichuan take pride in the Province's natural landscape and its many places of historical and cultural interest. Both the features of physical place and the social construction of place work together to nurture the unique identities of the Sichuan people, who are often considered to be "industrious and strong", "tolerant and open-minded", "creative and confident", or "optimistic and humorous". The wild natural environment and poor public transport links have marginalised Sichuan from central political and economic power, and the Sichuanese have therefore developed an industrious, strong and courageous character based on self-help, which has emerged through the long-term struggle against poverty and isolation. Sichuanese cuisine, meanwhile, is famous for its hotpot, which can also be recognised as a type of place identifier. Indeed, the Sichuanese people themselves might be described in analogy to the 'hotpot'. The Sichuan population is mainly composed of immigrants from other Provinces, and it is they who have turned Sichuan into a tolerant and open-minded region. Furthermore, the confident and creative character of the Sichuanese people has been nourished by the complex terrain of the Sichuan basin, with its high mountains and deep valleys, marked by the Yangtze river. The people of Sichuan have struggled with this varied

terrain in pursuit of a better life, developing steely resolve to overcome adversity and great ambition to explore new things. However, in contrast to this strong and adventurous character, life in an isolated basin where relatively favourable conditions predominate has also given Sichuan the reputation of being a very "laid-back" Province, and one that emphasises culture and relaxation. The people of Sichuan have the reputation of being satisfied with and enjoying a relaxed and slow pace of life.

From the analysis above, it is clear that heritage played a role as *genius loci* in the context of Sichuan before the earthquake. An old Chinese saying expresses this well: "*yi fang shui tu yang yi fang ren, yi fang ren zhu yi fang cheng*", which translates as "on the one hand, the unique features of local environment always nurture special characteristics in its inhabitants, and on the other hand, the inhabitants who live there keep constructing the place and build a unique 'home' with special identities". However, this distinctive sense of place was interrupted by the earthquake, and the changes it has wrought will be analysed in the following section.

7.1.2 Continuity and Sense of Place during the Earthquake Transition

Sense of place cannot be built or reproduced overnight, given that continuity is an essential element in forming a sense of place, or indeed a heritage. As Relph (1976) points out, place attachment or sense of place is created by the juncture of place, activity and meaning. Heritage should have a "strong link to place, tight constraints, collective control, strong kinship, ritual(s)", and is "old, of the past, accepting the past, respecting the past, emphasizing continuity, slow change, slow growth, enduring, low

novelty…" (King, 1998, p.12). However, with the sudden earthquake continuity of sense of place was interrupted, and local people experienced a shocked sense of loss, as Fan (Deputy Director, Dujiangyan City Cultural Relics Bureau, Sichuan Province) states:

> After I went in to the temple I was really shocked. It was extremely shocking. Fortunately, the extent of the damage was not as bad as we heard it was at the time when it happened, and we heard that the whole temple had basically collapsed. In fact, we learned through statistics later that the area was only about ten per cent. But why did it shock people so much? Because the most important section of the Two Kings temple, which had the double three character rhyme, had collapsed. Moreover, the ruins, the broken parts and all the cultural relics, were all over the floor, so it really shocked people. Although I wasn't born here, I came here in 1966 with my father and I grew up here. I grew up with the temple for 40 years. It kept me company for 40 years. It had already formed a deep impression in my memory and suddenly it was not there, so it really shocked people. It was a terrible feeling.
>
> (Fan Tuoyu, interview with him at Dujiangyan City Cultural Relics Bureau, Sichuan Province, 2010)

Fan's words not only demonstrate his feeling of shock after the earthquake, but also imply that the historical environment had already made a deep impression on his memory and become part of his habitual way of and living and seeing the world. Suddenly, though, this was no longer there, and he felt a sense of loss.

This interruption of continuity can also be witnessed through the disruption of people's powerful attachments to the place where they live. In the image in Figure 7.2, released by China's Xinhua News Agency, a woman cries beside the river near her old house, while behind her, her daughter gazes at their old house. Their embodied performances show their sense of place attachment, and we can clearly see written on their faces the sense of sadness at having lost their sense of home.

Figure 7.2: Sense of place, sense of home and sense of loss

Source: Photograph taken by Jiang, (2009), The Associated Press, [Online].

An interruption of continuity will therefore have a major impact on people's sense of place. A comparison of students' lives before, during and after the earthquake might demonstrate the changes which took place. In a blog widely read by people in China, a teacher at Beichuan Middle School took photos (see Figure 7.3) of students playing on 11 May, 2008, just 24 hours before the catastrophic Sichuan earthquake. From these photos, it is clear that the students were happy, smiling and enjoying a day of fun-filled activity. Just 24 hours later, however, these same students had suffered tremendous losses, and many were never to know the joy of being together again. Figure 7.4, meanwhile, shows surviving students at Beichuan Middle School mourning their classmates and friends on Tomb Sweeping Day. Many of the earthquake victims were young students, who were injured in collapsing school buildings and whose lives were completely changed by the earthquake. Figure 7.5 shows Beichuan Rehab Centre

for the Disabled receiving many students from Beichuan Middle School. Dong Cuibo, sitting with the nurse massaging her injured leg, Bai Xiaoyue, in the middle, and Tang Yuerong, in the wheelchair, were from different classes at the same school, and in just a moment they suddenly went from classroom to hospital ward. Their lives before and after the earthquake changed irrevocably, and they experienced a sense of loss and change. A clear comparison can be made between these three groups of images.

Figure 7.3: Beichuan Middle School 24 hours before the devastating earthquake.

Source: Photographs taken by Qin, (2009), sina.com [Online].

Figure 7.4: Beichuan Middle School: surviving students mourning their classmates and friends on Tomb Sweeping Day

Source: Photographs taken by Li, C. 2009, [Online].

Figure 7.5: From classroom to hospital war

Source: Photograph taken by Teh & Panos, (2008), TIME [Online].

7.1.3 Self-Esteem and Sense of Place after the Earthquake

Korpela (1991) has indicated that environment may provide support for self-esteem, and in this thesis I argue that self-esteem can be boosted not only through a positive evaluation of a place, but also with reference to a tragic place. The experience or witnessing of disaster, for example, can create a strong sense of association or self-reliance. People's experiences and actions during the Sichuan earthquake came to embody their sense of community, solidarity and nationhood and to confirm their sense of place. After the Sichuan earthquake, although many people in China were not able to reach Sichuan, or may have lacked any family connection to it, they did feel a sense of national solidarity and of shared Chinese community. The sense of place confirmed in the tragedy was therefore not just local (i.e. focused only on Sichuan), but more national

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in character. These links between 'self-esteem' and 'sense of place' may be traced in two different ways.

Firstly, links can be traced between attachments to place and a sense of belonging to a place. People had different ways of empathising with those who had suffered in the earthquake. The images of people holding banners blessing Sichuan people and the country (see Figure 7.6) and writing 'blessing' (see Figure 7.8) show people engaging with a status, namely the infusion of something with holiness, spiritual redemption, divine will, and sincere hope or approval. People wrote messages of care and concern on banners or even on T-shirts to empathise with people's suffering in the earthquake and to bless the country as a whole. It is important to note here that place names always appeared on the paper or other materials, with phrases like "China — stand up, China — never give up"; "Sichuan — come on! Sichuan —brave and strong!"; or "Wenchuan — we love and care about you". It is clear that these places are no longer only abstract places, but have been endowed with a sense or a feeling, and these expressions of emotion embody people's sense of national belonging. This sense of belonging generates a higher level of self-esteem still at the specific site of the tragedy.

Figure 7.6: People holding banners blessing Sichuan people and the country, with place names on the paper

Source: Photographs taken by Ma, (2008), enorth.com.cn, [Online].

Figure 7.7: Holding up encouraging words

Holding up "Wenchuan: brave and strong".

Source: Photograph taken by Ma, (2008), enorth.com.cn, [Online].

A Chinese man holding the slogan— "China never give up!" in Tiananmen Square in Beijing.

Source: Photograph taken by Ma, (2008), enorth.com.cn, [Online].

Figure 7.8: Writing "China — stand up and come on!"

Source: Photographs taken by Ma, (2008), enorth.com.cn, [Online].

Secondly, heritage-specific studies have explored the role of the heritage site as a means of supporting shared values, citizenship and sense of national community. As was discussed in Chapter 6, in the face of disaster, solidarity and unity provided strength, and nationalism was awakened. Different people from a variety of backgrounds, with different careers, from different places and social classes, were all inspired by a shared sense of national unity in working together in the Sichuan earthquake rescue and reconstruction effort (see Figures 7.9 and 7.10). As we can see in Figure 7.9, the national flag symbolises a sense of nationhood — "We all have the same national identity - Chinese!"— and people's practice of bonding around such symbols helps to embody a patriotic sense of belonging. These patriotic performances produce a sense of Chinese national spirit and collective identity. One widely-shared conclusion is that more active forms of engagement — actively creating, exhibiting, and participating — may have more successful outcomes in terms of social belonging (Graham, Mason & Newman, 2009). For example, many of these performances rely on emotional cheering to encourage the country as a whole to be strong. As can be seen in Figure 7.11, the faces and gestures of those involved show a strong emotional engagement with the performance of belonging. Emotional performance awakens the patriotic spirit and confirms the national identity of those taking part or those viewing the images.

Figure 7.9: "We all have the same national identity - Chinese!"

Source: Photograph taken by Liu, (2009), [Online].

Figure 7.10: "We have the same aim: to rescue lives!"

Note: A group of people, including soldiers, medical workers, firemen, policemen and journalists, working together to rescue a survivor. Source: Photograph taken by Liu, (2009), [Online].

Figure 7.11: In Tiananmen Square in Beijing, people gather together, crying and cheering "Sichuan come on! China, be strong!"

Source: Photograph taken by Ma, (2008), enorth.com.cn, [Online].

At many schools in China, students shouted "Sichuan Come On!" during memorial ceremonies.

Source: Photograph taken by Ma, (2008), enorth.com.cn, [Online].

From the above analysis, it seems clear that sense of place supports self-esteem, a sense of distinctiveness and the continuity that are key components in producing an identification with a specific place. It is therefore possible to see heritage as more than just a physical manifestation of an identity, but also as a process of producing meaning and a sense of place. This sense of place in turn contributes to a community's understanding of its cultural heritage within the changing social and economic circumstances attached to the site of tragedy.

7.2 Memory at Post-Disaster Sites

Memory is an important element in the construction of heritage, and, as Misztal (2003) notes, there is increasing concern with social memory as the number and frequency of civic anniversaries connected with events such as the Second World War grows. In addition, it has become an increasing focus of debate as received or the authorised ideas of historical memory have been challenged by a range of ethnic and cultural minorities. These challenges have arisen in a range of contexts across the world, including, for example, commemorations in post-colonial nations, celebrations marking the end of the Soviet Union, and in the context of debates about the meaning of the Holocaust (Smith, 2006). This research will focus on social memory in the context of tragic sites.

Although it is often recognised that memory and heritage are linked, and that heritage sites might invoke individual and/or collective memories, this observation is

often simply acknowledged rather than granted close critical attention. In this section, I shall take a closer look at the role of memory at post-disaster sites. In such places, memory is reflected in a number of different ways, including, for example, procedural memory (the memory of fact), autobiographical memory, cognitive memory, flashbulb memory (the memory of important or emotionally-charged events), habitual memory, and collective or social memory (Misztal, 2003). These different types of memory, or more usefully forms of remembering, are undertaken for different reasons and in different contexts. I shall highlight the fact that the forms of memory most often associated with heritage in post-disaster sites are collective (or social) memory and habitual memory.

7.2.1 Habitual and Collective Memory

An understanding of habitual memory in post-disaster sites may be grasped with reference to Bourdieu's habitus theory, where habitus is conceived as a 'sense of one's place… a sense of the other's place'. Habitus thus relates to our perceptions of our position (or 'place'), and that of other people, in the world in which we live, and how these perceptions affect our actions and interactions with these places and people (Hillier & Rooksby, 2005). At a deeper level, as Connerton (1991) argues, our bodies remember through their ability to perform certain skills and actions. For instance, he notes that we may not remember how we first learnt to swim, but that the memory of swimming lies in the act of swimming, which may be achieved without any help from representational clues, although a mental picture may be summoned up should we feel insecure in our ability. He goes on to state: "Many forms of habitual, skilled

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remembering illustrate a keeping of the past in mind that, without ever reverting to its historical origin, nevertheless re-enacts the past in our present conduct" (Connerton, 1991). The past is thus embodied: what he defines as incorporating practice impacts messages and meaning through gestures and actions, while inscribing practice is a way of recording and storing social memory and meaning (Connerton, 1991). In this thesis, I transpose this concept of habitual memory into habitual sense of place memory, whereby, in the wake of the Sichuan earthquake, people's habitual sense of place and their memories of the past are embodied in their habitual performances as they relate to the site of the tragedy. Figure 7.12 (Image 1) shows an earthquake survivor trying to figure out where his home used to be in the Donghekou Earthquake Relics Park, which covers one town and five villages (including Donghekou Village), in Qingchuan County in Sichuan Province. This park, which was the first memorial site to be inaugurated after the massive Sichuan earthquake, was opened to the public on 12 November, 2008. Although the survivor's home was buried, there was still a sense of lingering attachment and habitual memory. Image 2, on the other hand, shows an elderly woman who survived the earthquake visiting her collapsed old house in Leigu township in Beichuan County. She got into the habit of going there and walking around when she had time, and this behaviour shows her habitual sense of place memory. Similarly, Image 3 shows a mother carrying her child to their old house over a suspension bridge which survived the earthquake in Donghekou village. No matter how far away they have moved, these people still feel a deep attachment to their old home. Image 4 shows a woman turning to leave after looking at ruins in Beichuan County, an area hit by the quake. In each case we see people's sense of place and attachment to their homes. It is

clear from all these images that the post-disaster sites are intrinsically important to people, and that their memories are tied to the way they *use*, or perform, these sites rather than simply to the fact that they exist.

Figure 7.12: Habitual sense of place memory practices

Source: Image 1 and 2 taken by Liu, (2008), Getty Images, [Online].

Source: Image 3 taken by Liu, (2008), Getty Images, [Online].

Source: Image 4 taken by Wong, (2008), the Associated Press [Online].

However, as Nora (1989, p.9) points out:

> There are as many memories as there are groups, that memory is by nature multiple and yet specific; collective, plural, and yet individual. History, on the other hand, belongs to everyone and to on one, whence its claim to universal the authority. Memory takes root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images, and objects; history binds itself strictly to temporal continuities, to progressions and to relations between things. Memory is absolute, while history can only conceive the relative.

The useful point here is that memory plays an important constitutive role in identity formation, but that unlike official historical narratives, it is personal in nature. Collective memory therefore has a particular emotive power, tied as it is to the personal memories of a group. Although Halbwachs (1992) argues that every group constructs an identity for itself through shared memories, Wertsch (2002) notes that the idea of 'collective' can have many meanings. This, then, is where the idea of collective memory needs to be defined more carefully.

For Halbwachs, shared or collective memories are socially constructed in the present, and are collectively legitimised in that they make meaningful common interests and perceptions of collective identity. They work to bind the collective, and give it stability and continuity. Collective memory is passed on and shaped in the present by commemorative events, and is reshaped daily through transmission between members of the collective, social or cultural group and the language they employ to frame and define their memories. For instance, Figure 7.13 shows that to mark the first anniversary of the Sichuan earthquake, tens of thousands of people in Beichuan County walked between huge rocks at the site of a landslide to mourn relatives lost in the earthquake. These commemorations serve to perform acts of

collective remembrance that engage with the specific post-disaster site. As Halbwachs (1992) notes, "recollections are… located… with the help of landmarks that we always carry within ourselves, for it suffices to look around ourselves, to think about others, and to locate ourselves within the social framework in order to retrieve them".

Figure 7.13: Collective memory practices

Source: Photograph taken by Li, (2009), Getty Images, [Online].

These concepts of collective and habitual memory show us that sharing memories, and perhaps more importantly, engaging collectively in the acts or performances of remembering, helps to bind groups or populations together, as these images show. This may occur not only at a national but also at sub-national levels. These processes do not create static meanings and values, but rather they are negotiated and continually reworked by the processes of remembering and commemoration at post-disaster sites.

7.2.2 The Performance of Remembrance at Post-Disaster Sites

The increasing interest in the study of memory coincides with a growing social interest in commemoration and remembrance in post-disaster sites. As with heritage, memory is not an object to possess: memories are not "like books in a library that we can pull down, open up, and read" (Conway, 1997). Instead, memory is an active cultural process of remembering and forgetting which is fundamental to our ability to conceptualise the world (Misztal, 2003). Wertsch (2002) argues that remembering is an active process in which the past is continually renegotiated and reinterpreted, both collectively or individually, in relation to past experiences and present needs. The past can never be understood solely on its own terms, given that the present continually rewrites the meaning of the past and the memories and histories we construct about it within the context of the present. Urry (1996) therefore argues that "there is no past out there or back there. There is only the present, in the context of which the past is being continually re-created". "This remaking and recreating occurs through the activities of remembering and reminiscing, which take place in the context of interaction between people and their environments, including heritage sites and museums" (Davison, 2005). While geographers have most often focused on the textual and contested nature of memorials and monuments, some have also emphasised the importance of 'performance' in commemoration. The metaphor of performance directs our attention to the ways in which memorial landscapes serve as a stage, literally and figuratively, for a wide range of performances such as public dramas, rituals, historical re-enactments, marches and protests, pageants, civic ceremonies and festivals. In this

section, I shall argue that it is not simply the fact that these performances take place at places of memory, but rather that the memorial landscape is constituted, shaped and imbued with importance through the bodily performance and display of collective memory. How performances constitute 'viewing sites' and 'memorial mourning sites' will be examined in the context of this argument.

In the wake of the Sichuan earthquake, people began to use certain sites as 'gazing sites' or 'viewpoints'. Surrounded by mountains, the town of Beichuan in Sichuan Province is one of these. The town was flattened in the earthquake and 15,000 people perished. Part of the old town has completely disappeared, buried deep under stones and mud. For reasons of safety, the town is classified as a no-go area, and so locals climb the nearby hills to get a bird's eye view of the old houses (see Image 1, Figure 7.14). In this, local people's bodily performances demonstrate their memory engaging with their sense of place, and indeed more and more people are visiting these sites as they become 'popular': some locals have even set up stalls selling images (see Image 2, Figure 7.14). The once scenic town of Beichuan can now only be seen in pictures as a memory, like those shown in Image 3 (Figure 7.14), where the names of the old landmark buildings are printed in red. In the ruins behind the line of hanging photos, few of the buildings remain standing. These photos line the stalls by the ruins, and have become popular souvenirs among visitors. In the heritage tourism industry, such sites are known as 'gazing sites'.

Performance is particularly important within the heritage tourism industry. Host communities are often concerned with projecting a positive image to tourists, one that

actively displays a distinctive character and engages with local history. In many cases, existing memorials, monuments, and historic sites become the stage for historical tours and re-enactments embodying this commodification or selling of the past. At post-disaster sites, the packaging of the memorial landscape through performance is not like that at normal historical heritage sites, where the drama is created by actors and historical guides, as these performances include the everyday, seemingly mundane practices of local people as they simply talk about the past with visitors or mourn the victims. Festivals and anniversaries are community performances which are also increasingly used to highlight the historical identity of post-disaster sites. Although the town of Beichuan was closed off for safety reasons after the Sichuan earthquake, the authorities reopened the town during the Qingming Festival (Tomb Sweeping Day) so that families and visitors could mourn earthquake victims. The following images show hundreds of thousands of people flocking to Beichuan to look at the remains of the town, devastated in the earthquake. Mourners' performances not only mark the engagement of their memory with the post-disaster site, but they also illustrate the active negotiation process whereby post-disaster sites are transformed into memorial mourning sites (see Figure 7.15).

Figure 7.14: Visiting and the formation of gazing sites
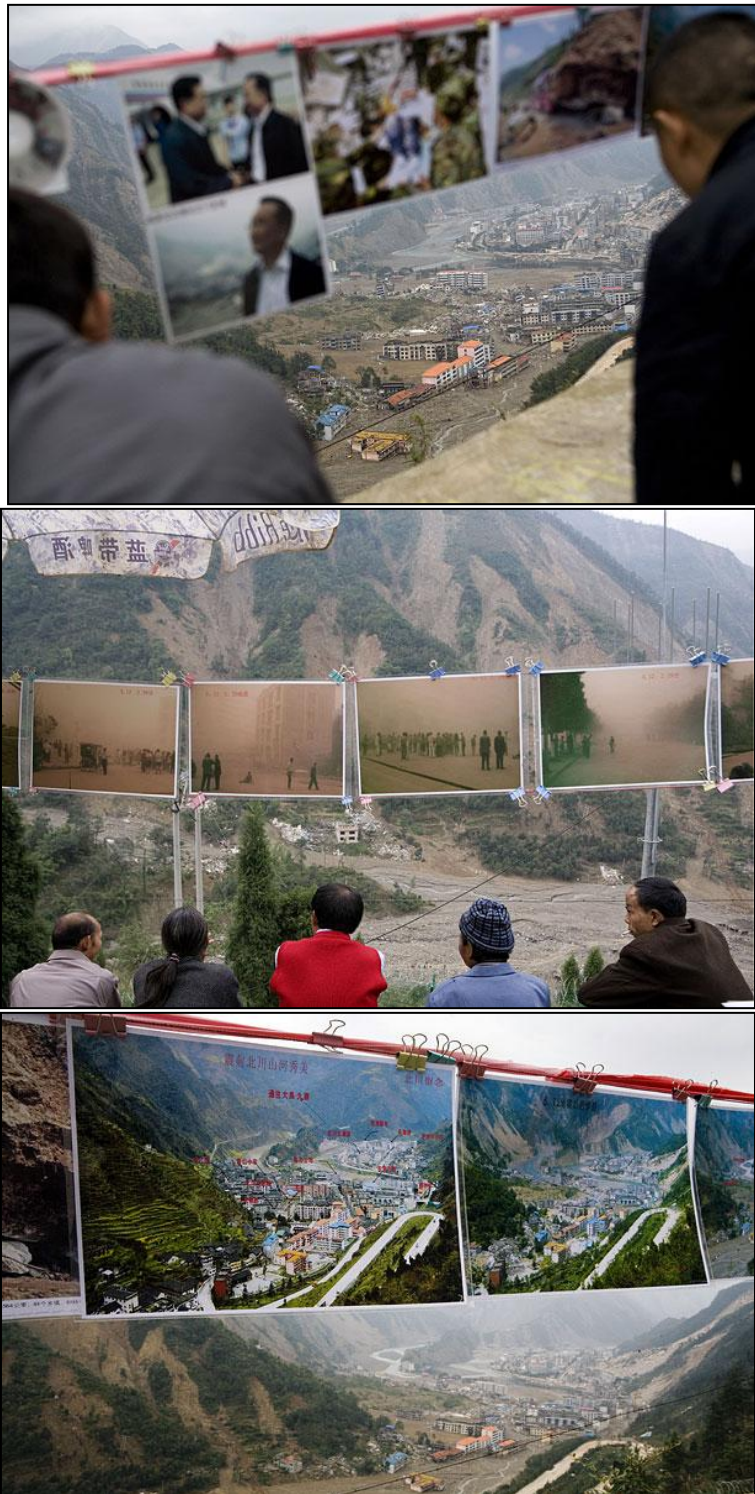
Source: Photographs taken by Teh & Panos, (2008), TIME, [Online].

Figure 7.15: Visiting and formation of memorial mourning sites

Notes: People make their way into Beichuan to mark the first anniversary of the Sichuan earthquake. Image 1

Source: Photograph taken by The Telegraph, China, (2009), [Online].

Image 2

Source: Photograph taken by Peter, (2009), Getty Images, [Online].

Figures 7.15 and 7.16 show thousands of people packing the road to the devastated town of Beichuan on 12 May, 2009, the first anniversary of the Sichuan earthquake. Their performances demonstrate their sense of place, but more importantly these post-disaster sites have been marked as memorial heritage places by people's bodily performances.

Figure 7.16: Visiting and the formation of mourning sites

Source: Photographs taken by Peter, (2009), Getty Images, [Online].

From the above images, it is clear that visiting and engaging with post-disaster sites has become not only an act of remembering, but also a cultural and political statement. These acts of remembrance may simply serve to legitimise memory and meaning, or they may involve taking up or 'learning' established collective memories, or the active and politicised reworking of meanings. However, as Crouch and Parker (2003) observe, "redoing or consciously re-enacting can be but a step away from doing", and thus the 'doing' or performance of heritage becomes an active cultural performance of remembrance as memory-making. In my view, personal emotional engagement plays a significant role in forming a collective sense of belonging at post-disaster sites. As Smith

(2006) points out, "the engagement of emotion and the sharing of this emotive experience or performance, together with the sharing of acts of remembering and memory making, are vital elements of the glue that creates and binds collective identities". Post-disaster memorial performances, therefore, are not only physical experiences of 'doing', but also emotional experiences of 'being'. Smith (2006) states that "the emotional content of performance is a significant aspect of the 'heritage experience', which itself not only makes, transmits and maintains social values and meanings, but does so in a manner that invokes, and indeed requires, self-conscious emotional acts of remembering and memory making". Figure 7.17 shows people's emotional engagement with post-disaster sites. The first image shows 32-year-old Zhao Yan wearing the Qiang minority costume, mourning her father and daughter who died during the earthquake in their old house in Beichuan County. Other images show Chinese parents crying near the ruins of Beichuan Middle School, one year after the school collapsed in the quake killing around 1,000 students and teachers. This sense of emotional memory becomes particularly powerful in the formation of collective identity at post-disaster sites, as it 'takes root' in specific personal memories which work to give this sense of memory emotive power through collective memorial performances. This reflects how the materialisation or embodiment of memory, as in Nora's (1989) 'sites of memory', is particularly significant at post-disaster sites.

Figure 7.17: People's emotional engagement with the post-disaster sites.

Source: Photographs taken by Bor, (2008), REUTERS, [Online].

Source: Photograph taken by Li, (2009), Getty Images, [Online].

Source: Photographs taken by Guan, (2009), the Associated Press, [Online].

The above exploration of the links between memory, remembering and performance, and their connection to the idea of heritage, gives a more nuanced understanding of the emotional quality and power of the cultural process of heritage production at post-disaster sites. This reinforces the idea that heritage is not the passive object of management and conservation for tourist visits, but rather an active process engaged with the construction and negotiation of meaning through remembering.

Ideas about collective and habitual memory provide a framework within which it is possible to understand that sharing memories, and perhaps more importantly engaging collectively in the act or performances of remembering, helps to bind groups or populations together, at both a national and a sub-national level. These processes do not create static meanings and values, but instead are negotiated and continually reworked through processes of remembering and commemoration. These processes may be authorised by the state and used to regulate and govern a sense of collective or received identity, or they may be enacted in more discreetly defined populations and groups that may even contest the state's narratives. In other words, memorials and monuments are inherently political. They can be manipulated by social groups in power, but they can also provide a platform for resistance and struggle for those traditionally lacking power. In the next section, I shall take a closer look at popular memorials at post-disaster sites in order to examine these issues further.

7.3 Popular Memorials as Sites of Post-Disaster Heritage Creation

In Chinese traditional rituals, people use flowers, candles, incense and the like to mourn the deceased. After the earthquake, people began to visit post-disaster sites, leaving behind poems, flowers, letters, messages, candles, toys and religious images in memory of the victims. Various forms of ritualised memorialisation and mourning have emerged in post-disaster spaces, and there is as yet no consensus on how to define this type of memorial. For the purposes of this thesis, I shall adopt Margry's (2011) definition of 'popular memorials' in order to highlight both their political dimension and their non-institutionalised character. This section aims to explore such memorials, with a particular focus on sense of place, as people visit memorials that engage with the sites of their former homes. This has particular relevance to Beichuan, one of the most seriously-affected counties, and one which has now become a public commemorative space for the victims of the Sichuan earthquake. During the Qingming Festival, or 'Tomb Sweeping Day', and on every anniversary of the earthquake of 12 May, people come to Beichuan to mourn at the ruins for those who died in the 2008 earthquake. White or yellow chrysanthemums and the burning of candles and incense (see Figure 7.18) mark these as special places and turn them into symbolic memorial landscapes. Figure 7.19, for example, shows a lady conducting rituals to mourn her departed relatives in Beichuan County. People's actions not only evoke Chinese Confucian rituals used to pay homage to the dead, but more importantly, people's sense of belonging to these sites, demonstrated through the ritual performances they conduct within the symbolic memorial spaces.

Figure 7.18: Flowers, candles and incense for traditional mourning rituals

Source: Photograph taken by Li, (2011), Xinhua News Agency, [Online].

Figure 7.19: A Chinese lady conducting rituals in mourning her departed relatives in Beichuan County.

Source: Photograph taken by Guan, (2009), The Sacramento Bee.com, [Online].

The first part of this section will take an in-depth look at popular memorials, paying special attention to the many dualities involved in such commemorations. These include:

- The performance of the memorial as both individual and collective commemoration

- The visitor's role as both performer and audience

- The memorial site as a 'spontaneous shrine'

- The role of the memorial as both commemorative and as a form of political protest

The second part, on the other hand, will focus on analysing popular memorials in the context of the Sichuan earthquake. Particular points of emphasis are:

- The popular memorial as an 'ephemeral' memorial with the potential to generate permanent meaning

- The popular memorial and the combination of material and non-material elements

- The popular memorial as a dynamic commemorative and politically mediated phenomenon

The third section will situate popular memorials within a discussion of the politicisation of memorials at a collective-national level and at the level of the individual. It is important to state that there is a multiple and plural narrative in the tragic memorial. Analysis will be divided into three sections:

- National memorials for the Sichuan earthquake

- National scale double-sided popular memorials

- Multiple meanings of popular memorials at an individual level

7.3.1 The Duality of the Popular Memorial

In order to explore the popular memorial as a site of tragic heritage creation, it is necessary to examine in greater detail memorial sites, persons, performances and the meaning of the popular memorial. In my view, the popular memorial is not a routine public expression of mourning, but an act capable of triggering other acts. People not only place their offerings in memory of the dead, but also demand other actions, such as demanding explanations for what has occurred, or demanding that the guilty parties be brought to justice or that someone take responsibility (Margry and Sánchez-Carretero, 2007). A few of the dualities of popular ritual memorials themselves comprise multiple dualities: popular ritual performances trigger dual meanings in that they embody individual remembering, but also resonate with collective commemoration: those involved in popular rituals are both performers and audience, and the duality of popular memorial sites being used as 'spontaneous shrines' and of the popular memorial's function shows that the same action carries both a commemorative meaning and one of political protest. I shall expand on these themes in the following sections.

The Duality of Popular Memorial Performances: Individual Remembering/Collective Commemoration

In common with the embodied practices discussed in the last section, the performative dimension is a characteristic that popular memorials have in common. However, popular ritual performances are more than simply a routine action of mourning. The performance involves only one action, but it triggers dual meanings, bringing together

the elements of individual remembering and collective commemoration. In China, when someone dies it is believed that they go to the 'afterlife', and thus surviving family members burn symbolic 'money' and 'clothing' (both made of paper) for the deceased, so that they will be well cared for in the afterlife. A 'happy afterlife' of course also means that the deceased will continue to care for the surviving loved ones in the present life. This is part of a centuries-old tradition, but these actions are only conducted in those special places where people feel a connection with the deceased, such as the memorial sites discussed in this section. This demonstrates people's sense of place, and, more importantly, popular ritual performances trigger dual meanings: they are acts of individual remembering, but also resonate with collective commemoration. Figure 7.20 shows Li Mingcui, 61, burning paper money to mourn her husband and granddaughter, who died during the earthquake in Beichuan County. However, she is not the only one performing such rituals. Figure 7.21 shows people burning offerings to mourn the deceased in Beichuan, while Figure 7.22 shows students' parents burning offerings to mourn their children near the ruins of Beichuan Middle School. These performances bring together the elements of individual remembrance and collective commemoration, and such behaviour may indeed have led to a cemetery eventually being built in Beichuan.

Figure 7.20: Li Mingcui burns joss money to mourn victims

Source: Photograph taken by Bor, (2008), REUTERS, [Online].

Figure 7.21: People burning offerings to mourn the deceased

Source: Photograph taken by Li, (2011), Xinhua News Agency, [Online].

Figure 7.22: Students' parents burn offerings to mourn their children near the ruins of Beichuan Middle School.

Source: Photographs taken by Li, (2009), Getty Images, [Online].

The Duality of Popular Ritual: the Individual as Performer and Audience

The word 'performance' has already been used frequently in this chapter. Abercrombie and Longhurst (1998) offer 'spectacle/performance' as a new paradigm for understanding the changing relationship between performance and audience, and this allows new insights into the nature of the heritage audience, while the idea of 'performativity' as embodied in the performer at a popular memorial requires closer examination. Conventional memorials are erected as permanent monuments with a future audience in mind, but popular memorials are intended for an immediate audience. The first are passive in character, while the second are extraordinarily dynamic (Grider, 2001).

The performer at a popular memorial site takes on a dual role: that of the performer or heritage producer, and, at the same time, the audience or heritage receiver. Figure 7.23 shows Li Mingcui wearing a Qiang minority costume and holding a red scarf as a sign of respect for the victims of the earthquake. She is bowing down and directly facing her old home, and it is clear that her performance demonstrates her sincere respect for the victims and a strong sense of place. She is the receiver of the memorial (in this case a monument), but her costume and gestures make her look as if she is performing on a 'memorial' stage, and indeed her appearance immediately attracted media attention. In Chinese traditional ritual, rice is poured over the backs of people at a ceremony for the dead: this action is recognised as a way of separating people into 'Yin 阴' (ghost space) and 'Yang 阳' (human space), and is viewed as a way

of respecting the dead, who live in the 'ghost world'. Figure 7.24 shows some local Sichuan people helping to pour rice over the backs of people who have just finished their memorial rituals for the victims. Such behaviour is typical of a festival celebration, and as such these local people are not only receivers of a memorial, but also performers producing something new to remember.

Figure 7.23: A Chinese woman holding a red scarf bows down in a ritual of respect for the victims of the earthquake and for her home town

Source: Photograph taken by Bor, (2008), REUTERS, [Online].

Figure 7.24: Rice is poured over the backs of people at a ceremony for the dead.

Source: Photograph taken by Kozak, (2008), [Online].

The Duality of the Popular Ritual Site as a 'Spontaneous Shrine'

In examining this 'memorial stage', I view popular ritual sites as 'spontaneous shrines', following Santino's (1992) study of places used to memorialise political deaths in Northern Ireland. As Sánchez-Carretero (2011) explains, the use of the word 'spontaneous' indicates the unofficial nature of the display: no institution — nation, state or church — issues an invitation to take part in this ritual, and it is a genuinely popular activity, in the sense that people themselves are its active subject. The word 'shrine' is used because these sites are places of communion between the living and the dead, and also places of pilgrimage where people go to commemorate and memorialise, though they are open to the public at large, too. After the earthquake, Beichuan became a 'spontaneous shrine', a site that combines the meaning of both temple and monument. Unlike a temple, it is not a religious place, but neither does it appear to be a monumental memorial, which involves "limited or no participation of the general public in the rationale behind them, whose objectives are controlled by some type of political or religious the authority, and which are also distant in time from the events they commemorate" (Young, 1993). It is instead a monument created by people spontaneously.

Figure 7.25 shows a father burning paper and candles for his child near the ruins of Beichuan Middle School during the first anniversary of the Sichuan earthquake. Figure 7.26, meanwhile, shows a boy covering a candle while mourning the deceased. As we can see, both were spontaneously performing memorials which generate a spiritual and emotional link with the victims through their engagement with the

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memorial site. The phenomena which they create, however, are naturally associated with religious images such as in a Chinese Buddhist temple, with the smoke of burning things spiralling up and crowning the memorial site (see Figure 7.26). Furthermore, the use of ritual materials, such as incense, and ritual gestures, like praying by placing the palms together, are forms of a symbolic religious nature which have been widely reproduced at post-disaster sites. Figure 7.27 shows a woman holding incense standing in front of her old house and praying with her palms together, as if she were praying in front of a temple, and, similarly, Figure 7.28 shows another woman standing in front of a cemetery and praying with her palms together, her sincerely devotional countenance indicating the symbolic meaning of the space. These images demonstrate that the memorial site is a 'shrine' containing religious 'colours', even though it is not created by an institution or for a political purpose, but constructed out of ordinary people's spontaneous performances.

Figure 7.25: A father burns papers and candles for his child near the ruins of Beichuan Middle School.

Source: Photograph taken by Li, (2009), Getty Images, [Online].

Figure 7.26: A boy covers a candle while mourning the deceased.

Source: Photograph taken by Li, (2011), Xinhua News Agency, [Online].

Figure 7.27: A Chinese woman holding incense and praying with her palms together.

Source: Xinhua Net, (2009), [Online].

Figure 7.28: A Chinese woman standing in front of a cemetery, praying with her palms together.
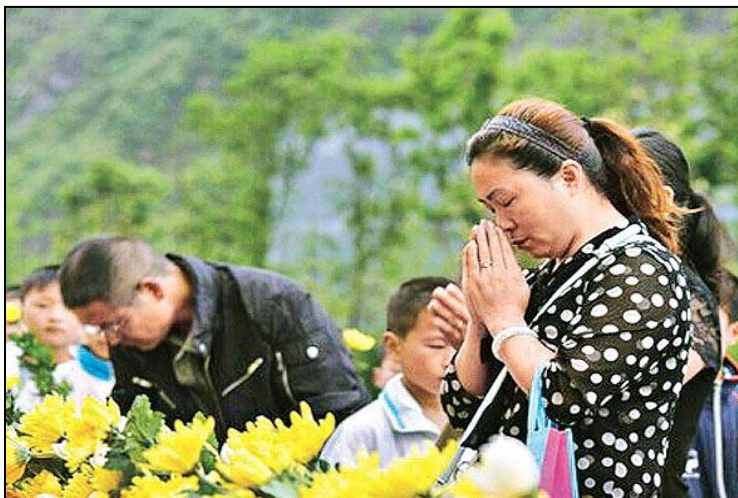
Source: Photograph taken by Xinhua Net, (2009), [Online].

The Duality of Function of the Popular Memorial: Commemoration and Political Protest

Another dual function of the popular memorial may be seen in how an act of memorial performance triggers meanings of both commemoration and political protest. People not only place their offerings in memory of the dead, but also demand other actions. The altars bring people's commemorative performances together with forms of social intervention by drawing attention, for example, to the social and political conditions that led to the deaths, and consequently mobilising the population (Sánchez-Carretero & Ortiz, 2011). Figure 7.29 shows Li Yang, a student from Beichuan Middle School and also a survivor of the devastating earthquake, mourning the earthquake victims at the ruins of his school. Li Yang came to the ruins of the school to mourn his teachers and classmates who had died in the 2008 earthquake, and naturally his behaviour in visiting the ruins of the school shows his sense of place, while he represented the victims with photos and dedicated flowers to them, in memory of the dead. His behaviour has a largely commemorative function.

Other similar scenes imply more, however, such as those depicting parents who lost children in the quake holding up photographs of their children in their hands in memory of their deaths (see Figure 7.30). In these images we can see not only their grief, but also their resentment, and therefore their commemorative behaviour at the same time takes the form of a political protest. Parental grief has spread like a pall over Sichuan. Thousands of schools full of children collapsed during the 12 May 2008 earthquake, with many of the young victims killed by falling concrete and bricks. As a

result, the most politically incendiary issue centres on school safety, amid allegations that corruption and mismanagement led to shoddy construction. Figure 7.31 shows more than a hundred parents who lost their children in the earthquake holding photographs of their children in front of the school's ruins, with a large banner demanding explanations as to why the buildings collapsed so easily, and asking the state the authorities to investigate the quality of the collapsed school buildings. In this sense, the popular memorials are not only an expression of pain, grief and remembrance of the victims, but also part of a popular protest action in the political arena. In other words, the popular memorial is also a political declaration with the aim of preventing individual voices from being silenced (Santino, 2006).

Figure 7.29: A student mourns the earthquake victims at the ruins of Beichuan Middle School on Tomb Sweeping Day in 2009

Source: Photograph taken by Chen, (2009), Xinhua News Agency, [Online].

Figure 7.30: Bereavement and resentment: students' parents who lost their children in the earthquake hold their childrens' photographs as a way of expressing their bereavement and resentment.

Source: Photograph taken by Lee, (2008), REUTERS, [Online].

Figure 7.31: Political protest: more than one hundred parents who lost their children in the earthquake hold their children's photographs in front of the ruins of the school, with a large banner demanding explanations

Source: Photographs taken by Lee, (2008), REUTERS, [Online].

7.3.2 The Dynamic and Mediated Popular Memorials Process

After the above detailed examination of popular memorials, this section will focus on analysing popular memorials in the context of the Sichuan earthquake. While the popular memorial may be an 'ephemeral' memorial, it does have the potential to generate more permanent meaning. Popular memorial objects combine both material and non-material elements, and similarly popular memorials may be viewed as both a commemorative and as a dynamic mediatised political phenomenon.

The Popular Memorial as an 'Ephemeral' Memorial with the Potential to Generate Permanent Meaning

A subsequent debate regarding the religious sense of the term 'shrine', as well as the questionable spontaneity of some of the memorials, has led other researchers to employ the term 'improvised' or 'ephemeral' memorials (Stengs, 2003). It is clear that

the spontaneous and sacred nature of the popular memorial is rooted in its temporal and instantaneous character, but this kind of 'ephemeral' memorial also has the potential to generate more permanent meaning, especially since an emblematic monument or a collective cemetery is likely to be built after the site has attracted a lot of public attention. As discussed above, only a few days after the Sichuan earthquake, people began to visit Beichuan County, leaving behind poems, flowers, letters, candles, toys and religious images in memory of the victims. Similar memorials also appeared in other parts of Sichuan. Yingxiu was the epicentre of the devastating Sichuan earthquake in 2008, and about 6,000 out of 16,000-plus residents were killed in the destruction. Figure 7.32 shows some relatives burning joss paper at the tomb of an 11-year-old girl on a mountain near Yingxiu town centre. When more and more people began to come here to mourn, the site became a 'shrine', and the two images of Figure 7.33 show how the mountain has now been turned into the Wenchuan Earthquake Collective Cemetery, and most of the earthquake victims in Yingxiu have been buried here. It is clear that the cemetery is an important space for mourning the dead, and the site not only represents a special space for people to engage with their sense of place in remembering their loved ones, but also shows how ephemeral, temporal and instantaneous popular memorials are solidified and come to acquire long-term meaning. Since then, more and more 'shrines' in Sichuan have been earmarked by the the authorities as sites for memorials or collective cemeteries for those lost in the Sichuan earthquake.

Figure 7.32: Relatives burn joss paper at the tomb of an 11-year-old girl on a mountain near Yingxiu town centre

Source: Photograph taken by Huang, (2011), chinadaily.com.cn, [Online].

Figure 7.33: The mountain near Yingxiu town centre has now been turned into the Wenchuan Earthquake Collective Cemetery.

Source: (The author unknown), (2011), Sina.com, [Online].

How Popular Memorial Objects Combine both Material and Non-Material Elements

Popular ritual memorial objects combine both material and non-material elements, as has been described above. The embodied practices of people contain non-material elements as well as material ones, such as flowers, letters or other offerings that are placed on the tombs of loved ones or on monuments. In this section, I shall take a more detailed look at these material elements. The offerings most commonly found are flowers, candles, and a series of other objects including toys, religious images, photographs, flags, T-shirts with messages, banners, drawings and paintings. The following images show the use of some of these materials at memorial sites in the Sichuan earthquake context.

Popular memorials commonly take the form of objects and written messages attached to the old houses, schools and tombs where people tend to feel the strongest sense of place in relation to lost loved ones. Writing a letter or banner is a typical gesture. Figure 7.34 shows a mother, Cheng Xingfeng, putting up a banner in mourning for her son and other victims who were buried by the collapse of Jing Jia mountain. The huge earthquake destroyed the lives of hundreds of students at Mao Ba Middle School, including the son of this woman, Huo Chuan, who was 16 years old. The banner is filled with the bitter voices of the mother, "For the victims of school teachers and students: Huo Chuan, how are you? Father and Mother miss you so much. My son, today it is the fourth anniversary of the earthquake. Your Mum doesn't know how she managed to move on these four years. Every day I miss you so much with the feeling of heart-

wrenching and lung-tearing. Dad and Mum love you forever; we will be together as always. My son, Mum misses you! Miss you! Miss you! "(translated by the the author).

Figure 7.34: A mother, Cheng Xingfeng, putting up a banner in mourning for her son who was buried by the earthquake in Beichuan County, on 12 May, 2012, the fourth anniversary of the Sichuan earthquake.

Source: Photographs taken by Zhu, (2012), news.ifeng.com, [Online].

A large amount of mourning graffiti can also be found among the ruins in Sichuan. Figure 7.35 shows a piece of paper carrying a message of mourning which reads "I miss you, Mama" in Beichuan Qiang Autonomous County. This kind of graffiti shows how people engage with this special memorial space in memory of their loved ones.

Figure 7.35: A piece of paper for mourning reads "I miss you, Mama"

Source: Photograph taken by Li, (2011), Xinhua News Agency, [Online].

The messages are written in many languages, and religious phrases are used to send people's spiritual messages to the victims, Figure 7.36 shows a banner with Buddhist content attached to a car which was damaged by rocks falling from the mountain during the earthquake.

Figure 7.36: A banner with Buddhist language, attached to a car damaged by rocks falling from the mountain during the earthquake.

Source: Photograph taken by Li, (2011), Xinhua News Agency, [Online].

Prayers for the victims were also found with yellow ribbons representing people's blessings for the disaster-hit people. People prayed for the earthquake victims by putting yellow ribbons on buses and buildings, and some people sent blessings for victims in disaster areas by wearing yellow ribbons on their wrists (see Figure 7.37).

Figure 7.37: Yellow ribbons placed at Changsha railway station and on buses.

Source: Photographs taken by Chen, (2008), english.rednet.cn, [Online].

People with yellow ribbons on their wrists.

Source: Photograph taken by Chen, (2008), english.rednet.cn, [Online].

Burning a candle is another special ritual, given that in China candles represent people's most sincere blessing. During special occasions, such as Mourning Day or anniversaries of the earthquake, ceremonies have been held where people burn candles for Sichuan and for all the victims of the earthquake. Candlelight is supposed to convey people's most pure-hearted blessings to victims of the earthquake, and Figure 7.38 shows children using candles as a means of sending their best wishes.

Figure 7.38: Burning candles in pure-hearted blessing

 Source: Photograph taken by Xu, (2009), Xinhua News Agency [Online].

People even use candles to form different shapes and send a variety of messages. Figure 7.39 shows people gathered around arrangements of candles reading "Wenchuan" and "512", during an activity to mourn victims of the quake. Candles are widely used in memorials, as they symbolise connection, and candlelight represents the light in people's hearts and their care for each other, encouraging one another to overcome disaster together.

Figure 7.39: Burning candles in pure-hearted blessing

Source: Photograph taken by Xu, (2009), Xinhua News Agency [Online].

The Popular Memorial: A Commemorative and Dynamic Mediatised Political Phenomenon

As discussed above, the 'shrines' at Sichuan constitute an important form of public response to the earthquake, and can also be considered to be a form of action within the political sphere in the wake of the earthquake. In other words, on the one hand, the popular memorial has a commemorative character, with the 'shrines' at Sichuan performing an important role as a mode of public response to the earthquake, while on the other, it also has a firmly political character, as a form of silent protest. In this section I shall explore this issue in greater detail, highlighting how the popular memorial is both a commemorative and a dynamic mediatised political phenomenon.

In the early stages after the Sichuan tragedy, popular memorials played a largely commemorative role. Shortly after the earthquake, a few people spontaneously visited the sites, and then more and more people came, which was followed in turn by a number of demonstrations such as students' parents' protests, which triggered political attention from the the authorities. The popular memorial then began to take on a more political direction, with the authorities sealing off large areas of quake-hit Beichuan County, building security gates and fences, and introducing security and ID checks for local residents to access their homes. Figure 7.40 shows the local the authorities sealing off quake-hit Beichuan County, with people outside security gates and walls topped with razor wire. Chain-link fencing is now to be seen everywhere in Beichuan (Figure 7.41). Figure 7.42 shows the police checking residents' identity before letting them past the security gate. However, nothing can stop people from expressing their bereavement

by engaging with their own land, and memorial materials have been found on the fences or walls, such as flowers stuck into the fence in front of the ruins (see Figure 7.43). Such materials are not only symbols of people's memory, but they also embody forms of silent political protest: "this land is mine, I have the right to come back." In other words, the popular memorials which appeared on the fences were not only an expression of pain, grief and remembrance of the victims, but also part of action in the political arena by local people. It seems clear that this kind of phenomenon only appeared slightly later in the post-tragedy period. As time went on, many collective cemeteries and monuments came to be built and regulated, and as people's resentment began to melt away with reconstruction, the popular memorial is now tending once more to shift towards a more commemoration-oriented and specifically-targeted meaning, rather than an unclear commemorative meaning in the initial stages, or a political function in the second. Figure 7.44 shows a more peaceful and specific commemoration, in recent times, when the popular memorial has moved back again towards a more monument-oriented function.

Figure 7.40: People outside a security wall topped with razor wire, after local the authorities sealed off quake-hit Beichuan County.

Source: Photograph taken by Wong, (2008), The Associated Press, [Online].

Figure 7.41: Chain-link fencing may be seen everywhere in Beichuan

Source: Photograph taken by Wong, (2008), The Associated Press, [Online].

Figure 7.42: Police check residents' identity before allowing them past the security gate

Source: Photograph taken by Wong, (2008), The Associated Press, [Online].

Figure 7.43: Silent demonstration, with flowers stuck into the fence in front of the ruins

Source: Photograph taken by Li, (2011), Xinhua News Agency, [Online].

Source: Photograph taken by the author Zhang, (2009).

Figure 7.44: Popular memorials move back once more towards a monument-oriented style

Source: (Author unknown), (2013), Chinanews.com, [Online].

7.3.3 The Complexities and Tensions between Top-Down and Bottom-Up Influences on the National Popular Memorial

In order to develop a clear understanding of the popular memorial, this section will situate the popular memorial within a discussion of the politicisation of memorials at a collective and state/national level, as well as a discussion at the level of the local/ individual memorial. The material will be analysed in three sections: national memorials for the Sichuan earthquake; national scale double-sided popular memorials; and the multiple meanings of popular memorials at an individual level.

National Memorials for the Sichuan Earthquake

In examining popular memorials, there is another important piece of contextual information that needs to be taken into account: the politicisation of the memorials. In a similar, but slightly more formal context, the word 'mourning' began to appear widely in official documents shortly after the Sichuan earthquake. Mourning for the Sichuan earthquake was elevated to the status of a national event by the Chinese Communist Party, a national event being one orchestrated by the state with a view to creating and recreating a sense of "community", and to producing citizens who are uniform and loyal in social terms (Frigolé, 2003). A large number of gatherings led by the Chinese Communist Party were held in public spaces such as squares in the centres of large cities. In my view, the general public, in a sense, sought to pre-empt any type of manipulation by the political powers-that-be by taking over the public space to ritualise their grief regarding the earthquake; I shall examine this in more detail below.

Led by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), mourning for Sichuan earthquake victims quickly became an event on a national scale. As is shown in Figure 7.45, one week after the earthquake, the CCP led the first national-scale mourning. The State Council proclaimed:

> In order to express deep condolences to victims of the 12 May Sichuan earthquake, the decision has been made by the State Council that there are three days, from 19 to 21 May 2008, which are declared official national days of mourning for the Sichuan earthquake victims. During this period, national and foreign institutions will fly flags at half-mast and stop all public recreational activities. The Foreign Ministry and Chinese embassies and consulates will set up a book of condolence. At 14.28 on 19 May, the people of the whole country will observe three minutes' silence, which will be ended with the sounding of car horns, train and ship's whistles and air defence alarms.

Figure 7.45: Announcement of national mourning from 19 to 21 May in 2008, with three minutes' silence at 14.28 on 19 May.

Source: (Author unknown), (2008), Global Voices, [Online].

After the three days of national mourning were declared, the whole nation responded rapidly, with ceremonies taking place not only in Sichuan, but also in all of the large Chinese cities, as well as abroad. There were many such ceremonies, during which

people offered gifts to the victims, but the most significant characteristic of these ceremonies was their strong symbolism, showing the Chinese people's ability to mobilise in collective meetings. In my view, however, symbols of Communist Party ideology also penetrated these national-scale gatherings, despite the fact that the crowds came to pay homage to the victims and to show the unity of Chinese society and its determination to overcome disaster. Figure 7.46 shows the strong unity of the whole nation in mourning, but the statue of Chinaman Mao clearly shows the event's Communist character. Chengdu's central square is typical of Communist China: it is a vast empty space, in the shadow of a statue representing President Mao Zedong. People stand in front of the statue of Chairman Mao, and a Chinese red banner is surrounded by flowers. There can be no doubt that the symbols of Communist China played an important role in the ceremony.

Figure 7.46: Millions of people mourning the earthquake victims in Chengdu's central square, during the first National Mourning Day on 19 May 2008.

Source: Photograph taken by Sun Tao, (2008), South Weekend News Agency, [Online].

Memorial ceremonies were also held in Tiananmen Square in Beijing and in other large cities. People displayed their unity in coping with the crisis, holding each other's hands and forming a gigantic human chain (see Figure 7.47). The earthquake was seen as a collective ordeal which all Chinese people had to overcome, and the ceremonies appeared to be a spectacle of national unity, the expression of a feeling of solidarity uniting all Chinese people. It seems clear that this expression created a collective national tragic memory, but with a Communist character.

Figure 7.47: The whole nation responds to the first National Mourning Day for Sichuan earthquake victims.

Source: Photographs taken by Liu & Bai, (2008), Xinhuanet, [Online].

A Double-sided Popular Memorial on a National Scale

In contrast to the above events, where the mourning was led by a strong ruling party, there were also other types of memorial, which I shall refer to as double-sided popular memorials. That is to say, many of the different kinds of memorial for the Sichuan earthquake victims, throughout the whole of China, were created spontaneously by ordinary people and hence may be recognised as large-scale popular memorials. When we look at these memorials in greater detail, focusing on what was remembered, how the events were conducted, the style of the events and their purpose, it is not easy to find traces of major political intervention. In other words, it might be said that the general public's response also sought to pre-empt any type of manipulation by the powers-that-be. Due to the high level of political control in China over such confidential resources, as well as the limitations of this research, this section will only cover these issues briefly, rather than undertake an in-depth analysis of the full extent to which this was the case.

Different kinds of popular memorials for the Sichuan earthquake victims were held spontaneously all over the country. On the traditional Chinese 'Tomb Sweeping Day' (4 April, 2009) a public memorial service was held in Xining (in Qinghai Province, in north-west China) for the victims of the earthquake. Figure 7.48 (Image 1) shows a resident presenting her hand-made flowers at a monument for victims. On the same day, in a memorial activity held in Suining, in Sichuan Province, people also presented flowers to express their condolences for the victims of the Sichuan earthquake (see

Image 3). Meanwhile, an 18-metre long and 3-metre high memorial wall (Image 2) was set up for people to express their condolences for victims of the devastating earthquake. Image 2 also shows two children holding up cards inscribed with their best wishes for children in the earthquake-hit areas.

Figure 7.48: Different materials for mourning victims of the Sichuan earthquake.

Image 1   Image 2

Image 3

Source: Photographs taken by Wen, (2009), ebigear.co, [Online].

Candlelight ceremonies attempt to create connections between people even across large distances. Figure 7.49 displays people spontaneously gathering for a candlelight vigil for Sichuan earthquake victims on 12 May 2009 in Shanghai, while Figure 7.50 shows residents of Changsha, in Hunan Province in central China, lighting candles in Wuyi Square to form the shape "5.12" on 19 May 2008, to mourn those killed in the Sichuan earthquake, and donating money.

Figure 7.49: Burning candles in the form of a heart.

Source: Photograph taken by Guan, (2009), The Sacramento Bee.com, [Online].

Figure 7.50: Burning candles in the form of a heart to remember a heroic teacher.

Source: Photograph taken by Lee, (2009), Rednet.cn, [Online].

Source: Photograph taken by Zhou, (2008), Xinhua Net, [Online].

However, as can be seen in the above images, what people chose to remember was the heroic teacher who saved children's lives in the earthquake. There is no desire to comment on the story itself: it is a symbolic model which was selected by the Chinese

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the authorities, and the style and scale of mourning were also strictly organised by the the authorities. In the lower left-hand corner of the image in Figure 7.51, we can see that there were police everywhere, keeping a strict watch over the people's memorial movement. This is apparent too in the source of the images, namely rednet.cn and Xinhua.Net, two important media organisations largely controlled by the Chinese Communist Party. It is not hard, therefore, to imagine how political influences affected these popular memorials.

Figure 7.51: Policemen (in lower left-hand corner of image) keeping a strict watch on the people's memorial movement.

Source: Photograph taken by Guan, (2009), The Sacramento Bee.com, [Online].

Multiple Meanings of Popular Memorials at an Individual Level

As well as on a collective vertical level, differences can also be seen at an individual level. In order to investigate this further, in this section I shall use the presentation of flowers for the victims as a typical example of how the same memorial act can generate different meanings for different people, and how the process of remembering a tragedy may be narrated in different ways. It is my view that in order to study and fully explore tragic heritage sites, it is important to examine their multiple and pluralistic dimensions.

Presenting flowers is a traditional ritual to commemorate the deceased. However, different people present flowers in different ways, with different meanings. Figure 7.52 shows the president of the People's Republic of China, Hu Jintao, delivering a speech on 12 May 2009 at the epicentre of the quake, the town of Yinxiu in Wenchuan County. Behind him in the left-hand image there is a sculpture of a huge clock which indicates the time of the disaster, and in the background of the picture, it is just possible to discern the ruins left by the earthquake. In the image on the right, he is holding a white chrysanthemum in front of a black wall as a mourning symbol, to pay homage to the victims. The white chrysanthemum, the black suit and the great black draperies in the background are all elements that make this commemoration ceremony very solemn, and the background has been left as a permanent memorial, marking this as a special place in the symbolic memorial landscape. President Hu Jintao's actions evoke Confucian rituals for paying homage to the dead and to ancestors, but his personal

actions are a symbolic act of mourning for the victims, showing how much he cares. However, Hu Jintao is alone, which places the emphasis on him as a figure rather than on the crowds watching him. This makes it clear that the event was to come to form part of the Chinese national memory.

Figure 7.53 shows local people presenting bouquets for their relatives who died in the earthquake. There is an old Chinese saying: 'When people lose something, they get to know the real sense of bitter loss.' It was local people who suffered the most, and the place of mourning was filled with a solemn silence. All of the mourners have bitterness written on their faces as they place flowers in front of the collective cemetery dedicated to the remembrance of the 2008 disaster.

Figure 7.54 shows health workers bowing after offering flowers to their patients who did not survive the earthquake, during a ceremony to commemorate the first anniversary of the earthquake. As can be seen from the images, their memories are connected with their work as medical professionals, and their faces speak of their helplessness. On the one hand, they pay their respects to the victims, but on the other their work has given them a profound sense of how weak and small human life is. Their memories are tinged with a sense of pity and guilt, with thoughts like "If she could have received treatment earlier...", "If I could have managed to try other ways……."

Figure 7.52: President Hu Jintao mourning the Sichuan earthquake victims on the first anniversary of the disaster.

Source: (Author unknown), (2009), Xinhuanet, [Online].

Figure 7.53: Local people presenting bouquets for relatives who died in the earthquake.

Source: Photograph taken by Jing, (2011), Xinhua News Agency, [Online].

Figure 7.54: Presenting flowers.

Source: Photograph taken by Guan, (2009), The Sacramento Bee.com, [Online].

Figure 7.55 shows people from outside Sichuan, from all over China, coming to mourn the deceased in Beichuan County. They present flowers to express their blessings for the victims, their hearts full of commiseration and caring for those who suffered in the earthquake.

Presenting a flower for the victims evokes a number of different meanings and memories for different people, and for this reason an analysis of tragic heritage in memorials needs to appreciate the multiple dimensions that go into creating them.

Figure 7.55: People from all over China coming to mourn the deceased.

Source: Photograph taken by Li, (2011), Xinhua News Agency, [Online].

Conclusion

In the aftermath of the earthquake, the different sites and buildings discussed in the thesis have begun to receive both attention and protection from cultural relics bureaus and other agents of top-down governance. However, the process of selecting and proclaiming certain buildings as heritage sites and exhibiting historic figures and events as part of a grand heritage narrative not only changes the places themselves, but also the local community's view of its heritage and its ability to control it. From Tunbridge and Ashworth's (1996) early work, 'Dissonant Heritage: the management of a resource in conflict', through to Ashworth, Graham, and Tunbridge's (2007) recent 'Pluralising Past: Heritage, Identity and Place in Multicultural Societies', central to the various studies has been the debate on multiple and pluralist approaches to heritage, which is indeed the principal concern of this third empirical chapter (Chapter 7). Following the theories of Ashworth, Graham and Tunbridge and other scholars such as Foote (2003), I

emphasise that memorial building must be an inclusive, rather than an exclusive process, and that as many individuals and groups as possible should be included in debates over memorialisation.

In the first section of this chapter, I analysed sense of place in terms of distinctiveness before the earthquake, continuity during the earthquake transition, and self-esteem after the earthquake. I conclude that heritage is a cultural process which involves embodying acts of remembrance and commemoration while negotiating and constructing a sense of place and belonging, and creating meaning in the present. What emerges, therefore, is a sense of the importance of memory, and specifically of performing acts of remembrance at post-disaster sites. Subsequently, in the second section, where I investigate what exactly people 'do' or 'sense', both subjectively and in cultural terms, at post-disaster sites, and how this comes to create post-disaster places, I highlight the fact that the forms of memory most often associated with heritage in post-disaster sites are collective (or social) memory and habitual memory. Heritage, then, is not the passive object of management and conservation, but rather an active process engaged with the construction and negotiation of meaning through remembering performances. In the final section, I illustrate how popular memorials come to be sites of post-disaster heritage creation through these three factors:

First of all, the dualities involved in such commemoration performances:

- The performance of the memorial as both individual and collective commemoration
- The visitor's role as both performer and audience
- The memorial site as a 'spontaneous shrine'

- The role of the memorial as both commemorative and as a form of political protest

Secondly, the process of this type of commemoration, which includes:

- The popular memorial as an 'ephemeral' memorial with the potential to generate permanent meaning

- The popular memorial and the combination of material and non-material elements

- The popular memorial as a dynamic commemorative and political mediated phenomenon

Thirdly, top-down and bottom-up national memorials, such as:

- National memorials for the Sichuan earthquake

- National scale double-sided popular memorials

- Multiple meanings of popular memorials at an individual level

Chapter 8: Exploring Dark Tourism: A Case Study of the Beichuan Tourism Region

Introduction

When the earthquake took place in 2008, I was studying in the UK, but it was my own childhood experience of an earthquake that drove me to see for myself what had happened in Sichuan. Like many other people, I had only seen photographs of the destruction caused by the earthquake, and I remember seeing the horrific images when news reports brought the earthquake to the attention of the public. All these images and stories brought to mind my own first experience of an earthquake in 1993: I was 10 years old when an earthquake measuring 5.3 on the Richter scale hit my home town of Liuzuo. Because it was the epicentre of the quake, and the quality of building was much lower than today, I felt the earth tremble and the mountains sway: I can never forget the horrific scenes of that terrible earthquake. My experience, however, was nothing compared to that of the people who were trapped or injured or who lost loved ones in the Sichuan earthquake, and so describing my own fears seems almost shameful.

When I was in Chengdu in 2010, my first thought was to visit the epicentre of the earthquake at Wenchuan: there were, however, public transport issues, and after seeking local advice I decided to go instead to the Beichuan region (see Figure 8.1). I took the bus from Chengdu to An Chang and visited the Beichuan earthquake memorial. On my return, I took a bus from Beichuan to MianYang, visiting New Beichuan and the Qiang ethnic village, and then took a train from Mian Yang to Chengdu. In 2012, I went back and revisited the region, following the same route.

This chapter draws upon those two visits, and my experiences of the development of a new post-earthquake tourism in Sichuan. It focuses on the Beichuan earthquake memorial, which is not a single memorial, but rather the description used for a large number of different sites across Beichuan County. This chapter, in four sections, examines these as different kinds of memorial and tourism sites. The first section provides a background to the Beichuan earthquake memorial region, and then a description of how the region has been packaged for tourism consumption. This is followed by two case studies: one of the early stages after the quake in Old Beichuan Town, and the other of the later stages. Together these demonstrate three distinctive ways in which post-disaster heritage works: by turning ruins into heritage, by making 'new' places (taking the form of a museum, for example), and by using the opportunity to remake places (as in the case of tourist sites).

Figure 8.1: Map of "dark tourism" in Sichuan

Source: Sichuan Tourism Administration, (2010)

8.1 The Beichuan Earthquake Memorial

The Beichuan earthquake memorial, which is still under construction, is a large project including many sites across Beichuan County. It is planned to be completed within five to eight years, with a total investment of RMB 900 million. A great deal of preparatory work still needs to be finished, such as detailed geological disaster assessments of the surrounding areas and the reconstruction of roads, which present a variety of challenges for the future (Beichuan Earthquake Memorial Plan, 2008). According to the Urban Planning Bureau of Mianyang City (Sichuan Province), Beichuan earthquake memorial will serve as a testament and display, a memorial and a reminder, a channel of information and education, and a means of research and development, showing the real history of the Sichuan earthquake. According to the plan, the memorial covers around 15 square kilometres, including the site exhibition area, the commemorative area, the exhibition area, the service area, Leigu Town, Old Beichuan Town and the surrounding environment (see Figure 8.2, Beichuan earthquake museum satellite map).

As the satellite map below shows, the Beichuan earthquake memorial will include the exhibition area (the part highlighted in red) and the service area (highlighted in orange) in the town of Leigu; the earthquake site of Old Beichuan Town (highlighted in green); the commemorative area (highlighted in blue), which is between Leigu and Old Beichuan Town; as well as the surrounding environment, which includes

new Beichuan town and the Qiang ethnic village, located in the bottom left corner, below the entrance region. Detailed explanations are as follows:

Figure 8.2: Beichuan earthquake museum satellite map
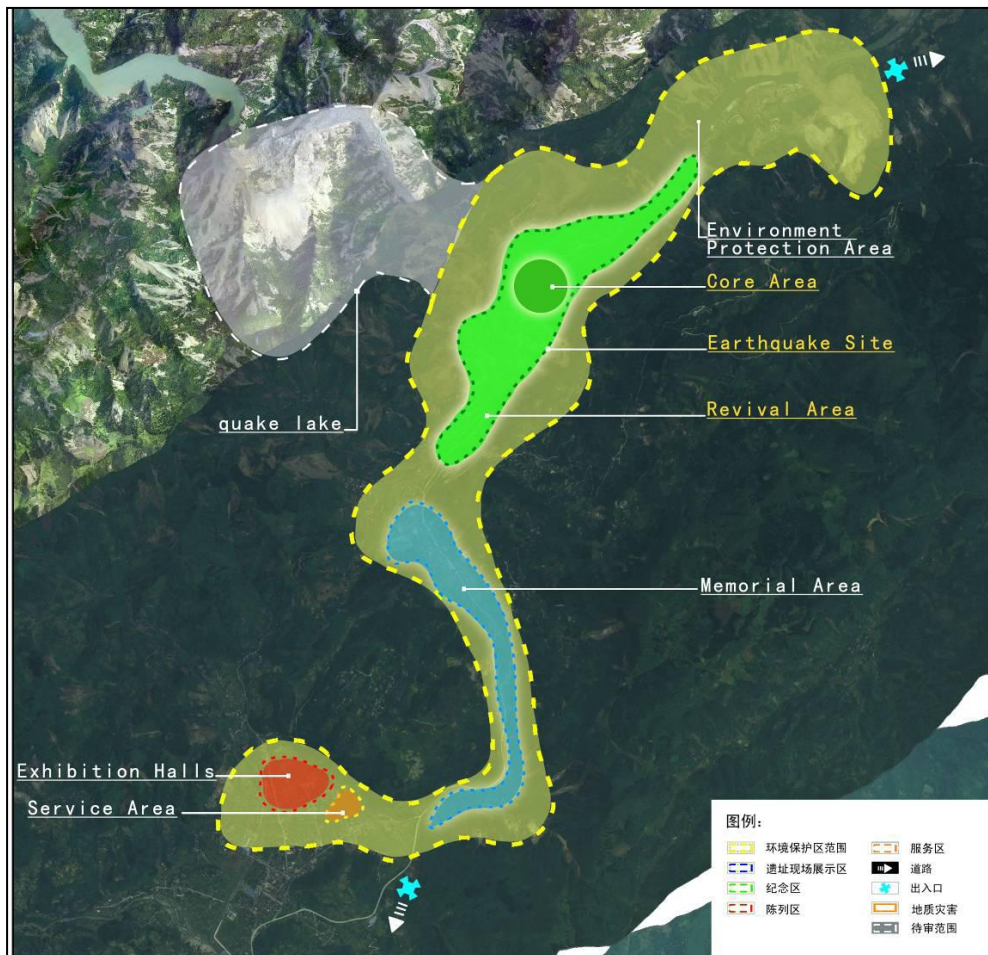
Source: Beichuan Earthquake Memorial Plan, (2011)

- Exhibition Area and Service Area — Introduction of the Memorial

    The town of Leigu will feature the exhibition architecture and service area, due to its relatively good geological condition. New exhibition architecture and management offices will be established, based on the original infrastructure and service facilities.

- Commemorative Area — Condolence and Reflection

    The 4 km-long road between the town of Leigu and Beichuan Middle School, together with the school itself, will form the Commemorative Area. A commemorative pagoda will be built at Beichuan Middle School for visitors to see the whole earthquake museum site. The Commemorative Area (the part highlighted in blue) includes the Disaster Relief Centre at Beichuan Middle School, where commemorative buildings will be constructed, and the 4 km-long road between the town of Leigu and Beichuan Middle School, where the memorial walls with names of the victims will be built.

- Earthquake Ruins Area— Experiencing the Shock

    The most striking part of the earthquake memorial will be the earthquake ruins (the part highlighted in green). The earthquake site presents a genuine and complete experience of a site destroyed by a disaster. By visiting the site, it is hoped that visitors will go through the emotional process of turning grief to hope. The moment the earthquake happened is shown in the 'Core Area', with its preserved streets, architecture and objects.

- Revival Area — Reflect the Future

    In addition to its commemorative function, the Beichuan earthquake memorial is in itself a dynamic record of the multiple and different stages that occur during a natural disaster such as an earthquake. The revival area, such as new Beichuan town and Qiang ethnic village, are newly emerged, which shows the earthquake is an opportunity to remake places, as we hope will be shown in the following discussion.

From my investigations, there appears to be three principal characteristics of the post-disaster landscape in Beichuan memorial region.

First of all, it is important to highlight the scientific natural disaster context of the site. The earthquake relic site is differentiated from the earthquake museum, and it has been suggested that the ruins of the 5.12 earthquake will be preserved in their original condition and that the site will potentially become a world heritage site. Old Beichuan town, the most seriously damaged town in the earthquake, will be turned into a museum and memorial which will illustrate the quake in more depth.

Secondly, the commemorative function is fulfilled by the earthquake museum, which covers an area of 140,230 square metres and is named "Crack": there are two main exhibition sections, which include a scientific museum and a commemorative museum. The museums will integrate functions: not only do they provide a historical narrative of the massive earthquake, but more importantly they act as a form of commemoration and condolence; they also popularize scientific knowledge and education, as well as scientific research and development (Planning Bureau of Mianyang City, 2008). "The museum not only records the moment of the earthquake, it is the tangible memory of the deceased. It warns us to respect nature and promote the spirit of endurance in times of catastrophe" (Ma, interview with local governor, 13/03/2010).

Thirdly, many tourist sites were developed around the Beichuan region after the earthquake, and seven different themed tours have been planned: an earthquake ruins

sightseeing tour, an earthquake science fieldwork tour, an earthquake relief and experience tour, an earthquake memorial tour, a Qiang ethnic culture experience tour, a landscape scenery viewing tour, and a wilderness hiking adventure tour. In the future, tourists are also expected to be able to view the disaster site by cable car. According to Ma, the local governor

> The Beichuan earthquake memorial Leigu reception centre covers an area of 13,000 square metres and is the public access point for visits to the earthquake site of the old town of Beichuan. It provides a commemorative reception, an enquiries service, transfers to Memorial tour buses, a dining area, general and ethnic Qiang shopping areas, a tourist reception hall, and the Beichuan earthquake science and education hall. A large car park with a total area of 16,417 square metres provides spaces for 33,306 cars, with an average daily reception capacity of more than 4,000.

> (Ma, interview with local governor, 13/03/2010)

8.2 Beichuan Region has been Framed for Tourism Consumption

After the earthquake, many attractions were damaged, and the tourist industry suffered huge losses. However, this also brought with it some new opportunities, and in this context the development of new tourist routes appears to be a good marketing strategy. Travel agencies launched disaster tourism routes, which were not intended to obtain much profit, but this was within the overall remit of promoting tourist development and resuming normal activity as soon as possible, thus overcoming the stagnation of the tourist industry. Disaster tourism also allows tourists to experience for themselves the terrible feeling of the earthquake, and encourages them to cherish their lives and appreciate what they have. Figure 8.3, a leaflet collected from the Chunqiu Travel

Service Corporation during fieldwork, provides a good example of 'dark tourism' advertising: the leaflet is written in a very similar way to Table 8.1 below, as may be seen from the images, but here the Beichuan region has been framed for tourist consumption. The accompanying table 8.1 shows the details of the 'Love Journey' package, the new travel route offered by the company after the Sichuan earthquake. This shows how the site or landscape has been framed in much the same manner as the leaflet, for the primary purpose of tourist consumption. The next section describes the events experienced in this itinerary in detail and explores cultural phenomena in this post-disaster landscape, with a view to developing deeper insights and understanding into the effects these kinds of events have on a landscape and its inhabitants.

Figure 8.3: The 'dark tourism' leaflet

Source: Chunqiu Travel Agency, (2009), collected from fieldwork

Table 8.1: The "Love Journey" itinerary

The Two Day "Love Journey" Trip around Deyang Earthquake Ruins	
Accommodation location	Jinghu Hotel
Dining	Local box lunch
Price	RMB 390 Yuan

The "Love journey" itinerary:
- Day 1, Deyang- Shifang-Ying Hua Town-Deyang

Itinerary – Day 1	Details
Meet group in Deyang, drive to Shifang City	The city of Shifang is the second largest worst-hit area in Sichuan
Travel to the town of Chuanxindian, Ying Hua	52km, about 60 minutes by car
Visit chemical plant of the listed company Hongda Group	Completely destroyed in the earthquake
Lunch Experience	Lunch provided by the locals, to offer an insight into the experience of post-disaster life
Travel to Deyang	52km, approximately 60 minutes by car. Tour Asia's largest man-made gem-stone art wall, East Lake Hill Park, Bell and Drum Tower
Check in at hotel	Check in at hotel, dinner
Visit to Jing Lake	Jing Lake Art gallery (26 km-long lake), a taste of post-disaster recovery in Deyang.

- Day 2, Deyang-Mianzhu-Hanwang Town-New Year Paintings Town

Itinerary – Day 2	Details
Visit the wine village of Mianzhu	Fourth worst-hit area in Sichuan
Travel to Hanwang	4km, approximately 50 minutes by car via the Mianzhu Bridge
Plastic housing visit	See the world's largest temporary plastic housing areas (plastic housing providing more than 30,000 rooms, with more than 50,000 victims living there)
Visit to East Electrical Plant	Under military control
Visit Han Wang Memorial	12 May 'Memorial Clock' and blessing for the people in disaster areas
Visit to Ching Dao town	Visit earthquake survivors See New Year paintings Village, featuring one of China's four New Year paintings — unique charms of Mianzhu New Year paintings
Travel back to Deyang	Travel home and write journal

Source: Chunqiu Travel Agency, translated by author, Zhang

8.3 Case Study: Early Stage of Post-disaster Heritage-Making in Old Beichuan Town (Visit on 11/03/2010)

Old Beichuan town is located in the north-west of Sichuan Province, and is an ancient site inhabited by the minority Qiang people, who have played an iconic role in Chinese history. It was one of the worst-hit areas in the earthquake, and the ruins have been designated a memorial site for the 8,600 people who lost their lives there (Xinhua News, 2008). The town is in a deep valley, with mountains on all sides: the force of the earthquake sheared off the sides of the mountains, and landslides roared straight down onto the town. When I first visited, Old Beichuan Town had been abandoned, and a fence topped with concertina wire prevented any access to it, but it is now planned that the ruined town should become a tourist attraction. After the earthquake, Premier Wen Jiabao visited the county, and, as it was impossible to rebuild on the old town site, he gave instructions for the new town of Beichuan to be erected on what is now known as the town of Yongchang. The earthquake site will be preserved as the world's most extensive earthquake ruins, and old Beichuan is to be turned into a memorial museum for the 2008 earthquake. The following section will draw on my fieldwork diary to examine the site in its early stages.

"Today I visited old Beichuan County and, because of the mountain roads, it is not an easy journey to Beichuan. All of Beichuan is becoming like a big factory, white dust fills the air, and everywhere reconstruction is under way. As we approached the town centre, it felt as though the air had solidified, and the foggy weather mixed with white dust made it difficult to breathe" (Zhang, diary entry, 11/03/2010).

For security reasons, Old Beichuan Town centre remained blocked when we visited, but with the help of our tour guide, Mr. Li, we managed to go further and get closer to the ruins. Mr. Li is a local resident who runs a small business in Beichuan — luckily, he was on a business trip on the day of the earthquake, and so he survived. When we were on our way to the town centre, I looked up at the mountainsides (see Figure 8.4 below), and Hennessy's (2009) report came vividly to my mind:

> Great gashes in the almost vertical green walls, betraying the reason why so many people died here, landslides gobbled up what was left of this town after the quake. You can track their path down. Down through the natural gullies and small ravines, filling them all to the brim with their brown-yellow death, then hurtling across the valley floor, smashing, burying, and changing the landscape forever.

Figure 8.4: Beichuan County was completely destroyed by the Sichuan earthquake

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2010).

After driving to the town centre, we walked around taking pictures. The whole site has generally retained its original status, though, due to plans to turn it into a memorial, it has been cleaned and in a sense it has been developing in accordance with these plans. Mr. Li had to describe what we were looking at, since so many of the buildings were unrecognisable. Walking through the rubble of the town centre of old Beichuan made a deep impression on us, one that is difficult to put into words. Mr. Li pointed out the ruined buildings, telling us that "this was the Beichuan Hotel (Image 1 in Figure 8.5), that was the Road Transport Bureau (Image 2 in Figure 8.5), and that was the Police Station (Image 3 in Figure 8.5) over there…". His voice was broken by sobs, and he turned around quietly (Zhang, diary entry, 11/03/2010). Even such a strong and masculine hero of the earthquake relief effort could not face his surroundings, and his sorrow touched everyone.

Looking at the town centre, I could see that it resembled many other mountain towns in south-west China, including my home town: the streets of old Beichuan were lined with "multi-story buildings, KTV venues with excessive exterior lights and multi-level apartment buildings with small balconies bursting with colourful garments drying on clothing lines" (Hunt, 2010). "All these images were still vividly in my mind, but in front of me, store signs saying 'Tea', 'Alcohol' and 'Cigarettes' were scattered amongst piles of rubble, and small bright blue three-wheeled delivery vans lay crushed beneath the weight of collapsed six-storey buildings. In every building and on every corner there are fragments of someone's daily life, and seeing everyday items such as clothes and children's toys under the beautiful sun was both eerie and moving, to say the least.

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Although the streets were perfectly clear for walking, they were lined with broken slabs of concrete, twisted and tangled telephone wires, jagged shards of glass, and, above all, the remnants of people's lives. The sunshine and serenity of the day provided a strangely inappropriate backdrop to the desolation and sense of loss Beichuan carried with it" (Zhang, diary entry, 11/03/2010).

Our next stop was the remains of a school — Beichuan Middle School (see Figure 8.6) — an ugly pile of shattered slabs of concrete where around 700 students and teachers were buried alive or killed by huge boulders falling from nearby Jingjia Mountain. Only the national flag among the ruins marks the location of the old Beichuan Middle School, but a memorial to the county's lost children is planned for the site. When I visited it in 2010, the project was barely in an embryonic stage. There is an area here covered by rich green grass which constitutes both a memorial and a mass grave for those who died in the wreckage (see Figure 8.7). "It is not a site I will easily forget. Relatives grieve in this special place reserved for flowers and the burning of incense and paper money. I placed my own flowers there" (Zhang, diary entry, 11/03/2010).

Figure 8.5: Ruins of Beichuan town centre

Source: Photographs taken by the author, Zhang, (2010).

Figure 8.6: Old Beichuan Middle School site

Source: Photograph taken by the author, Zhang, (2010).

Figure 8.7: A memorial altar for mourning

 Source: Photograph taken by tour guide, Li, (2010).

Not just a temporary memorial site, there is also evidence that the whole site has been slowly taking shape in its new form, which may be shown in the following aspects. Many coloured signs punctuate the visitor's emotional engagement with the town, acting as reminders and marking out how this site has been changed into a memorial museum. Figure 8.8 demonstrates this phenomenon: the yellow sign reads "Please walk quietly and keep your voice down, and give the dead people a peaceful world", while the blue one reads "Our family members are resting. Do we really want to disturb them?" The red one, on the other hand, marks the forbidden area, reading "Please protect the earthquake ruins: Stepping inside is not allowed".

Figure 8.8: Signs at the ruins

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2010).

On my field trip in 2010, I walked away from Old Beichuan County, through the official toll gate and up a narrow dirt path. I climbed past temporary altars where visitors burn incense and candles, past temporary plaques to honour the earthquake dead. In Old Beichuan, the historical landscape was interrupted by the sudden earthquake in 2008 and afterwards people began to recreate their place. When we left Old Beichuan town centre, we walked past vendors lining the mountain road selling earthquake souvenirs (see Figure 8.9). Visitors can buy DVDs and photos of disaster footage taken in the immediate aftermath of the quake, and as such it is clear that a tourist destination has emerged. The next section will explore changes in the Old Beichuan Town landscape, based on my last visit in 2012.

Figure 8.9: Beichuan disaster tourism souvenir market

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2010).

8.4 Case Study: Late Stage of Post-disaster Heritage-Making in Old Beichuan Town (Visit on 30/09/2012)

In 2012 I followed the same route, and visited Old Beichuan Town again. As mentioned, in my first visit in 2010 I experienced how the terrible tragedy had turned a once thriving town of families, lives and homes into ruins. On my second visit, however, I witnessed how the ruined town has become a museum — what appears to be a destination for tourism and sightseeing.

"The strong rocky green mountains in the distance, the collapsed and decimated buildings on the side of a road in the foreground that are being held up by multiple layers of steel supports in order to ensure the buildings do not collapse any further and endanger the lives of the tourists. Both sides of the road have been fenced off with shattered buildings behind them, as if they were to be viewed like animals in a zoo for entertainment, with such a sense of curiosity. Tourists gaze at the remains of a disaster from the safe side of a very clear boundary between the dead and the living." (Zhang, diary entry, 30/09/2012; see Figure 8.10).

My latest investigation revealed that, compared with the early stages, there appear to be a number of important changes in Old Beichuan Town. Firstly, with new infrastructure built to support the destroyed site, the landscape of Old Beichuan Town in 2012 was quite different from how it was in 2010. Secondly, the village has been largely packaged for tourism purposes, with the construction of new infrastructure undertaken with tourism in mind. Old Beichuan Town has actually been turned into a museum, and tourist behaviour shows us that Old Beichuan Town has now been turned

into a tourist destination, with tourists gazing, walking and wandering around the new tourist sites. The following sections will develop these issues further and look closely at how the site has shifted toward tourism and museumification.

Figure 8.10: Old Beichuan Town in 2012

Source: Photograph taken by the author Zhang, (2012).

The landscape of the town in 2012 was quite different from how it was in 2010, with many new facilities having been built. Figure 8.11 shows a tourist restaurant in the service site of Leigu Town, which was rebuilt after the earthquake, the advertisement on the door showing the menu and associated food options. The very first line on the menu states 'Beichuan Earthquake Memorial Restaurant', and the menu presents many

items which promote the food as authentic Qiang ethnic fare made from local produce. The restaurant looks very commercially oriented, like a typical restaurant that you could see anywhere, and not what you would expect to see amid earthquake ruins. As can be seen from the photograph, there are no other references or markings on the building indicating that the town had just recovered from one of the world's biggest earthquakes. It seems clear that a new site has been created for the purpose of tourism.

Figure 8.11: Tourist restaurant in the service site of Leigu Town

Source: Photograph taken by the author Zhang, (2012).

More new infrastructure had been added to the ruins themselves since I visited in 2010. Image 1 of Figure 8.12 shows the shell of a building once occupied, held in place by massive structural supports to prevent it from falling down entirely. The inside of the building shows furniture still in place where it was once used by the people that frequented the County Road Transport Management Site.

Similarly, Image 2 of Figure 8.12 illustrates a clear layer of new infrastructure: massive steel supports prevent further damage to the buildings, and steel fences mark a clear boundary, creating a 'safe zone' and a 'dead zone': within the safe zone, trees have been planted and information boards put up. "An almost endless view of barraged buildings, unsafe for any human to walk through without risking their life to falling debris, whilst in the far off background again we see the natural mountains that still stand tall and overlook the catastrophe. A very sad smaller tourist information board is displayed behind the safety barriers close to the rubble with photographs of the people that died in the building when the earthquake struck and took their lives. The main information board slightly closer to the safety rails includes detailed information of the history of the building and a photo of how it once looked when it stood undamaged by the quake" (Zhang, diary entry, 30/09/2012). As can be seen from the images, all of the ruin sites have been packaged according to a 'dark' theme, and made ready for tourist consumption.

Figure 8.12: New infrastructure in the ruins

Image 1

Image 2

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2012).

The village has been packaged principally for tourist purposes, and there is a strong sense that the disaster site has become tourist-oriented. Figure 8.13 demonstrates the distinctive feeling I had when I went there for the second time, in 2012: "In the background we see a broken-down cityscape of high rise buildings, old ruins that would invoke sadness and the memories of a fatal and bloody tragedy. In the foreground we see the multi-lingual information boards, tourist maps, directional signs all marking the way to a newly-built infrastructure of paths and routes, which facilitate the tourists in exploring their own curiosity at what is literally the remains of many people's town, homes and lives." (Zhang, diary entry, 30/09/2012). The reconstruction of Old Beichuan Town has been carried out with tourists in mind, and a clear division created between backstage ruins and front-stage dark tourism.

Figure 8.13: Backstage ruins and front-stage tourism
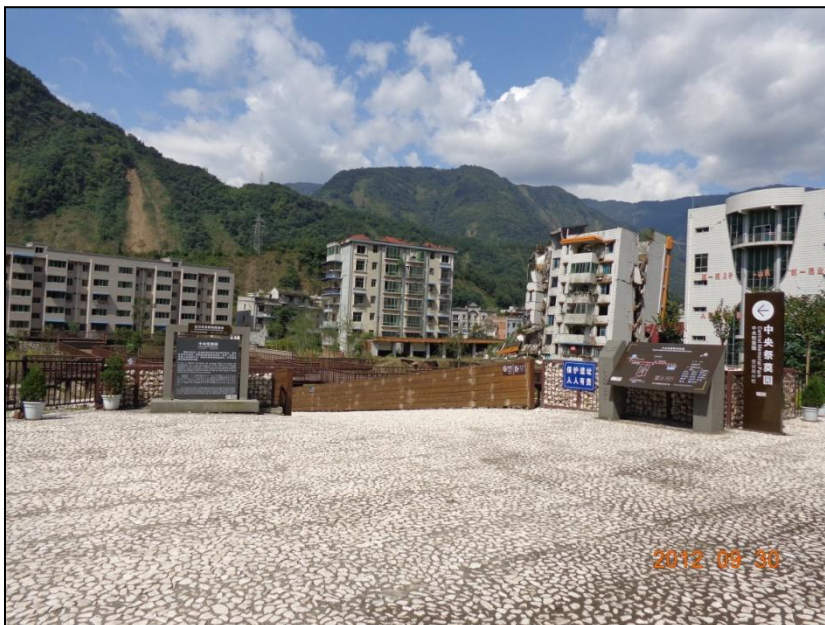
Source: Photograph taken by the author Zhang, (2012).

More specifically, Figure 8.14 shows that a tourist information reception has been built at the entrance to Old Beichuan Town to sell tickets to tourists. Image 1 of Figure 8.14 shows some of the buildings damaged in the earthquake in the distance, fenced off and labelled with a large red banner scrolling across the security fence to encourage tourists to participate in voluntary activities. Image 2 shows an informative tourist map constructed for visitors to Beichuan, depicting the entire memorial site with corresponding tourist information and the general information you might expect to see, such as contact phone numbers for enquiries and first-aid numbers in case of emergencies. As Image 2 of Figure 8.14 shows, there is also a detailed description of the earthquake for tourists written in Chinese, Japanese, Korean and English, detailing the memorial site and the events surrounding the earthquake and its historic effects on Beichuan. This evidence indicates that Old Beichuan Town has been largely packaged for the purposes of tourism, and the next section will illustrate this idea by looking at a number of typical tourist sites.

Figure 8.14: Tourist information reception

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2012).

Figure 8.15 displays one of the site's tourist information boards entitled "Earthquake Ruins of Old Beichuan". Unlike the previous board, which displayed a logical map of the site, this one shows a very vivid colour photograph of the landscape as it once existed before the earthquake hit the site and demolished the buildings. Beside the board is a prominent blue sign reminding people to queue for the electronic tourist bus: the fences stop tourists from stepping into the tour bus area, and there is a layout of different lanes, very similar to theme parks elsewhere.

Image 2 of Figure 8.15 shows tourists viewing the sites and being transported along the roads in a small carrier bus, "with a damaged building still standing in the close background at the side of the road and a completely fallen building's rubble in the distance further away with the greenest of hills and mountains. The contrasting wreckage and devastation of buildings that were once home to many and the tranquil forest and sky as their backdrop, almost as if nature itself had a say in what was to remain untouched." (Zhang, diary entry, 30/09/2012).

Figure 8.15: Tourist information board and tourist transport minibuses

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2012).

Beichuan Hotel, another key memorial site discussed earlier, displays a more informative memorial board in the foreground entitled 'Relic Site of Beichuan Hotel' (see Figure 8.16). The board features an image of the hotel with a traditional festival going on in the streets, where the Shalang dance was held and people drank *zajiu* liquor. The information board describes, in the four languages typically seen on all of the memorials (Chinese, Japanese, Korean and English), how the hotel was the only three-star hotel in Beichuan Qiang Ethnic Autonomous County and how it was one of the landmarks of the county. It became a shelter for thousands of survivors and the place where leaders of the Beichuan Qiang Ethnic Autonomous County Party Committee and the People's Government organised people in the wake of the disaster and rescued survivors. Beside it, there is another board entitled 'Sketch Map of Beichuan Hotel Ruins': like the others, it shows a logical diagram of the site detailing the various areas and relevant information on facilities. The images on the board do not look like a disaster site — on the contrary, they seem more like those of a thriving and successful town, with an elegant statue of three goats standing in the distance and a hotel on the other side of the road shrouded in lush green foliage imbuing the scene with tranquillity, in sharp contrast to the fact that the place is in fact a memorial. The next section will develop this idea further, looking at how exactly the ruins have been turned into a museum.

Figure 8.16: Relic site of Beichuan Hotel

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2012).

In a further development of the tourism-oriented concept, Old Beichuan Town has actually been specifically turned into a museum. The foreground in Figure 8.17 displays a plaque that reads 'The Beichuan Heritage Site of Earthquake', with symbolic Chinese writing written in an authentic Chinese scroll-like format. It is clear that the place has been stamped with the heritage site label, and a number of important sites are described below.

Figure 8.17: Beichuan heritage site of 2008 earthquake

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2012).

Figure 8.18: Beichuan County Bureau of Public Security

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2012).

The tourist sign above (see Figure 8.18) shows one of the buildings (Beichuan County Bureau of Public Security) as it stood before it was shaken by the earthquake, and details the events and the lives of the people who perished in the tragedy. The sign begins by giving the name of the building, followed by a framed photograph of how it looked before the earthquake occurred. Below this, details of the earthquake and information about the site are described in a number of languages, in order to ensure that information about the site is accessible to worldwide interest.

Here are the details of events, as described on the sign:

> The seven-storey office building of the Beichuan County Bureau of Public Security and the dormitory were connected. The right part of the dormitory collapsed and the rest was seriously damaged. Behind the office building was the Fire Prevention Bureau, where the office building was destroyed and the fire prevention facilities and equipment damaged. The earthquake claimed the lives of 31 policemen, with a further 17 injured and 30 losing their families.

A smaller blue sign lies to the right of the main tourist information sign, to remind people not to get too close to the building, for security reasons. Inside the building, at the entrance, there are photographs of the faces of people killed in this horrific disaster. The site is imbued very strongly with the character of an open museum.

As discussed earlier in the Old Beichuan Town section, the Beichuan Middle School is another important site (see Figure 8.19 Image 1). When I first visited, in 2010, there was just a temporary altar, but when I visited in 2012 this had become a mature memorial. "The roadside lined with rows of bright and colourful yellow flowers in plant pots going into the distance on either side of where now stands a huge rock carved as a memorial tombstone, engraved with '5.12' in large red numbers" (Zhang, diary entry, 30/09/2012). The site has shifted to become the centrepiece of what is now a tomb to commemorate the loss of those in the earthquake: "Green potted shrubs and planted trees surround the lush green grass inside the grounds. Past the main tombstone at the very back of the garden lies a huge banner mounted high up with symbolic Chinese writing displaying the '5.12' commemoration date. The Chinese flag is also mounted in the centre of the board, a sense of pride and nationalism. In the distance outside the immediate grounds of the tomb, the side of an old building which was damaged has

been painted white and written on with traditional Chinese symbolic script going down the wall, following old customs as a way to refer to the traditional wisdom of the past in order to heal the present." (Zhang, diary entry, 30/09/2012).

Image 2 in Figure 8.19 displays another scene of the memorial. JingJia Mountain is to be seen in the background, with a tourist information board in the foreground at the very bottom of a newly-built staircase on top of the old damaged steps that previously existed underneath. This appears to be a new construction to enable visitors to gain closer access to the site. The information board displays a picture of a beautiful school as it once existed close to the mountain, before it was all buried. The details describe the new Beichuan Campus Middle School, and how it was buried completely, with a huge number of casualties: "the beautiful campus and a national flag fluttering in the wind" (Zhang, diary entry, 30/09/2012). The last sentence on the board is almost poetic, and gives a sense of the calm after the storm, with the national flag standing high at the very top of the staircase.

Image 3 of Figure 8.19 shows another tombstone mirroring the buildings on the other side of the road. Here shrubs, trees and flowers are arranged on either side, again in a very symmetrical and respectful-looking pattern. This appears to be the norm in such circumstances, as a way of at least trying to pay respect to those who have passed from this world into the next.

Beside the site, there is a small, newly-built, traditional-looking bamboo hut which provides a 'memorial flower service' (see Figure 8.19 Image 4). Flowers are sold

in a bid to allow tourists to commemorate and pay their respects to those loved ones who have passed on. This is an innocent and decent-minded service to provide given the circumstances, though it could conceivably also be viewed in another sense as something of a double-edged sword, where grief meets a commercially-oriented venture, loss meeting gain.

Figure 8.19: Beichuan Middle School Memorial in 2012

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2012)

Another important memorial site showcasing the ruins that has been turned into a museum is the exhibition centre for the display of damaged vehicles. Figure 8.20 shows how the site has been turned into an open exhibition centre for damaged vehicles such as cars, vans, bikes and minibuses, which were destroyed by the earthquake in landslides, or smashed by collapsing buildings.

"The building sheltering the vehicles has a greenhouse look to it; it is an outdoor building with a covering roof only, and all sides are exposed to the public. There is a secure fence surrounding all the vehicles which would be unsafe for anyone to touch, given their state with sharp metal and glass etc." (Zhang, diary entry, 30/09/2012).

An information board provides details of road damage around Beichuan County and how traffic was paralysed during the earthquake. This site was constructed to protect and exhibit the vehicles and to preserve the memory of the earthquake's huge destructive power. In this way, the site has become a museum of sorts, to ensure that the past is not forgotten, and to allow tourists who may never have experienced such a natural disaster to visit and see the destruction for themselves.

Figure 8.20: The exhibition centre for the display of damaged vehicles

 Source: Photograph taken by the author Zhang, (2012).

A fourth indicator that Old Beichuan Town has now been turned into a tourist destination is tourist behaviour itself. Through the act of gazing, visitors actively create the new tourist sites. Unlike the other photos seen so far, and despite the clear nature of the devastation, in the following images we can see many tourists walking alongside the roads sightseeing, looking at the buildings and taking pictures of the aftermath, giving us a real sense of the nature of dark tourism, and how such behaviour creates the character of the new places.

For security reasons, Old Beichuan Town centre remained blocked and was not open to the public when I first visited in 2010, but in 2012, when I visited a second time, the site was open to the public. I saw many tourists, and observed for myself how their behaviour actively created the new tourist sites. For instance, at the top of the mountain (see Figure 8.21), in 2010 there was a contemporary altar on the side of the road where many local people and tourists burned incense and candles, and which provided a bird's eye view of Beichuan town centre, while by 2012 the site had been transformed into a tourist site officially named "San Dao Guai", though people have given it the nickname "望乡台 (Wang Xiang Tai)", which translates as "a high place for looking at one's home town" (see Figure 8.21). As Figure 8.21 shows, tourists take photos there. The following section will look closely at gazing, walking and other tourist behaviours to explore how tourists themselves have made their mark on Old Beichuan Town as a tourist-oriented memorial site.

Figure 8.21: "Wang Xiang Tai" and the tourist gaze

Source: CNS Photo, (2009).

Image 1 in Figure 8.22 shows old people resting and cooling down under the trees, relaxing as tourists. They are chatting, drinking tea and reading, which leaves a strange feeling when juxtaposed with all the disaster banners and ruins in the background. In front of them is the modern reality of tourism: a 'P' sign for a newly-built modern car park, a speed limit sign, a tourist information sign, new rubbish bins, and bamboo shops. Marked by tourist behaviour, the atmosphere here makes the site seem like a regular theme park.

Images 2, 3 and 4 in Figure 8.22 show tourists exploring and looking around the wrecked buildings. Using their mobile phones, texting, and filming the ruins, their gestures and everyday unconscious activities seem almost a little cold, as if they are unable to truly see and appreciate the havoc that ruined the lives of so many, even though it is right in front of their eyes.

Image 5 in Figure 8.22 shows tourists gazing on in curiosity, trying to get closer, leaning on the security fences in order to get a better view of the aftermath of the disaster. They are filming and taking pictures on their phones, turning the place into a live tourist site.

Image 6 in Figure 8.22 shows a family touring the disaster site with their children, who give the impression of being on a fun holiday, despite the decaying, fenced -off backdrop. As the English saying goes, "ignorance is bliss", even though this is an innocent ignorance, as the children skip and play amongst the remains of the disaster.

Image 7 in Figure 8.22 shows closer views of the dilapidated buildings, as tourists wander along the roads and the streets, taking in the sights of the ruins of the town.

Figure 8.22: How tourist behaviours mark and create new tourist sites

Source: Photographs taken by the author Zhang, (2012).

From the above analysis, it is clear the 2012 Old Beichuan Town landscape is quite different from that of 2010. From the four different changes illustrated above, it is only possible to conclude that the post-disaster site has now shifted to become a mature museumified tourist site. It is clear that museums dedicated to traumatic events engage a wide audience in the necessary consumption of grief, allowing society as a whole to remember and commemorate people and the past in a way that prevents us from forgetting our collective history entirely. However, when the site becomes a tourist destination, it seems to give an almost contradictory sense of atmosphere, where loss and disaster meet tourism and commerce. On the one hand, the dark scene with those ignorant and cold tourists looks strange and uncomfortable, but on the other this is the truth of tourism, and its search for exoticism, curiosity and fun.

Conclusion

Drawing upon two visits to the Beichuan earthquake memorial region in 2010 and 2012, this chapter demonstrates distinctive ways in which post-disaster heritage works and changes the reality of a region. It describes how the old Beichuan historical landscape was disrupted by the sudden earthquake, which turned the beautiful landscape into ruins. By making these ruins into heritage, by changing them into an open earthquake museum — with new infrastructure, tourist information centres and tourist boards and maps, as can be clearly seen in the later-stage visit to Old Beichuan — the townscape has shifted toward a mature museumified touristscape. Tourist behaviours such as gazing, photographing and walking mark and create new tourist landscapes.

From my investigations, there appear to be three principal characteristics of the post-disaster landscape in the Beichuan memorial region. First of all, it is important to highlight the scientific natural disaster context of the site. The earthquake relic site is differentiated from the earthquake museum, and the ruins of the 12 May earthquake will be preserved in their original condition, with the site potentially becoming a World Heritage Site. The town of Old Beichuan, the most seriously damaged by the earthquake, has been turned into a museum and memorial which will illustrate the quake in greater detail. The commemorative function, meanwhile, is fulfilled by the earthquake museum named "Crack", which covers an area of 140,230 square metres. There are two main exhibition sections, which include a scientific museum and a commemorative one. Many other tourist sites, too, have been developed around the Beichuan region in the aftermath of the earthquake, and plans for seven different themed tours have been made. It is clear that the site has been earmarked for tourist consumption, but this is a dynamic and developing process, and my latest investigation, in 2012 reveals that, in comparison with the early stages, there appear to be a number of other changes in Old Beichuan Town, with the site shifting gradually towards a more mature tourist site.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

This thesis explores the different dimensions of heritage within the post-disaster context, focusing in particular on the impact of the earthquake on cultural heritage, popular memory, memorialisation and tourism. Referring back to the beginning of the thesis, my principal objectives are to:

1. Trace the transformation of cultural sites in Sichuan affected by the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, exploring the transformation from 'cultural landscape' through 'disasterscape' to 'touristscape';

2. Study how interpretations of heritage and identity diverged in the wake of the earthquake, focusing on the contradictions between the top-down approach (specifically the authorised heritage discourse as disseminated by the Chinese Communist Party) and more spontaneous, bottom-up forms of place-making.

3. Investigate how popular memory of place is practiced and embodied in a post-disaster context, particularly from a Chinese perspective;

4. Examine the reality of tourism and heritage sites in post-disaster Sichuan, with a particular focus on experiences of the practice of tourism.

The four theoretical innovations discussed below respond specifically to these objectives.

Transformation of Place: Heritage, Identity and Time

This thesis aims to provide an overall perspective on Sichuan's cultural heritage in the context of a broad historical and geographical background, mapping the transformation of cultural heritage sites and objects before, during and after the earthquake. In conjunction with this transformation, a new category of disaster-made heritage is now emerging. By examining the transformation of heritage during the disaster transition

period, with particular emphasis on changes in the cultural landscape, I reflect on and contribute to Foote's (2003) observation that, while much research has been carried out on violence and tragedy, little of this has focused on the fate of the 'dark' sites themselves. I then extend Foote's terminology into a wider context, highlighting how the disaster has provided an opportunity for sites to be remade and marked as new post-disaster heritage, and for meaning to be re-inscribed. This phenomenon is typical of a strongly politically-controlled society like China, and case studies such as the 5.12 Ruin Parks and Qiang Ethnic Village (in Chapter 5) clearly illustrate this argument.

In this research, the meaning of heritage is strongly marked by place identity, and is produced and exchanged through social interaction, which means that the heritage of disaster naturally associates itself with the disaster-affected area (the sites) and the affected people. In this way, people, heritage and place become linked together in a complex and constantly mutating variety of ways. This thesis follows a socially-constructed view of the post-disaster site, in contrast to earlier conceptualisations of place as abstract, objective and value-neutral: recent studies have centred on ideas of spatial multiplicity and the contestation arising from the variegated social actualisation of place (Winter, 2006). I expand Graham and Howard's (2008) view of heritage as process in the recent post-disaster context in China, emphasising that cultural heritage is not fixed in a historical context but is in continuous development, a process of constant negotiation, contestation and re-interpretation (Svensson, 2005). I argue that the post-disaster site not only reflects a certain heritage affected by the disaster, but that the disaster itself creates a new category of disaster-oriented heritage: in this way,

the post-disaster site also serves to communicate and reproduce the values and meanings that underpin this heritage. Scholars working in the field of post-disaster heritage therefore need, in my view, to pay greater attention to cultural geography, given that it seems essential that post-disaster heritage recovery be upgraded to incorporate issues of social awareness and education, rather than stopping at the level of crisis management and materialised cultural protection. In other words, it is important to understand that post-disaster heritage is a social phenomenon, and more specifically, a living heritage. It is founded on the relationship between people and the post-disaster site, and the process and interaction between the post-disaster space and the communities that inhabit it.

Top-Down Authorised Heritage Discourse

In exploring the complexities and tensions in the Chinese Communist Party's vision of post-disaster heritage, I emphasise that Smith's (2006) concept of 'authorised heritage discourse' is vital for understanding heritage in the post-disaster context. As the single ruling party, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) plays a very important role in such critical situations in China: in the wake of the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, for instance, it seems that the political elite adopted an unprecedented attitude marked by previously unseen values with regard to the natural disaster. Some of the key characteristics of this attitude will be outlined below.

First of all, an analysis of the post-disaster heritage production process enacted by the Chinese Communist Party in relation to the reaffirmation of its political power shows how impressively the Chinese administrative machine initiated heritage

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recovery. The CCP government took on the main role, ensuring that the disaster enjoyed national status and showing a very strong commitment to heritage recovery even in its initial emergency response. The CCP soon set up a national project for the full-scale restoration of cultural heritage, under the aegis of the State Administration of Cultural Heritage. Through this, the CCP used the 12 May earthquake as an opportunity to both reshape Sichuan's cultural landscape and to regain its power. The power structures and politics involved in the rebuilding process are especially evident in the affected areas. There are countless rebuilding projects in post-disaster Sichuan, and the relocation, renaming, restoration, rebuilding and re-emerging process as seen in the town of Beichuan illustrates the social production of post-disaster 'place' as applied by the CCP, which has in turn produced a CCP-oriented post-disaster heritage landscape.

Secondly, research into the representation of texts in museums confirms that this too is a political strategy serving the dissemination of a CCP-dominated ideology. Like the national earthquake museums and monuments, the cultural heritage programmes at post-disaster sites are inevitably political in character. On the one hand, the CCP seeks to shape accepted narratives about specific aspects of meaning, and on the other, cultural heritage programmes also support state-directed development efforts that are explicitly linked to a national project of modernisation and to the image of the Party. There can be little doubt that the Chinese Communist Party's aspirations, as delivered through museum projects, have shaped the interpretation of post-disaster heritage. As empirical case studies show, CCP political ideology has deeply penetrated

post-disaster heritage, imbuing it with a Communist, 'cosmopolitan' and 'utilitarian', 'Marxist revolutionary' and 'people-oriented' identity.

In the course of analysing authorised heritage discourse as applied to post-disaster tourism and in museums, I argue that this discourse works to underpin and validate national narratives of post-disaster heritage, in a post-disaster context where in reality there are a number of contested and complex heritage discourses. Contrasting this model with the bottom-up approach as described in Chapter 7, I conclude that tensions do not simply occur in opposition to top-down authorised heritage discourse, but also within the discursive field marked out by discourse.

Bottom-Up Popular Memorials

Another theoretical current which is also a key part of this research recognises complexities in the production of post-disaster heritage. Even in a context of authorised heritage discourse as dominant as in China, bottom-up popular memorials still do appear. I argue that there is a multitude and a plurality of narratives of tragic heritage at work within a post-disaster site, and that many voices may be left out of the 'consensual narratives' that appear after a collective trauma. Mass media, politicians and legal documentation will almost certainly play a dominant role in the production of such narratives: these are top-down voices, as discussed in Chapter 6. It is my view, though, that popular memorials too should be recognised as part of the long-term project to represent 'memory' at tragic heritage sites, despite the fact that because an earthquake is by nature a very short-lived event, this type of bottom-up memorial has not generally been considered to form part of the heritage process in China.

Within the context of the Sichuan earthquake, it is in my opinion essential to establish an archive of the popular memorials that have sprung up in the wake of the earthquake, with a view to documenting, archiving and analysing them. In a sense, the need to set up this type of project has developed from a feeling that evidence of what happened must be left for posterity, and that popular memorials must be marked so that they cannot be ignored, and that this aspect of reality must be documented if it is to be understood (Taylor, 2003).

It is important, however, to address the fact that within the post-disaster context researchers working in the field of the popular memorial are acting in the opposite direction to that taken by the standard selection process for historical heritage in museums: the aim is not to rescue the past from the present, but rather to preserve material that could in future also come to be considered as heritage. This reflects how the theme of material culture continues to play a central role in heritage study, and more broadly in the study of cultural geography. In the course of my research, my encounter with the ethnic villages and the earthquake museums of Beichuan gave me a glimpse of the many fascinating and as yet unstudied aspects of material culture, and made me understand that this thesis can only a serve as a starting point for the creation of this type of bottom-up memorial archive. For this reason, there is a major need for more detailed research in this field, within the post-disaster context.

Dark Tourism: Uses of Heritage in Practice

A particular concern of this thesis is to extend heritage studies into a broader post-disaster context, especially from the perspective of the newly-emerged phenomenon of 'dark tourism', as well as to explore the values and meanings associated with cultural heritage at post-disaster sites and to provide valuable insight into the complex relationships between landscape, memory and identity. In the course of this research, I have found that in the Chinese context 'dark tourism' has some very specific characteristics.

Firstly, at a number of post-disaster sites the earthquake has been viewed as an opportunity, and the sites have largely been designed for the purpose of tourism. On the basis of my two visits to the Beichuan earthquake memorial region in 2010 and 2012, the changes I have witnessed demonstrate distinctive ways in which post-disaster heritage functions and how it changes the reality of a region. The old historical landscape of Beichuan was transformed by a massive earthquake which suddenly left the beautiful landscape in ruins. By making these ruins into heritage, by transforming them into an open earthquake museum — with new infrastructure, tourist information centres, information boards and maps, as we have seen in Old Beichuan in the latter stages — the whole townscape has shifted toward a mature, museumified touristscape. Tourist behaviours such as gazing, photographing and walking mark and thus create new tourist landscapes.

Secondly, there are a number of different stakeholders that have become involved in the rebuilding process. The dominant political power in China, the Chinese

Communist Party, intervenes directly in the making of the site: the case of the Qiang Ethnic Village shows how the Party has deliberately built a centre of cultural heritage to showcase an indigenous people. In this way, villages and towns are transformed into tourist destinations, the meanings of the post-disaster sites are transferred, and this changing meaning marks the reaffirmation of the power of the dominant party.

To sum up, it is my view that 'dark tourism' is indeed a brand of tourist development capable of powering the economic development of post-disaster sites, but that it also has many ambiguous and uncertain connotations. In an era of earthquake transition when hegemony or ideological conformity has given way to pluralism or even, to a certain extent, confusion, 'dark tourism' serves as an ideological means of reasserting state control.

Postscript

Following on from the devastating 2008 earthquake in Sichuan Province, there have been further unfortunate disruptions to the region. Earthquakes frequently strike Sichuan: a 6.2-magnitude earthquake struck Panzhihua in Sichuan Province on 30 August 2008; a 6.9- magnitude quake hit Qinghai province, bordering the north-west of Sichuan, in April 2010; and two earthquakes measuring 5.5 and 5.9 struck the south-western border of Sichuan with Yunnan Province in 2012 and 2013 (Terra Daily, 2013). These earthquakes have each taken many lives and caused many more casualties. A number of the sites discussed in this thesis, including memorials and historic sites that were rebuilt, have since been damaged or destroyed once more.

In particular, the heaviest rainfall witnessed for 50 years, with 37 inches (94 cm) of rain, caused flooding and landslides in July 2013, with massive disruption to the lives of roughly six million people in the Sichuan region. The rain destroyed bridges, houses and memorials, and also affected many of those who were the victims of the 2008 earthquake. Multiple landslides followed the floods, burying dozens of people, and the sheer power and strength of the rain and floods were another life-threatening blow dealt to the province (Jacobs, 2013).

As Figure 10.1 below shows, an important 2008 Sichuan earthquake memorial, the Beichuan Earthquake Memorial, which constitutes an important case study in my thesis, has been largely flooded, and most of the memorials are now gone. As can be seen in the image, a huge tidal wave swept across the landscape, engulfing everything in its

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path. The sheer power of this tide can be seen in this photograph, which seems to capture the utterly raw nature of the chaos that occurs when waves crash into and wash over man-made structures and wreak havoc on the lives of many.

Figure 10.1: The Beichuan Earthquake Memorial has been largely flooded, and most of the memorials have gone

Source: Getty Images refer from Jacobs, 10th July 2013, New York Times [Online].

The Qingchun Earthquake Memorial, also discussed in this thesis, has been destroyed by another recent earthquake. It is important, though, to stress that the fact that recent disasters have destroyed many sites or objects which have been discussed in the thesis does not negate the work contained here; in fact, it makes the central questions posed by the research, and its themes and conclusions, more important still. In an area which continues to suffer from disasters, the processes seen before and after

the 2008 earthquake are not the end of the story, as it may be repeated again and again; furthermore, beyond the 'natural' factor, there is also a sense that disaster is also 'man'-made, as the thesis emphasises, in that there is a dynamic and on-going process of rebuilding or remaking place. There are, however, many questions that remain to be answered regarding how people deal with this fragile land as well as how to make human interventions in a practical and sustainable way. There is an urgent need within academia to explore such issues.

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